

Introduction to Philosophy

# Introduction to Philosophy

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# CHAPTER 1: NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

## "NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY" POWER POINT

### Nature of Philosophy

### PLATO: APOLOGY (PART 1)

How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost made me forget who I was—so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth. But of the many falsehoods told by them, there was one which quite amazed me;—I mean when they said that you should be upon your guard and not allow yourselves to be deceived by the force of my eloquence. To say this, when they were certain to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and proved myself to be anything but a great speaker, did indeed appear to me most shameless—unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for is such is their meaning, I admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saying, they have scarcely spoken the truth at all; but from me you shall hear the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases. No, by heaven! but I shall use the words and arguments which occur to me at the moment; for I am confident in the justice of my cause (Or, I am certain that I am right in taking this course.): at my time of life I ought not to be appearing before you, O men of Athens, in the character of a juvenile orator—let no one expect it of me. And I must beg of you to grant me a favour:—If I defend myself in my accustomed manner, and you hear me using the words which I have been in the habit of using in the agora, at the tables of the money-changers, or anywhere else, I would ask you not to be surprised, and not to interrupt me on this account. For I am more than seventy years of age, and appearing now for the first time in a court of law, I am quite a stranger to the language of the place; and therefore I would have you regard me as if I were really a stranger, whom you would excuse if he spoke in his native tongue, and after the fashion of his country:—Am I making an unfair request of you? Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the truth of my words, and give heed to that: let the speaker speak truly and the judge decide justly.

And first, I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones. For of old I have had many accusers, who have accused me falsely to you during many years; and I am more afraid of them than of Anytus and his associates, who are dangerous, too, in their own way. But far more dangerous are the others, who began when you were children, and took possession of your minds with their falsehoods, telling of one Socrates, a wise man, who speculated about the heaven above, and searched into the earth beneath, and made the worse appear the better cause. The disseminators of this tale are the accusers whom I dread; for their hearers are apt to fancy that such enquirers do not believe in the existence of the gods. And they are many, and their charges against me are of ancient date, and they were made by them in the days when you were more impressible than you are now—in childhood, or it may have been in youth—and the cause when heard went by default, for there was none to answer. And hardest of all, I do not know and cannot tell the names of my accusers; unless in the chance case of a Comic poet. All who from envy and malice have persuaded you—some of them up here, and cross-examine them, and therefore I must simply fight with shadows in my own defence, and argue when there is no one who answers. I will ask you then to assume with me, as I was saying, that my opponents are

of two kinds; one recent, the other ancient: and I hope that you will see the propriety of my answering the latter first, for these accusations you heard long before the others, and much oftener.

Well, then, I must make my defence, and endeavour to clear away in a short time, a slander which has lasted a long time. May I succeed, if to succeed be for my good and yours, or likely to avail me in my cause! The task is not an easy one; I quite understand the nature of it. And so leaving the event with God, in obedience to the law I will now make my defence.

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what is the accusation which has given rise to the slander of me, and in fact has encouraged Meletus to prove this charge against me. Well, what do the slanderers say? They shall be my prosecutors, and I will sum up their words in an affidavit: 'Socrates is an evil-doer, and a curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others.' Such is the nature of the accusation: it is just what you have yourselves seen in the comedy of Aristophanes (Aristoph., Clouds.), who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saying that he walks in air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little—not that I mean to speak disparagingly of any one who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could bring so grave a charge against me. But the simple truth is, O Athenians, that I have nothing to do with physical speculations. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbours whether any of you have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon such matters... You hear their answer. And from what they say of this part of the charge you will be able to judge of the truth of the rest.

As little foundation is there for the report that I am a teacher, and take money; this accusation has no more truth in it than the other. Although, if a man were really able to instruct mankind, to receive money for giving instruction would, in my opinion, be an honour to him. There is Gorgias of Leontium, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis, who go the round of the cities, and are able to persuade the young men to leave their own citizens by whom they might be taught for nothing, and come to them whom they not only pay, but are thankful if they may be allowed to pay them. There is at this time a Parian philosopher residing in Athens, of whom I have heard; and I came to hear of him in this way:—I came across a man who has spent a world of money on the Sophists, Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and knowing that he had sons, I asked him: 'Callias,' I said, 'if your two sons were foals or calves, there would be no difficulty in finding some one to put over them; we should hire a trainer of horses, or a farmer probably, who would improve and perfect them in their own proper virtue and excellence; but as they are human beings, whom are you thinking of placing over them? Is there any one who understands human and political virtue? You must have thought about the matter, for you have sons; is there any one?' 'There is,' he said. 'Who is he?' said I; 'and of what country? and what does he charge?' 'Evenus the Parian,' he replied; 'he is the man, and his charge is five minae.' Happy is Evenus, I said to myself, if he really has this wisdom, and teaches at such a moderate charge. Had I the same, I should have been very proud and conceited; but the truth is that I have no knowledge of the kind.

I dare say, Athenians, that some one among you will reply, 'Yes, Socrates, but what is the origin of these accusations which are brought against you; there must have been something strange which you have been doing? All these rumours and this talk about you would never have arisen if you had been like other men: tell us, then, what is the cause of them, for we should be sorry to judge hastily of you.' Now I regard this as a fair challenge, and I will endeavour to explain to you the reason why I am called wise and have such an evil fame. Please to attend then. And although some of you may think that I am joking, I declare that I will tell you the entire truth. Men of Athens, this reputation of mine has come of a certain sort of wisdom which I possess. If you ask me what kind of wisdom, I reply, wisdom such as may perhaps be attained by man, for to that extent I am inclined to believe that I am wise; whereas the persons of whom I was speaking have a superhuman wisdom which I may fail to describe, because I have it not myself; and he who says that I have, speaks falsely, and is taking away my character. And here, O men of Athens, I must beg you not to interrupt me, even if I seem to say something extravagant. For the word which I will speak is not mine. I will refer you to a witness who is worthy of credit; that witness shall be the God of Delphi—he will tell you about my wisdom, if I have any, and of what sort it is. You must have known Chaerephon; he was early a friend of mine, and also a friend of yours, for he shared in the recent exile of the people, and returned with you. Well, Chaerephon, as you know, was very impetuous in all his doings, and he went to Delphi and boldly asked the oracle to tell him whether—as I was saying, I must beg you not to interrupt—he asked the oracle to tell him whether anyone was wiser than I was, and the Pythian prophetess answered, that there was no man wiser. Chaerephon is dead himself; but his brother, who is in court, will confirm the truth of what I am saying.

Why do I mention this? Because I am going to explain to you why I have such an evil name. When I heard the answer, I said to myself, What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of his riddle? for I know that I

have no wisdom, small or great. What then can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god, and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After long consideration, I thought of a method of trying the question. I reflected that if I could only find a man wiser than myself, then I might go to the god with a refutation in my hand. I should say to him, 'Here is a man who is wiser than I am; but you said that I was the wisest.' Accordingly I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom, and observed him—his name I need not mention; he was a politician whom I selected for examination—and the result was as follows: When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he was thought wise by many, and still wiser by himself; and thereupon I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is,—for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows; I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another who had still higher pretensions to wisdom, and my conclusion was exactly the same. Whereupon I made another enemy of him, and of many others besides him.

Then I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked, and I lamented and feared this: but necessity was laid upon me,—the word of God, I thought, ought to be considered first. And I said to myself, Go I must to all who appear to know, and find out the meaning of the oracle. And I swear to you, Athenians, by the dog I swear!—for I must tell you the truth—the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better. I will tell you the tale of my wanderings and of the 'Herculean' labours, as I may call them, which I endured only to find at last the oracle irrefutable. After the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dithyrambic, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be instantly detected; now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are. Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them—thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to confess the truth, but I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them. The poets appeared to me to be much in the same case; and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the artisans. I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and here I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets;—because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom; and therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and to the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This inquisition has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies. And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go about the world, obedient to the god, and search and make enquiry into the wisdom of any one, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and my occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

There is another thing:—young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and proceed to examine others; there are plenty of persons, as they quickly discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing; and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me: This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth!—and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practise or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretence of knowledge has been detected—which is the truth; and as they are

numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are drawn up in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and inveterate calumnies. And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus and Anytus and Lycon, have set upon me; Meletus, who has a quarrel with me on behalf of the poets; Anytus, on behalf of the craftsmen and politicians; Lycon, on behalf of the rhetoricians: and as I said at the beginning, I cannot expect to get rid of such a mass of calumny all in a moment. And this, O men of Athens, is the truth and the whole truth; I have concealed nothing, I have dissembled nothing. And yet, I know that my plainness of speech makes them hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I am speaking the truth?—Hence has arisen the prejudice against me; and this is the reason of it, as you will find out either in this or in any future enquiry.

I have said enough in my defence against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class. They are headed by Meletus, that good man and true lover of his country, as he calls himself. Against these, too, I must try to make a defence:—Let their affidavit be read: it contains something of this kind: It says that Socrates is a doer of evil, who corrupts the youth; and who does not believe in the gods of the state, but has other new divinities of his own. Such is the charge; and now let us examine the particular counts. He says that I am a doer of evil, and corrupt the youth; but I say, O men of Athens, that Meletus is a doer of evil, in that he pretends to be in earnest when he is only in jest, and is so eager to bring men to trial from a pretended zeal and interest about matters in which he really never had the smallest interest. And the truth of this I will endeavour to prove to you.

Come hither, Meletus, and let me ask a question of you. You think a great deal about the improvement of youth?

Yes, I do.

Tell the judges, then, who is their improver; for you must know, as you have taken the pains to discover their corrupter, and are citing and accusing me before them. Speak, then, and tell the judges who their improver is.—Observe, Meletus, that you are silent, and have nothing to say. But is not this rather disgraceful, and a very considerable proof of what I was saying, that you have no interest in the matter? Speak up, friend, and tell us who their improver is.

The laws.

But that, my good sir, is not my meaning. I want to know who the person is, who, in the first place, knows the laws.

The judges, Socrates, who are present in court.

What, do you mean to say, Meletus, that they are able to instruct and improve youth?

Certainly they are.

What, all of them, or some only and not others?

All of them.

By the goddess Here, that is good news! There are plenty of improvers, then. And what do you say of the audience,—do they improve them?

Yes, they do.

And the senators?

Yes, the senators improve them.

But perhaps the members of the assembly corrupt them?—or do they too improve them?

They improve them.

Then every Athenian improves and elevates them; all with the exception of myself; and I alone am their corrupter? Is that what you affirm?

That is what I stoutly affirm.

I am very unfortunate if you are right. But suppose I ask you a question: How about horses? Does one man do them harm and all the world good? Is not the exact opposite the truth? One man is able to do them good, or at least not many;—the trainer of horses, that is to say, does them good, and others who have to do with them rather injure them? Is not that true, Meletus, of horses, or of any other animals? Most assuredly it is; whether you and Anytus say yes or no. Happy indeed would be the condition of youth if they had one corrupter only, and all the rest of the world were their improvers. But you, Meletus, have sufficiently shown that you never had a thought about the young: your carelessness is seen in your not caring about the very things which you bring against me.

And now, Meletus, I will ask you another question—by Zeus I will: Which is better, to live among bad citizens, or among good ones? Answer, friend, I say; the question is one which may be easily answered. Do not the good do their neighbours good, and the bad do them evil?

Certainly.

And is there anyone who would rather be injured than benefited by those who live with him? Answer, my good friend, the law requires you to answer—does any one like to be injured?

Certainly not.

And when you accuse me of corrupting and deteriorating the youth, do you allege that I corrupt them intentionally or unintentionally?

Intentionally, I say.

But you have just admitted that the good do their neighbours good, and the evil do them evil. Now, is that a truth which your superior wisdom has recognized thus early in life, and am I, at my age, in such darkness and ignorance as not to know that if a man with whom I have to live is corrupted by me, I am very likely to be harmed by him; and yet I corrupt him, and intentionally, too—so you say, although neither I nor any other human being is ever likely to be convinced by you. But either I do not corrupt them, or I corrupt them unintentionally; and on either view of the case you lie. If my offence is unintentional, the law has no cognizance of unintentional offences: you ought to have taken me privately, and warned and admonished me; for if I had been better advised, I should have left off doing what I only did unintentionally—no doubt I should; but you would have nothing to say to me and refused to teach me. And now you bring me up in this court, which is a place not of instruction, but of punishment.

It will be very clear to you, Athenians, as I was saying, that Meletus has no care at all, great or small, about the matter. But still I should like to know, Meletus, in what I am affirmed to corrupt the young. I suppose you mean, as I infer from your indictment, that I teach them not to acknowledge the gods which the state acknowledges, but some other new divinities or spiritual agencies in their stead. These are the lessons by which I corrupt the youth, as you say.

Yes, that I say emphatically.

Then, by the gods, Meletus, of whom we are speaking, tell me and the court, in somewhat plainer terms, what you mean! for I do not as yet understand whether you affirm that I teach other men to acknowledge some gods, and therefore that I do believe in gods, and am not an entire atheist—this you do not lay to my charge,—but only you say that they are not the same gods which the city recognizes—the charge is that they are different gods. Or, do you mean that I am an atheist simply, and a teacher of atheism?

I mean the latter—that you are a complete atheist.

What an extraordinary statement! Why do you think so, Meletus? Do you mean that I do not believe in the godhead of the sun or moon, like other men?

I assure you, judges, that he does not: for he says that the sun is stone, and the moon earth.

Friend Meletus, you think that you are accusing Anaxagoras: and you have but a bad opinion of the judges, if you fancy them illiterate to such a degree as not to know that these doctrines are found in the books of Anaxagoras the Clazomenian, which are full of them. And so, forsooth, the youth are said to be taught them by Socrates, when there are not unfrequently exhibitions of them at the theatre (Probably in allusion to Aristophanes who caricatured, and to Euripides who borrowed the notions of Anaxagoras, as well as to other dramatic poets.) (price of admission one drachma at the most); and they might pay their money, and laugh at Socrates if he pretends to father these extraordinary views. And so, Meletus, you really think that I do not believe in any god?

I swear by Zeus that you believe absolutely in none at all.

Nobody will believe you, Meletus, and I am pretty sure that you do not believe yourself. I cannot help thinking, men of Athens, that Meletus is reckless and impudent, and that he has written this indictment in a spirit of mere wantonness and youthful bravado. Has he not compounded a riddle, thinking to try me? He said to himself:—I shall see whether the wise Socrates will discover my facetious contradiction, or whether I shall be able to deceive him and the rest of them. For he certainly does appear to me to contradict himself in the indictment as much as if he said that Socrates is guilty of not believing in the gods, and yet of believing in them—but this is not like a person who is in earnest.

I should like you, O men of Athens, to join me in examining what I conceive to be his inconsistency; and do you, Meletus, answer. And I must remind the audience of my request that they would not make a disturbance if I speak in my accustomed manner:

Did ever man, Meletus, believe in the existence of human things, and not of human beings?...I wish, men of Athens, that he would answer, and not be always trying to get up an interruption. Did ever any man believe in horsemanship, and not in horses? or in flute-playing, and not in flute-players? No, my friend; I will answer to you and to the court, as you refuse to answer for yourself. There is no man who ever did. But now please to answer the next question: Can a man believe in spiritual and divine agencies, and not in spirits or demigods?

He cannot.

How lucky I am to have extracted that answer, by the assistance of the court! But then you swear in the indictment that I teach and believe in divine or spiritual agencies (new or old, no matter for that); at any rate, I believe in spiritual agencies,—so you say and swear in the affidavit; and yet if I believe in divine beings, how can I help believing in spirits or demigods;—must I not? To be sure I must; and therefore I may assume that your silence gives consent. Now what are spirits or demigods? Are they not either gods or the sons of gods?

Certainly they are.

But this is what I call the facetious riddle invented by you: the demigods or spirits are gods, and you say first that I do not believe in gods, and then again that I do believe in gods; that is, if I believe in demigods. For if the demigods are the illegitimate sons of gods, whether by the nymphs or by any other mothers, of whom they are said to be the sons—what human being will ever believe that there are no gods if they are the sons of gods? You might as well affirm the existence of mules, and deny that of horses and asses. Such nonsense, Meletus, could only have been intended by you to make trial of me. You have put this into the indictment because you had nothing real of which to accuse me. But no one who has a particle of understanding will ever be convinced by you that the same men can believe in divine and superhuman things, and yet not believe that there are gods and demigods and heroes.

I have said enough in answer to the charge of Meletus: any elaborate defence is unnecessary, but I know only too well how many are the enmities which I have incurred, and this is what will be my destruction if I am destroyed;—not Meletus, nor yet Anytus, but the envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them.

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, upon your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to slay Hector, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself—'Fate,' she said, in these or the like words, 'waits for you next after Hector;' he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonour, and not to avenge his friend. 'Let me die forthwith,' he replies, 'and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a laughing-stock and a burden of the earth.' Had Achilles any thought of death and danger? For wherever a man's place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything but of disgrace. And this, O men of Athens, is a true saying.

Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I who, when I was ordered by the generals whom you chose to command me at Potidaea and Amphipolis and Delium, remained where they placed me, like any other

man, facing death—if now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfil the philosopher’s mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death, fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For the fear of death is indeed the pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being a pretence of knowing the unknown; and no one knows whether death, which men in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is not this ignorance of a disgraceful sort, the ignorance which is the conceit that a man knows what he does not know? And in this respect only I believe myself to differ from men in general, and may perhaps claim to be wiser than they are:—that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonourable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now, and are not convinced by Anytus, who said that since I had been prosecuted I must be put to death; (or if not that I ought never to have been prosecuted at all); and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words—if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again you shall die;—if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honour and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting any one whom I meet and saying to him after my manner: You, my friend,—a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens,—are you not ashamed of heaping up the greatest amount of money and honour and reputation, and caring so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? And if the person with whom I am arguing, says: Yes, but I do care; then I do not leave him or let him go at once; but I proceed to interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue in him, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less. And I shall repeat the same words to every one whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For know that this is the command of God; and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the state than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person. But if any one says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whichever you do, understand that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

## PLATO: APOLOGY (PART 2)

Men of Athens, do not interrupt, but hear me; there was an understanding between us that you should hear me to the end: I have something more to say, at which you may be inclined to cry out; but I believe that to hear me will be good for you, and therefore I beg that you will not cry out. I would have you know, that if you kill such an one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Nothing will injure me, not Meletus nor yet Anytus—they cannot, for a bad man is not permitted to injure a better than himself. I do not deny that Anytus may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or deprive him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is inflicting a great injury upon him: but there I do not agree. For the evil of doing as he is doing—the evil of unjustly taking away the life of another—is greater far.

And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours, that you may not sin against the God by condemning me, who am his gift to you. For if you kill me you will not easily find a successor to me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, given to the state by God; and the state is a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. You will not easily find another like me, and therefore I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel out of temper (like a person who is suddenly awakened from sleep), and you think that you might easily strike me dead as Anytus advises, and then

you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you sent you another gadfly. When I say that I am given to you by God, the proof of my mission is this:—if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns or patiently seen the neglect of them during all these years, and have been doing yours, coming to you individually like a father or elder brother, exhorting you to regard virtue; such conduct, I say, would be unlike human nature. If I had gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense in my doing so; but now, as you will perceive, not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of any one; of that they have no witness. And I have a sufficient witness to the truth of what I say—my poverty.

Some one may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the state. I will tell you why. You have heard me speak at sundry times and in divers places of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign, which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do. This is what deters me from being a politician. And rightly, as I think. For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And do not be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly striving against the many lawless and unrighteous deeds which are done in a state, will save his life; he who will fight for the right, if he would live even for a brief space, must have a private station and not a public one.

I can give you convincing evidence of what I say, not words only, but what you value far more—actions. Let me relate to you a passage of my own life which will prove to you that I should never have yielded to injustice from any fear of death, and that ‘as I should have refused to yield’ I must have died at once. I will tell you a tale of the courts, not very interesting perhaps, but nevertheless true. The only office of state which I ever held, O men of Athens, was that of senator: the tribe Antiochis, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of Arginusae; and you proposed to try them in a body, contrary to law, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the Prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against you; and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and you called and shouted, I made up my mind that I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to put him to death. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my great and only care was lest I should do an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And many will witness to my words.

Now do you really imagine that I could have survived all these years, if I had led a public life, supposing that like a good man I had always maintained the right and had made justice, as I ought, the first thing? No indeed, men of Athens, neither I nor any other man. But I have been always the same in all my actions, public as well as private, and never have I yielded any base compliance to those who are slanderously termed my disciples, or to any other. Not that I have any regular disciples. But if any one likes to come and hear me while I am pursuing my mission, whether he be young or old, he is not excluded. Nor do I converse only with those who pay; but any one, whether he be rich or poor, may ask and answer me and listen to my words; and whether he turns out to be a bad man or a good one, neither result can be justly imputed to me; for I never taught or professed to teach him anything. And if any one says that he has ever learned or heard anything from me in private which all the world has not heard, let me tell you that he is lying.

But I shall be asked, Why do people delight in continually conversing with you? I have told you already, Athenians, the whole truth about this matter: they like to hear the cross-examination of the pretenders to wisdom; there is amusement in it. Now this duty of cross-examining other men has been imposed upon me by God; and has been signified to me by oracles, visions, and in every way in which the will of divine power was ever intimated to any one. This is true, O Athenians, or, if not true, would be soon refuted. If I am or have been corrupting the youth, those of them who are now grown up and have become sensible that I gave them bad advice in the days of their youth should come forward as accusers, and take their revenge; or if they do not like to come themselves, some of their relatives, fathers, brothers, or other kinsmen, should say what evil their families have suffered at my hands. Now is their time. Many of them I see in the court. There is Critobolus, who is of the same age and of the same deme with myself, and there is Critobolus his son, whom I also see. Then again there is Lysanias of Sphettus, who is the father of Aeschines—he is present; and also there is Antiphon of Cephissus, who is the father of

Epigenes; and there are the brothers of several who have associated with me. There is Nicostratus the son of Theosdotides, and the brother of Theodotus (now Theodotus himself is dead, and therefore he, at any rate, will not seek to stop him); and there is Paralus the son of Demodocus, who had a brother Theages; and Adeimantus the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is present; and Aeantodorus, who is the brother of Apollodorus, whom I also see. I might mention a great many others, some of whom Meletus should have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech; and let him still produce them, if he has forgotten—I will make way for him. And let him say, if he has any testimony of the sort which he can produce. Nay, Athenians, the very opposite is the truth. For all these are ready to witness on behalf of the corrupter, of the injurer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me; not the corrupted youth only—there might have been a motive for that—but their uncorrupted elder relatives. Why should they too support me with their testimony? Why, indeed, except for the sake of truth and justice, and because they know that I am speaking the truth, and that Meletus is a liar.

Well, Athenians, this and the like of this is all the defence which I have to offer. Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar, or even a less serious occasion, prayed and entreated the judges with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a host of relations and friends; whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. The contrast may occur to his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at me on this account. Now if there be such a person among you,—mind, I do not say that there is,—to him I may fairly reply: My friend, I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not 'of wood or stone,' as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one almost a man, and two others who are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal. And why not? Not from any self-assertion or want of respect for you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But, having regard to public opinion, I feel that such conduct would be discreditable to myself, and to you, and to the whole state. One who has reached my years, and who has a name for wisdom, ought not to demean himself. Whether this opinion of me be deserved or not, at any rate the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men. And if those among you who are said to be superior in wisdom and courage, and any other virtue, demean themselves in this way, how shameful is their conduct! I have seen men of reputation, when they have been condemned, behaving in the strangest manner: they seemed to fancy that they were going to suffer something dreadful if they died, and that they could be immortal if you only allowed them to live; and I think that such are a dishonour to the state, and that any stranger coming in would have said of them that the most eminent men of Athens, to whom the Athenians themselves give honour and command, are no better than women. And I say that these things ought not to be done by those of us who have a reputation; and if they are done, you ought not to permit them; you ought rather to show that you are far more disposed to condemn the man who gets up a doleful scene and makes the city ridiculous, than him who holds his peace.

But, setting aside the question of public opinion, there seems to be something wrong in asking a favour of a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal, instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure; and we ought not to encourage you, nor should you allow yourselves to be encouraged, in this habit of perjury—there can be no piety in that. Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonourable and impious and wrong, especially now, when I am being tried for impiety on the indictment of Meletus. For if, O men of Athens, by force of persuasion and entreaty I could overpower your oaths, then I should be teaching you to believe that there are no gods, and in defending should simply convict myself of the charge of not believing in them. But that is not so—far otherwise. For I do believe that there are gods, and in a sense higher than that in which any of my accusers believe in them. And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me.

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There are many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected it, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal; for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say, I think, that I have escaped Meletus. I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, any one may see that he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmae.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part, O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is my due? What return shall be made to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life; but has been careless of what the many care for—wealth, and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I

could do the greatest good privately to every one of you, thither I went, and sought to persuade every man among you that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the state before he looks to the interests of the state; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such an one? Doubtless some good thing, O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, and who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no reward so fitting as maintenance in the Prytaneum, O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or chariot race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty fairly, I should say that maintenance in the Prytaneum is the just return.

Perhaps you think that I am braving you in what I am saying now, as in what I said before about the tears and prayers. But this is not so. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you—the time has been too short; if there were a law at Athens, as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe that I should have convinced you. But I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year—of the Eleven? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life, if I am so irrational as to expect that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you will have no more of them, others are likely to endure me. No indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, ever changing my place of exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that wherever I go, there, as here, the young men will flock to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their request; and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Some one will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that to do as you say would be a disobedience to the God, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that daily to discourse about virtue, and of those other things about which you hear me examining myself and others, is the greatest good of man, and that the unexamined life is not worth living, you are still less likely to believe me. Yet I say what is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Also, I have never been accustomed to think that I deserve to suffer any harm. Had I money I might have estimated the offence at what I was able to pay, and not have been much the worse. But I have none, and therefore I must ask you to proportion the fine to my means. Well, perhaps I could afford a mina, and therefore I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minae, and they will be the sureties. Let thirty minae be the penalty; for which sum they will be ample security to you.

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Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise, even although I am not wise, when they want to reproach you. If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. I am speaking now not to all of you, but only to those who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: you think that I was convicted because I had no words of the sort which would have procured my acquittal—I mean, if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone or unsaid. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words—certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to do, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I maintain, are unworthy of me. I thought at the time that I ought not to do anything common or mean when in danger: nor do I now repent of the style of my defence; I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought I or any man to use every way of escaping death. Often in battle there can be no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is

unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death,—they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award—let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,—and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and in the hour of death men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my departure punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more inconsiderate with you, and you will be more offended at them. If you think that by killing men you can prevent some one from censuring your evil lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honourable; the easiest and the noblest way is not to be disabling others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about the thing which has come to pass, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then a little, for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges—for you I may truly call judges—I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the divine faculty of which the internal oracle is the source has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error in any matter; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when I was leaving my house in the morning, or when I was on my way to the court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching the matter in hand has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this silence? I will tell you. It is an intimation that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. For the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good.

Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things—either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death be of such a nature, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead abide, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I myself, too, shall have a wonderful interest in there meeting and conversing with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and any other ancient hero who has suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! In another world they do not put a man to death for asking questions: assuredly not. For besides being happier than we are, they will be immortal, if what is said is true.

Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; wherefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my condemners, or with my accusers; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favour to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing,—then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, both I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.

## **BERTRAND RUSSELL: "THE VALUE OF PHILOSOPHY"**

### **Value of Philosophy**

Having now come to the end of our brief and very incomplete review of the problems of philosophy, it will be well to consider, in conclusion, what is the value of philosophy and why it ought to be studied. It is the more necessary to consider this question, in view of the fact that many men, under the influence of science or of practical affairs, are inclined to doubt whether philosophy is anything better than innocent but useless trifling, hair-splitting distinctions, and controversies on matters concerning which knowledge is impossible.

This view of philosophy appears to result, partly from a wrong conception of the ends of life, partly from a wrong conception of the kind of goods which philosophy strives to achieve. Physical science, through the medium of inventions, is useful to innumerable people who are wholly ignorant of it; thus the study of physical science is to be recommended, not only, or primarily, because of the effect on the student, but rather because of the effect on mankind in general. Thus utility does not belong to philosophy. If the study of philosophy has any value at all for others than students of philosophy, it must be only indirectly, through its effects upon the lives of those who study it. It is in these effects, therefore, if anywhere, that the value of philosophy must be primarily sought.

But further, if we are not to fail in our endeavour to determine the value of philosophy, we must first free our minds from the prejudices of what are wrongly called 'practical' men. The 'practical' man, as this word is often used, is one who recognizes only material needs, who realizes that men must have food for the body, but is oblivious of the necessity of providing food for the mind. If all men were well off, if poverty and disease had been reduced to their lowest possible point, there would still remain much to be done to produce a valuable society; and even in the existing world the goods of the mind are at least as important as the goods of the body. It is exclusively among the goods of the mind that the value of philosophy is to be found; and only those who are not indifferent to these goods can be persuaded that the study of philosophy is not a waste of time.

Philosophy, like all other studies, aims primarily at knowledge. The knowledge it aims at is the kind of knowledge which gives unity and system to the body of the sciences, and the kind which results from a critical examination of the grounds of our convictions, prejudices, and beliefs. But it cannot be maintained that philosophy has had any very great measure of success in its attempts to provide definite answers to its questions. If you ask a mathematician, a mineralogist, a historian, or any other man of learning, what definite body of truths has been ascertained by his science, his answer will last as long as you are willing to listen. But if you put the same question to a philosopher, he will, if he is candid, have to confess that his study has not achieved positive results such as have been achieved by other sciences. It is true that this is partly accounted for by the fact that, as soon as definite knowledge concerning any subject becomes possible, this subject ceases to be called philosophy, and becomes a separate science. The whole study of the heavens, which now belongs to astronomy, was once included in philosophy; Newton's great work was called 'the mathematical principles of natural philosophy'. Similarly, the study of the human mind, which was a part of philosophy, has now been separated from philosophy and has become the science of psychology. Thus, to a great extent, the uncertainty of philosophy is more apparent than real: those questions which are already capable of definite answers are placed in the sciences, while those only to which, at present, no definite answer can be given, remain to form the residue which is called philosophy.

This is, however, only a part of the truth concerning the uncertainty of philosophy. There are many questions—and among them those that are of the profoundest interest to our spiritual life—which, so far as we can see, must remain insoluble to the human intellect unless its powers become of quite a different order from what they are now. Has the universe any unity of plan or purpose, or is it a fortuitous concourse of atoms? Is consciousness a permanent part of the universe, giving hope of indefinite growth in wisdom, or is it a transitory accident on a small planet on which life must ultimately become impossible? Are good and evil of importance to the universe or only to man? Such questions are asked by philosophy, and variously answered by various philosophers. But it would seem that, whether answers be otherwise discoverable or not, the answers suggested by philosophy are none of them demonstrably true. Yet, however slight may be the hope of discovering an answer, it is part of the business of philosophy to continue the consideration of such questions, to make us aware of their importance, to examine all the approaches to them, and to keep alive that speculative interest in the universe which is apt to be killed by confining ourselves to definitely ascertainable knowledge.

Many philosophers, it is true, have held that philosophy could establish the truth of certain answers to such fundamental questions. They have supposed that what is of most importance in religious beliefs could be proved by strict demonstration to be true. In order to judge of such attempts, it is necessary to take a survey of human knowledge, and to form an opinion as to its methods and its limitations. On such a subject it would be unwise to pronounce dogmatically; but if the investigations of our previous chapters have not led us astray, we shall be compelled to renounce the hope of finding philosophical proofs of religious beliefs. We cannot, therefore, include as part of the value of philosophy any definite set of answers to such questions. Hence, once more, the value of philosophy must not depend upon any supposed body of definitely ascertainable knowledge to be acquired by those who study it.

The value of philosophy is, in fact, to be sought largely in its very uncertainty. The man who has no tincture of philosophy goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices derived from common sense, from the habitual beliefs of his age or his nation, and from convictions which have grown up in his mind without the co-operation or consent of his deliberate reason. To such a man the world tends to become definite, finite, obvious; common objects rouse no questions, and unfamiliar possibilities are contemptuously rejected. As soon as we begin to philosophize, on the contrary, we find, as we saw in our opening chapters, that even the most everyday things lead to problems to which only very incomplete answers can be given. Philosophy, though unable to tell us with certainty what is the true answer to the doubts which it raises, is able to suggest many possibilities which enlarge our thoughts and free them from the tyranny of custom. Thus, while diminishing our feeling of certainty as to what things are, it greatly increases our knowledge as to what they may be; it removes the somewhat arrogant dogmatism of those who have never travelled into the region of liberating doubt, and it keeps alive our sense of wonder by showing familiar things in an unfamiliar aspect.

Apart from its utility in showing unsuspected possibilities, philosophy has a value—perhaps its chief value—through the greatness of the objects which it contemplates, and the freedom from narrow and personal aims resulting from this contemplation. The life of the instinctive man is shut up within the circle of his private interests: family and friends may be included, but the outer world is not regarded except as it may help or hinder what comes within the circle of instinctive wishes. In such a life there is something feverish and confined, in comparison with which the philosophic life is calm and free. The private world of instinctive interests is a small one, set in the midst of a great and powerful world which must, sooner or later, lay our private world in ruins. Unless we can so enlarge our interests as to include the whole outer world, we remain like a garrison in a beleaguered fortress, knowing that the enemy prevents escape and that ultimate surrender is inevitable. In such a life there is no peace, but a constant strife between the insistence of desire and the powerlessness of will. In one way or another, if our life is to be great and free, we must escape this prison and this strife.

One way of escape is by philosophic contemplation. Philosophic contemplation does not, in its widest survey, divide the universe into two hostile camps—friends and foes, helpful and hostile, good and bad—it views the whole impartially. Philosophic contemplation, when it is unalloyed, does not aim at proving that the rest of the universe is akin to man. All acquisition of knowledge is an enlargement of the Self, but this enlargement is best attained when it is not directly sought. It is obtained when the desire for knowledge is alone operative, by a study which does not wish in advance that its objects should have this or that character, but adapts the Self to the characters which it finds in its objects. This enlargement of Self is not obtained when, taking the Self as it is, we try to show that the world is so similar to this Self that knowledge of it is possible without any admission of what seems alien. The desire to prove this is a form of self-assertion and, like all self-assertion, it is an obstacle to the growth of Self which it desires, and of which the Self knows that it is capable. Self-assertion, in philosophic speculation as elsewhere, views the world as a means to its own ends; thus it makes the world of less account than Self, and the Self sets bounds to the greatness of its goods. In contemplation, on the contrary, we start from

the not-Self, and through its greatness the boundaries of Self are enlarged; through the infinity of the universe the mind which contemplates it achieves some share in infinity.

For this reason greatness of soul is not fostered by those philosophies which assimilate the universe to Man. Knowledge is a form of union of Self and not-Self; like all union, it is impaired by dominion, and therefore by any attempt to force the universe into conformity with what we find in ourselves. There is a widespread philosophical tendency towards the view which tells us that Man is the measure of all things, that truth is man-made, that space and time and the world of universals are properties of the mind, and that, if there be anything not created by the mind, it is unknowable and of no account for us. This view, if our previous discussions were correct, is untrue; but in addition to being untrue, it has the effect of robbing philosophic contemplation of all that gives it value, since it fetters contemplation to Self. What it calls knowledge is not a union with the not-Self, but a set of prejudices, habits, and desires, making an impenetrable veil between us and the world beyond. The man who finds pleasure in such a theory of knowledge is like the man who never leaves the domestic circle for fear his word might not be law.

The true philosophic contemplation, on the contrary, finds its satisfaction in every enlargement of the not-Self, in everything that magnifies the objects contemplated, and thereby the subject contemplating. Everything, in contemplation, that is personal or private, everything that depends upon habit, self-interest, or desire, distorts the object, and hence impairs the union which the intellect seeks. By thus making a barrier between subject and object, such personal and private things become a prison to the intellect. The free intellect will see as God might see, without a *here* and *now*, without hopes and fears, without the trammels of customary beliefs and traditional prejudices, calmly, dispassionately, in the sole and exclusive desire of knowledge—knowledge as impersonal, as purely contemplative, as it is possible for man to attain. Hence also the free intellect will value more the abstract and universal knowledge into which the accidents of private history do not enter, than the knowledge brought by the senses, and dependent, as such knowledge must be, upon an exclusive and personal point of view and a body whose sense-organs distort as much as they reveal.

The mind which has become accustomed to the freedom and impartiality of philosophic contemplation will preserve something of the same freedom and impartiality in the world of action and emotion. It will view its purposes and desires as parts of the whole, with the absence of insistence that results from seeing them as infinitesimal fragments in a world of which all the rest is unaffected by any one man's deeds. The impartiality which, in contemplation, is the unalloyed desire for truth, is the very same quality of mind which, in action, is justice, and in emotion is that universal love which can be given to all, and not only to those who are judged useful or admirable. Thus contemplation enlarges not only the objects of our thoughts, but also the objects of our actions and our affections: it makes us citizens of the universe, not only of one walled city at war with all the rest. In this citizenship of the universe consists man's true freedom, and his liberation from the thralldom of narrow hopes and fears.

Thus, to sum up our discussion of the value of philosophy; Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind also is rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good.

# CHAPTER 2: LOGIC

## LOGIC AS A DISCIPLINE

### The Discipline of Logic

Human life is full of decisions, including significant choices about what to believe. Although everyone prefers to believe what is **true**, we often disagree with each other about what that is in particular instances. It may be that some of our most fundamental convictions in life are acquired by haphazard means rather than by the use of reason, but we all recognize that our beliefs about ourselves and the world often hang together in important ways.

If I believe that whales are mammals and that all mammals are fish, then it would also make sense for me to believe that whales are fish. Even someone who (rightly!) disagreed with my understanding of biological taxonomy could appreciate the consistent, reasonable way in which I used my mistaken beliefs as the foundation upon which to establish a new one. On the other hand, if I decide to believe that Hamlet was Danish because I believe that Hamlet was a character in a play by Shaw and that some Danes are Shavian characters, then even someone who shares my belief in the result could point out that I haven't actually provided good reasons for accepting its truth.

In general, we can respect the directness of a path even when we don't accept the points at which it begins and ends. Thus, it is possible to distinguish correct reasoning from incorrect reasoning independently of our agreement on substantive matters. **Logic** is the discipline that studies this distinction—both by determining the conditions under which the truth of certain beliefs leads naturally to the truth of some other belief, and by drawing attention to the ways in which we may be led to believe something without respect for its truth. This provides no guarantee that we will always arrive at the truth, since the beliefs with which we begin are sometimes in error. But following the principles of correct reasoning does ensure that no additional mistakes creep in during the course of our progress.

In this review of elementary logic, we'll undertake a broad survey of the major varieties of reasoning that have been examined by logicians of the Western philosophical tradition. We'll see how certain patterns of thinking do invariably lead from truth to truth while other patterns do not, and we'll develop the skills of using the former while avoiding the latter. It will be helpful to begin by defining some of the technical terms that describe human reasoning in general.

### The Structure of Argument

Our fundamental unit of what may be asserted or denied is the **proposition** (or **statement**) that is typically expressed by a declarative sentence. Logicians of earlier centuries often identified propositions with the mental acts of affirming them, often called **judgments**, but we can evade some interesting but thorny philosophical issues by avoiding this locution.

Propositions are distinct from the sentences that convey them. "Smith loves Jones" expresses exactly the same proposition as "Jones is loved by Smith," while the sentence "Today is my birthday" can be used to convey many different propositions, depending upon who happens to utter it, and on what day. But each proposition is either true or false. Sometimes, of course, we don't know which of these truth-values a particular proposition has ("There is life on the third moon of Jupiter" is presently an example), but we can be sure that it has one or the other.

The chief concern of logic is how the truth of some propositions is connected with the truth of another. Thus, we will usually consider a group of related propositions. An **argument** is a set of two or more propositions related to each other in such a way that all but one of them (the **premises**) are supposed to provide support for the remaining one (the **conclusion**). The transition or movement from premises to conclusion, the logical connection between them, is the **inference** upon which the argument relies.

Notice that “premise” and “conclusion” are here defined only as they occur in relation to each other within a particular argument. One and the same proposition can (and often does) appear as the conclusion of one line of reasoning but also as one of the premises of another. A number of words and phrases are commonly used in ordinary language to indicate the premises and conclusion of an argument, although their use is never strictly required, since the context can make clear the direction of movement. What distinguishes an argument from a mere collection of propositions is the inference that is supposed to hold between them.

Thus, for example, “The moon is made of green cheese, and strawberries are red. My dog has fleas.” is just a collection of unrelated propositions; the truth or falsity of each has no bearing on that of the others. But “Helen is a physician. So Helen went to medical school, since all physicians have gone to medical school.” is an argument; the truth of its conclusion, “Helen went to medical school,” is inferentially derived from its premises, “Helen is a physician.” and “All physicians have gone to medical school.”

## Recognizing Arguments

It’s important to be able to identify which proposition is the conclusion of each argument, since that’s a necessary step in our evaluation of the inference that is supposed to lead to it. We might even employ a simple diagram to represent the structure of an argument, numbering each of the propositions it comprises and drawing an arrow to indicate the inference that leads from its premise(s) to its conclusion.

Don’t worry if this procedure seems rather tentative and uncertain at first. We’ll be studying the structural features of logical arguments in much greater detail as we proceed, and you’ll soon find it easy to spot instances of the particular patterns we encounter most often. For now, it is enough to tell the difference between an argument and a mere collection of propositions and to identify the intended conclusion of each argument.

Even that isn’t always easy, since arguments embedded in ordinary language can take on a bewildering variety of forms. Again, don’t worry too much about this; as we acquire more sophisticated techniques for representing logical arguments, we will deliberately limit ourselves to a very restricted number of distinct patterns and develop standard methods for expressing their structure. Just remember the basic definition of an argument: it includes more than one proposition, and it infers a conclusion from one or more premises. So “If John has already left, then either Jane has arrived or Gail is on the way.” can’t be an argument, since it is just one big (compound) proposition. But “John has already left, since Jane has arrived.” is an argument that proposes an inference from the fact of Jane’s arrival to the conclusion, “John has already left.” If you find it helpful to draw a diagram, please make good use of that method to your advantage.

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Our primary concern is to evaluate the reliability of inferences, the patterns of reasoning that lead from premises to conclusion in a logical argument. We’ll devote a lot of attention to what works and what does not. It is vital from the outset to distinguish two kinds of inference, each of which has its own distinctive structure and standard of correctness.

## Deductive Inferences

When an argument claims that the truth of its premises **guarantees** the truth of its conclusion, it is said to involve a **deductive** inference. Deductive reasoning holds to a very high standard of correctness. A deductive inference succeeds only if its premises provide such absolute and complete support for its conclusion that it would be utterly inconsistent to suppose that the premises are true but the conclusion false.

Notice that each argument either meets this standard or else it does not; there is no middle ground. Some deductive arguments are perfect, and if their premises are in fact true, then it follows that their conclusions must also be true, no matter what else may happen to be the case. All other deductive arguments are no good at

all—their conclusions may be false even if their premises are true, and no amount of additional information can help them in the least.

## Inductive Inferences

When an argument claims merely that the truth of its premises make it **likely or probable** that its conclusion is also true, it is said to involve an **inductive** inference. The standard of correctness for inductive reasoning is much more flexible than that for deduction. An inductive argument succeeds whenever its premises provide some legitimate **evidence** or support for the truth of its conclusion. Although it is therefore reasonable to accept the truth of that conclusion on these grounds, it would not be completely inconsistent to withhold judgment or even to deny it outright.

Inductive arguments, then, may meet their standard to a greater or to a lesser degree, depending upon the amount of support they supply. No inductive argument is either absolutely perfect or entirely useless, although one may be said to be relatively better or worse than another in the sense that it recommends its conclusion with a higher or lower degree of probability. In such cases, relevant additional information often affects the reliability of an inductive argument by providing other evidence that changes our estimation of the likelihood of the conclusion.

It should be possible to differentiate arguments of these two sorts with some accuracy already. Remember that deductive arguments claim to guarantee their conclusions, while inductive arguments merely recommend theirs. Or ask yourself whether the introduction of any additional information—short of changing or denying any of the premises—could make the conclusion seem more or less likely; if so, the pattern of reasoning is inductive.

## Truth and Validity

Since deductive reasoning requires such a strong relationship between premises and conclusion, we will spend the majority of this survey studying various patterns of deductive inference. It is therefore worthwhile to consider the standard of correctness for deductive arguments in some detail.

A deductive argument is said to be **valid** when the inference from premises to conclusion is perfect. Here are two equivalent ways of stating that standard:

- If the premises of a valid argument are true, then its conclusion must also be true.
- It is impossible for the conclusion of a valid argument to be false while its premises are true.

(Considering the premises as a set of propositions, we will say that the premises are true only on those occasions when each and every one of those propositions is true.) Any deductive argument that is not valid is **invalid**: it is possible for its conclusion to be false while its premises are true, so even if the premises are true, the conclusion may turn out to be either true or false.

Notice that the validity of the inference of a deductive argument is independent of the truth of its premises; **both** conditions must be met in order to be sure of the truth of the conclusion. Of the eight distinct possible combinations of truth and validity, only one is ruled out completely:

Premises	Inference	Conclusion
True	Valid	True
		XXXX
	Invalid	True
		False
False	Valid	True
		False

	Invalid	True
		False

The only thing that cannot happen is for a deductive argument to have true premises and a valid inference but a false conclusion.

Some logicians designate the combination of true premises and a valid inference as a **sound** argument; it is a piece of reasoning whose conclusion must be true. The trouble with every other case is that it gets us nowhere, since either at least one of the premises is false, or the inference is invalid, or both. The conclusions of such arguments may be either true or false, so they are entirely useless in any effort to gain new information.

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## LANGUAGE AND LOGIC

### Functions of Language

The formal patterns of correct reasoning can all be conveyed through ordinary language, but then so can a lot of other things. In fact, we use language in many different ways, some of which are irrelevant to any attempt to provide reasons for what we believe. It is helpful to identify at least three distinct uses of language:

1. The **informative use of language** involves an effort to communicate some content. When I tell a child, “The fifth of May is a Mexican holiday,” or write to you that “Logic is the study of correct reasoning,” or jot a note to myself, “Jennifer—555-3769,” I am using language informatively. This kind of use presumes that the content of what is being communicated is actually true, so it will be our central focus in the study of logic.
2. An **expressive use of language**, on the other hand, intends only to vent some feeling, or perhaps to evoke some feeling from other people. When I say, “Friday afternoons are dreary,” or yell “Ouch!” I am using language expressively. Although such uses don’t convey any information, they do serve an important function in everyday life, since how we feel sometimes matters as much as—or more than—what we hold to be true.
3. Finally, **directive uses of language** aim to cause or to prevent some overt action by a human agent. When I say “Shut the door,” or write “Read the textbook,” or memo myself, “Don’t rely so heavily on the passive voice,” I am using language directly. The point in each of these cases is to make someone perform (or forswear) a particular action. This is a significant linguistic function, too, but like the expressive use, it doesn’t always relate logically to the truth of our beliefs.

Notice that the intended use in a particular instance often depends more on the specific context and tone of voice than it does on the grammatical form or vocabulary of what is said. The simple declarative sentence, “I’m hungry,” for example, could be used to report on a physiological condition, or to express a feeling, or implicitly to request that someone feed me. In fact, uses of two or more varieties may be mixed together in a single utterance; “Stop that,” for example, usually involves both expressive and directive functions jointly. In many cases, however, it is possible to identify a single use of language that is probably intended to be the primary function of a particular linguistic unit.

British philosopher **J. L. Austin** developed a similar, though much more detailed and sophisticated, nomenclature for the variety of actions we commonly perform in employing ordinary language. You’re welcome to examine his theory of **speech acts** in association with the discussion in your textbook. While the specifics may vary, some portion of the point remains the same: since we do in fact employ language for many distinct purposes, we can minimize confusion by keeping in mind what we’re up to on any particular occasion.

## Literal and Emotive Meaning

Even single words or short phrases can exhibit the distinction between purely informative and partially expressive uses of language. Many of the most common words and phrases of any language have both a literal or descriptive meaning that refers to the way things are and an **emotive meaning** that expresses some (positive or negative) feeling about them. Thus, the choice of which word to use in making a statement can be used in hopes of evoking a particular emotional response.

This is a natural function of ordinary language, of course. We often do wish to convey some portion of our feelings along with information. There is a good deal of poetry in everyday communication, and poetry without emotive meaning is pretty dull. But when we are primarily interested in establishing the truth—as we are when assessing the logical merits of an argument—the use of words laden with emotive meaning can easily distract us from our purpose.

## Kinds of Agreement and Disagreement

In fact, an excessive reliance on emotively charged language can create the appearance of disagreement between parties who do not differ on the facts at all, and it can just as easily disguise substantive disputes under a veneer of emotive agreement. Since the degrees of agreement in belief and attitude are independent of each other, there are four possible combinations at work here:

1. Agreement in belief and agreement in attitude: There aren't any problems in this instance, since both parties hold the same positions and have the same feelings about them.
2. Agreement in belief but disagreement in attitude: This case, if unnoticed, may become the cause of endless (but pointless) shouting between people whose feelings differ sharply about some fact upon which they are in total agreement.
3. Disagreement in belief but agreement in attitude: In this situation, parties may never recognize, much less resolve, their fundamental difference of opinion, since they are lulled by their shared feelings into supposing themselves allied.
4. Disagreement in belief and disagreement in attitude: Here the parties have so little in common that communication between them often breaks down entirely.

It is often valuable, then, to recognize the levels of agreement or disagreement at work in any exchange of views. That won't always resolve the dispute between two parties, of course, but it will ensure that they don't waste their time on an inappropriate method of argument or persuasion.

## Emotively Neutral Language

For our purposes in assessing the validity of deductive arguments and the reliability of inductive reasoning, it will be most directly helpful to eliminate emotive meaning entirely whenever we can. Although it isn't always easy to achieve emotively neutral language in every instance, and the result often lacks the colorful character of our usual public discourse, it is worth the trouble and insipidity because it makes it much easier to arrive at a settled understanding of what is true.

In many instances, the informal fallacies we will consider next result from an improper use of emotionally charged language in the effort to persuade someone to accept a proposition at an emotional level, without becoming convinced that there are legitimate grounds for believing it to be true.

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# DEFINITION AND MEANING

## Genuine and Verbal Disputes

We've seen that sloppy or misleading use of ordinary language can seriously limit our ability to create and communicate correct reasoning. As philosopher [John Locke](#) pointed out three centuries ago, the achievement of human knowledge is often hampered by the use of words without fixed signification. Needless controversy is sometimes produced and perpetuated by an unacknowledged ambiguity in the application of key terms. We can distinguish disputes of three sorts:

- Genuine disputes involve disagreement about whether or not some specific proposition is true. Since the people engaged in a genuine dispute agree on the meaning of the words by means of which they convey their respective positions, each of them can propose and assess logical arguments that might eventually lead to a resolution of their differences.
- Merely [verbal disputes](#), on the other hand, arise entirely from ambiguities in the language used to express the positions of the disputants. A verbal dispute disappears entirely once the people involved arrive at an agreement on the meaning of their terms, since doing so reveals their underlying agreement in belief.
- Apparently verbal but really genuine disputes can also occur, of course. In cases of this sort, the resolution of every ambiguity only reveals an underlying genuine dispute. Once that's been discovered, it can be addressed fruitfully by appropriate methods of reasoning.

We can save a lot of time, sharpen our reasoning abilities, and communicate with each other more effectively if we watch for disagreements about the meaning of words and try to resolve them whenever we can.

## Kinds of Definition

The most common way of preventing or eliminating differences in the use of languages is by agreeing on the [definition](#) of our terms. Since these explicit accounts of the meaning of a word or phrase can be offered in distinct contexts and employed in the service of different goals, it's useful to distinguish definitions of several kinds:

A [lexical definition](#) simply reports the way in which a term is already used within a language community. The goal here is to inform someone else of the accepted meaning of the term, so the definition is more or less correct depending upon the accuracy with which it captures that usage. In these pages, my definitions of technical terms of logic are lexical because they are intended to inform you about the way in which these terms are actually employed within the discipline of logic.

At the other extreme, a [stipulative definition](#) freely assigns meaning to a completely new term, creating a usage that had never previously existed. Since the goal in this case is to propose the adoption of shared use of a novel term, there are no existing standards against which to compare it, and the definition is always correct (though it might fail to win acceptance if it turns out to be inapt or useless). If I now decree that we will henceforth refer to Presidential speeches delivered in French as "glorshefs," I have made a (probably pointless) stipulative definition.

Combining these two techniques is often an effective way to reduce the [vagueness](#) of a word or phrase. These [precising definitions](#) begin with the lexical definition of a term but then propose to sharpen it by stipulating more narrow limits on its use. Here, the lexical part must be correct and the stipulative portion should appropriately reduce the troublesome vagueness. If the USPS announces that "proper notification of a change of address" means that an official form containing the relevant information must be received by the local post office no later than four days prior to the effective date of the change, it has offered a (possibly useful) precising definition.

[Theoretical definitions](#) are special cases of stipulative or precising definition, distinguished by their attempt to establish the use of this term within the context of a broader intellectual framework. Since the adoption of any theoretical definition commits us to the acceptance of the theory of which it is an integral part, we are rightly

cautious in agreeing to it. [Newton's](#) definition of the terms "mass" and "inertia" carried with them a commitment to (at least part of) his theories about the conditions in which physical objects move.

Finally, what some logicians call a [persuasive definition](#) is an attempt to attach [emotive meaning](#) to the use of a term. Since this can only serve to confuse the literal meaning of the term, persuasive definitions have no legitimate use.

## Extension and Intension

A rather large and especially useful portion of our active vocabularies is taken up by general terms, words or phrases that stand for whole groups of individual things sharing a common attribute. But there are two distinct ways of thinking about the meaning of any such term.

The [extension](#) of a general term is just the collection of individual things to which it is correctly applied. Thus, the extension of the word "chair" includes every chair that is (or ever has been or ever will be) in the world. The [intension](#) of a general term, on the other hand, is the set of features which are shared by everything to which it applies. Thus, the intension of the word "chair" is (something like) "a piece of furniture designed to be sat upon by one person at a time."

Clearly, these two kinds of meaning are closely interrelated. We usually suppose that the intension of a concept or term determines its extension, that we decide whether or not each newly-encountered piece of furniture belongs among the chairs by seeing whether or not it has the relevant features. Thus, as the intension of a general term increases, by specifying with greater detail those features that a thing must have in order for it to apply, the term's extension tends to decrease, since fewer items now qualify for its application.

## Denotative and Connotative Definitions

With the distinction between extension and intension in mind, it is possible to approach the definition of a general term (on any of the five kinds of definition we discussed last time) in either of two ways:

A [denotative definition](#) tries to identify the extension of the term in question. Thus, we could provide a denotative definition of the phrase "this logic class" simply by listing all of our names. Since a complete enumeration of the things to which a general term applies would be cumbersome or inconvenient in many cases, though, we commonly pursue the same goal by listing smaller groups of individuals or by offering a few examples instead. In fact, some philosophers have held that the most primitive denotative definitions in any language involve no more than [pointing at a single example](#) to which the term properly applies.

But there seem to be some important terms for which denotative definition is entirely impossible. The phrase "my grandchildren" makes perfect sense, for example, but since it presently has no extension, there is no way to indicate its membership by enumeration, example, or ostension. In order to define terms of this sort at all, and in order more conveniently to define general terms of every variety, we naturally rely upon the second mode of definition.

A [connotative](#) definition tries to identify the intension of a term by providing a synonymous linguistic expression or an operational procedure for determining the applicability of the term. Of course, it isn't always easy to come up with an alternative word or phrase that has exactly the same meaning or to specify a concrete test for applicability. But when it does work, connotative definition provides an adequate means for securing the meaning of a term.

## Definition by *Genus* and *Differentia*

Classical logicians developed an especially effective method of constructing connotative definitions for general terms, by stating their [genus and differentia](#). The basic notion is simple: we begin by identifying a familiar, broad category or kind (the *genus*) to which everything our term signifies (along with things of other sorts) belongs; then we specify the distinctive features (the *differentiae*) that set them apart from all the other things of this kind. My definition of the word "chair" in the second paragraph of this lesson, for example, identifies "piece of furniture" as the *genus* to which all chairs belong and then specifies "designed to be sat upon by one person at a time" as the *differentia* that distinguishes them from couches, desks, etc.

Copi and Cohen list five rules by means of which to evaluate the success of connotative definitions by *genus* and *differentia*:

1. **Focus on essential features.** Although the things to which a term applies may share many distinctive properties, not all of them equally indicate its true nature. Thus, for example, a definition of “human beings” as “featherless bipeds” isn’t very illuminating, even if it does pick out the right individuals. A good definition tries to point out the features that are essential to the designation of things as members of the relevant group.
2. **Avoid circularity.** Since a **circular definition** uses the term being defined as part of its own definition, it can’t provide any useful information; either the audience already understands the meaning of the term, or it cannot understand the explanation that includes that term. Thus, for example, there isn’t much point in defining “cordless ‘phone” as “a telephone that has no cord.”
3. **Capture the correct extension.** A good definition will apply to exactly the same things as the term being defined, no more and no less. There are several ways to go wrong. Consider alternative definitions of “bird”:
  - “warm-blooded animal” is too broad, since that would include horses, dogs, and aardvarks along with birds.
  - “feathered egg-laying animal” is too narrow, since it excludes those birds who happen to be male. and
  - “small flying animal” is both too broad and too narrow, since it includes bats (which aren’t birds) and excludes ostriches (which are).

Successful intensional definitions must be satisfied by all and only those things that are included in the extension of the term they define.

4. **Avoid figurative or obscure language.** Since the point of a definition is to explain the meaning of a term to someone who is unfamiliar with its proper application, the use of language that doesn’t help such a person learn how to apply the term is pointless. Thus, “happiness is a warm puppy” may be a lovely thought, but it is a lousy definition.
5. **Be affirmative rather than negative.** It is always possible in principle to explain the application of a term by identifying literally everything to which it does **not** apply. In a few instances, this may be the only way to go: a proper definition of the mathematical term “infinite” might well be negative, for example. But in ordinary circumstances, a good definition uses positive designations whenever it is possible to do so. Defining “honest person” as “someone who rarely lies” is a poor definition.

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## FALLACIES OF RELEVANCE

### Appeal to Force (*argumentum ad baculum*)

In the **appeal to force**, someone in a position of power threatens to bring down unfortunate consequences upon anyone who dares to disagree with a proffered proposition. Although it is rarely developed so explicitly, a fallacy of this type might propose:

- *If you do not agree with my political opinions, you will receive a grade of F for this course.*
- *I believe that Herbert Hoover was the greatest President of the United States.*
- *Therefore, Herbert Hoover was the greatest President of the United States.*

It should be clear that even if all of the premises were true, the conclusion could nevertheless be false. Since that is possible, arguments of this form are plainly invalid. While this might be an effective way to get you to agree (or at least to pretend to agree) with my position, it offers no grounds for believing it to be true.

### Appeal to Pity (*argumentum ad misericordiam*)

Turning this on its head, an [appeal to pity](#) tries to win acceptance by pointing out the unfortunate consequences that will otherwise fall upon the speaker and others, for whom we would then feel sorry.

- *I am a single parent, solely responsible for the financial support of my children.*
- *If you give me this traffic ticket, I will lose my license and be unable to drive to work.*
- *If I cannot work, my children and I will become homeless and may starve to death.*
- *Therefore, you should not give me this traffic ticket.*

Again, the conclusion may be false (that is, perhaps I should be given the ticket) even if the premises are all true, so the argument is fallacious. Appeal to Emotion (*argumentum ad populum*)

In a more general fashion, the [appeal to emotion](#) relies upon emotively charged language to arouse strong feelings that may lead an audience to accept its conclusion:

- *As all clear-thinking residents of our fine state have already realized, the Governor's plan for financing public education is nothing but the bloody-fanged wolf of socialism cleverly disguised in the harmless sheep's clothing of concern for children.*
- *Therefore, the Governor's plan is bad public policy.*

The problem here is that although the flowery language of the premise might arouse strong feelings in many members of its intended audience, the widespread occurrence of those feelings has nothing to do with the truth of the conclusion.

### **Appeal to Authority (*argumentum ad verecundiam*)**

Each of the next three fallacies involve the mistaken supposition that there is some connection between the truth of a proposition and some feature of the person who asserts or denies it. In an [appeal to authority](#), the opinion of someone famous or accomplished in another area of expertise is supposed to guarantee the truth of a conclusion. Thus, for example:

- *Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan believes that spiders are insects.*
- *Therefore, spiders are insects.*

As a pattern of reasoning, this is clearly mistaken: no proposition must be true because some individual (however talented or successful) happens to believe it. Even in areas where they have some special knowledge or skill, expert authorities could be mistaken; we may accept their testimony as inductive evidence but never as deductive proof of the truth of a conclusion. Personality is irrelevant to truth.

### **Ad Hominem Argument**

The mirror-image of the appeal to authority is the [ad hominem argument](#), in which we are encouraged to reject a proposition because it is the stated opinion of someone regarded as disreputable in some way. This can happen in several different ways, but all involve the claim that the proposition must be false because of who believes it to be true:

- *Harold maintains that the legal age for drinking beer should be 18 instead of 21.*
- *But we all know that Harold . . .*
  - *. . . dresses funny and smells bad. or*
  - *. . . is 19 years old and would like to drink legally or*
  - *. . . believes that the legal age for voting should be 21, not 18 or*
  - *. . . doesn't understand the law any better than the rest of us*
- *Therefore, the legal age for drinking beer should be 21 instead of 18.*

In any of its varieties, the *ad hominem* fallacy asks us to adopt a position on the truth of a conclusion for no better reason than that someone believes its opposite. But the proposition that person believes can be true (and the intended conclusion false) even if the person is unsavory or has a stake in the issue or holds inconsistent beliefs or shares a common flaw with us. Again, personality is irrelevant to truth.

### **Appeal to Ignorance (*argumentum ad ignorantiam*)**

An [appeal to ignorance](#) proposes that we accept the truth of a proposition unless an opponent can prove otherwise. Thus, for example:

- *No one has conclusively proven that there is no intelligent life on the moons of Jupiter.*

- *Therefore, there is intelligent life on the moons of Jupiter.*

But, of course, the absence of **evidence** against a proposition is not enough to secure its truth. What we don't know could nevertheless be so.

### Irrelevant Conclusion (*ignoratio elenchi*)

Finally, the fallacy of the **irrelevant conclusion** tries to establish the truth of a proposition by offering an argument that actually provides support for an entirely different conclusion.

- *All children should have ample attention from their parents.*
- *Parents who work full-time cannot give ample attention to their children.*
- *Therefore, mothers should not work full-time.*

Here the premises might support some conclusion about working parents generally, but do not secure the truth of a conclusion focussed on women alone and not on men. Although clearly fallacious, this procedure may succeed in distracting its audience from the point that is really at issue.

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## FALLACIES OF PRESUMPTION

### Unwarranted Assumptions

The fallacies of presumption also fail to provide adequate reason for believing the truth of their conclusions. In these instances, however, the erroneous reasoning results from an implicit supposition of some further proposition whose truth is uncertain or implausible. Again, we'll consider each of them in turn, seeking always to identify the unwarranted assumption upon which it is based.

#### Accident

The fallacy of **accident** begins with the statement of some principle that is true as a general rule, but then errs by applying this principle to a specific case that is unusual or atypical in some way.

- *Women earn less than men earn for doing the same work.*
- *Oprah Winfrey is a woman.*
- *Therefore, Oprah Winfrey earns less than male talk-show hosts.*

As we'll soon see, a true **universal premise** would **entail** the truth of this conclusion; but then, a universal statement that "Every woman earns less than any man." would obviously be false. The truth of a general rule, on the other hand, leaves plenty of room for exceptional cases, and applying it to any of them is fallacious.

#### Converse Accident

The fallacy of **converse accident** begins with a specific case that is unusual or atypical in some way, and then errs by deriving from this case the truth of a general rule.

- *Dennis Rodman wears earrings and is an excellent rebounder.*
- *Therefore, people who wear earrings are excellent rebounders.*

It should be obvious that a single instance is not enough to establish the truth of such a general principle. Since it's easy for this conclusion to be false even though the premise is true, the argument is unreliable.

## False Cause

The fallacy of **false cause** infers the presence of a causal connection simply because events appear to occur in correlation or (in the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* variety) temporal succession.

- *The moon was full on Thursday evening.*
- *On Friday morning I overslept.*
- *Therefore, the full moon caused me to oversleep.*

Later we'll consider what sort of **evidence** adequately supports the conclusion that a **causal relationship** does exist, but these fallacies clearly are not enough.

### Begging the Question (*petitio principii*)

**Begging the question** is the fallacy of using the conclusion of an argument as one of the premises offered in its own support. Although this often happens in an implicit or disguised fashion, an explicit version would look like this:

- *All dogs are mammals.*
- *All mammals have hair.*
- *Since animals with hair bear live young, dogs bear live young.*
- *But all animals that bear live young are mammals.*
- *Therefore, all dogs are mammals.*

Unlike the other fallacies we've considered, begging the question involves an argument (or chain of arguments) that is formally valid: if its premises (including the first) are true, then the conclusion must be true. The problem is that this valid argument doesn't really provide support for the truth its conclusion; we can't use it unless we have already granted that.

### Complex Question

The fallacy of **complex question** presupposes the truth of its own conclusion by including it implicitly in the statement of the issue to be considered:

- *Have you tried to stop watching too much television?*
- *If so, then you admit that you do watch too much television.*
- *If not, then you must still be watching too much television.*
- *Therefore, you watch too much television.*

In a somewhat more subtle fashion, this involves the same difficulty as the previous fallacy. We would not willingly agree to the first premise unless we already accepted the truth of the conclusion that the argument is supposed to prove.

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# FALLACIES OF AMBIGUITY

## Ambiguous Language

In addition to the fallacies of relevance and presumption we examined in our previous lessons, there are several patterns of incorrect reasoning that arise from the imprecise use of language. An **ambiguous** word, phrase, or sentence is one that has two or more distinct meanings. The inferential relationship between the propositions

included in a single argument will be sure to hold only if we are careful to employ exactly the same meaning in each of them. The fallacies of ambiguity all involve a confusion of two or more different senses.

### Equivocation

An **equivocation** trades upon the use of an ambiguous word or phrase in one of its meanings in one of the propositions of an argument but also in another of its meanings in a second proposition.

- *Really exciting novels are rare.*
- *But rare books are expensive.*
- *Therefore, Really exciting novels are expensive.*

Here, the word “rare” is used in different ways in the two premises of the argument, so the link they seem to establish between the terms of the conclusion is spurious. In its more subtle occurrences, this fallacy can undermine the reliability of **otherwise valid deductive arguments**.

### Amphiboly

An **amphiboly** can occur even when every term in an argument is **univocal**, if the grammatical construction of a sentence creates its own ambiguity.

- *A reckless motorist Thursday struck and injured a student who was jogging through the campus in his pickup truck.*
- *Therefore, it is unsafe to jog in your pickup truck.*

In this example, the premise (actually heard on a radio broadcast) could be interpreted in different ways, creating the possibility of a fallacious inference to the conclusion.

### Accent

The fallacy of **accent** arises from an ambiguity produced by a shift of spoken or written emphasis. Thus, for example:

- *Jorge turned in his assignment on time today.*
- *Therefore, Jorge usually turns in his assignments late.*

Here the premise may be true if read without inflection, but if it is read with heavy stress on the last word seems to imply the truth of the conclusion.

### Composition

The fallacy of **composition** involves an inference from the attribution of some feature to every individual member of a class (or part of a greater whole) to the possession of the same feature by the entire class (or whole).

- *Every course I took in college was well-organized.*
- *Therefore, my college education was well-organized.*

Even if the premise is true of each and every component of my curriculum, the whole could have been a chaotic mess, so this reasoning is defective.

Notice that this is distinct from the **fallacy of converse accident**, which improperly generalizes from an unusual specific case (as in “My philosophy course was well-organized; therefore, college courses are well-organized.”). For the fallacy of composition, the crucial fact is that even when something can be truly said of each and every individual part, it does not follow that the same can be truly said of the whole class.

### Division

Similarly, the fallacy of **division** involves an inference from the attribution of some feature to an entire class (or whole) to the possession of the same feature by each of its individual members (or parts).

- *Ocelots are now dying out.*

- *Sparky is an ocelot.*
- *Therefore, Sparky is now dying out.*

Although the premise is true of the species as a whole, this unfortunate fact does not reflect poorly upon the health of any of its individual members.

Again, be sure to distinguish this from the [fallacy of accident](#), which mistakenly applies a general rule to an atypical specific case (as in “Ocelots have many health problems, and Sparky is an ocelot; therefore, Sparky is in poor health”). The essential point in the fallacy of division is that even when something can be truly said of a whole class, it does not follow that the same can be truly said of each of its individual parts.

### Avoiding Fallacies

Informal fallacies of all seventeen varieties can seriously interfere with our ability to arrive at the truth. Whether they are committed inadvertently in the course of an individual’s own thinking or deliberately employed in an effort to manipulate others, each may persuade without providing legitimate grounds for the truth of its conclusion. But knowing what the fallacies are affords us some protection in either case. If we can identify several of the most common patterns of incorrect reasoning, we are less likely to slip into them ourselves or to be fooled by anyone else.

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# CHAPTER 3: ETHICS

## "NATURE OF ETHICS" POWER POINT

### Nature of Ethics

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## DIVINE COMMAND THEORY (PART 1)

**Divine command theory** (also known as **theological voluntarism**)<sup>[1][2]</sup> is a **meta-ethical** theory which proposes that an action's status as **morally** good is equivalent to whether it is commanded by **God**. The theory asserts that what is moral is determined by what God commands, and that for a person to be moral is to follow his commands. Followers of both monotheistic and polytheistic religions in ancient and modern times have often accepted the importance of God's commands in establishing morality. Numerous variants of the theory have been presented: historically, figures including **Saint Augustine**, **Duns Scotus**, and **Thomas Aquinas** have presented various versions of divine command theory; more recently, **Robert Merrihew Adams** has proposed a "modified divine command theory" based on the **omnibenevolence** of God in which morality is linked to human conceptions of right and wrong. Paul Copan has argued in favour of the theory from a Christian viewpoint, and Linda Zagzebski's divine motivation theory proposes that God's motivations, rather than commands, are the source of morality.

Semantic challenges to divine command theory have been proposed; the philosopher William Wainwright argued that to be commanded by God and to be morally obligatory do not have an identical meaning, which he believed would make defining obligation difficult. He also contended that, as knowledge of God is required for morality by divine command theory, **atheists** and **agnostics** could not be moral; he saw this as a weakness of the theory. Others have challenged the theory on **modal** grounds by arguing that, even if God's command and morality correlate in this world, they may not do so in other possible worlds. In addition, the **Euthyphro dilemma**, first proposed by **Plato**, presented a dilemma which threatened either to leave morality subject to the whims of God, or challenge his omnipotence. Divine command theory has also been criticised for its apparent incompatibility with the omnibenevolence of God, moral **autonomy** and **religious pluralism**, although some scholars have attempted to defend the theory from these challenges.

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# DIVINE COMMAND THEORY (PART 2)

Various forms of divine command theory have been presented by philosophers including [William of Ockham](#), [St Augustine](#), [Duns Scotus](#), and [John Calvin](#). The theory generally teaches that moral truth does not exist independently of [God](#) and that morality is determined by divine commands. Stronger versions of the theory assert that God's command is the only reason that a good action is moral, while weaker variations cast divine command as a vital component within a greater reason.<sup>[3]</sup> The theory asserts that good actions are morally good as a result of their being commanded by God, and many [religious believers](#) subscribe to some form of divine command theory.<sup>[4]</sup> Because of these premises, adherents believe that moral obligation is obedience to God's commands; what is morally right is what God desires.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Augustine

[Saint Augustine](#) offered a version of divine command theory that began by casting ethics as the pursuit of the supreme good, which delivers human happiness. He argued that to achieve this happiness, humans must love objects that are worthy of human love in the correct manner; this requires humans to love God, which then allows them to correctly love everything else. Augustine's ethics proposed that the act of loving God enables humans to properly orient their loves, leading to human happiness and fulfilment.<sup>[6]</sup> Augustine supported [Plato's](#) view that a well-ordered soul is a desirable consequence of morality; unlike Plato, he believed that achieving a well-ordered soul had a higher purpose: living in accordance with God's commands. His view of morality was thus heteronomous, as he believed in deference to a higher authority (God), rather than acting [autonomously](#).<sup>[7]</sup>

## Scholasticism

John Duns Scotus, who proposed a variant of divine command theory

[Scholastic](#) philosopher [John Duns Scotus](#) argued that the only moral obligations that God could not take away from humans are to love one another and love God. He proposed that some commandments are moral because God commands them, and some are moral irrespective of his command.<sup>[8]</sup> Duns Scotus argued that the natural law contains only what is self-evidently [analytically true](#) and that God could not make these statements false. This means that the commands of natural law do not depend on God's will; these commands were those found on the first tablet of the [Ten Commandments](#) – the first three, which consist of obligations to God. He suggested that the rest of the Ten Commandments, and any other commandments God makes, are morally obligatory because God commands them.<sup>[9]</sup>

Kelly James Clark and Anne Poortenga have presented a defence of divine command theory based on [Aquinas'](#) moral theory. Aquinas proposed a theory of [natural law](#) which asserted that something is moral if it works towards the purpose of human existence, and so human nature can determine what is moral. Clark and Poortenga argued that God created human nature and thus commanded a certain morality; hence he cannot arbitrarily change what is right or wrong for humans.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Immanuel Kant

The [deontological ethics](#) of [Immanuel Kant](#) has been cast as rejecting divine command theory by several figures, among whom is ethicist [R. M. Hare](#). Kant's view that morality should be determined by the [categorical imperative](#) – duty to the moral law, rather than acting for a specific end – has been viewed as incompatible with divine command theory. Philosopher and theologian [John E. Hare](#) has noted that some philosophers see divine command theory as an example of Kant's [heteronomous will](#) – motives besides the moral law, which Kant regarded as non-moral.<sup>[11]</sup> American philosopher [Lewis White Beck](#) takes Kant's argument to be a refutation of

the theory that morality depends of divine authority.<sup>[12]</sup> John E. Hare challenges this view, arguing that [Kantian ethics](#) should be seen as compatible with divine command theory.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Robert Adams

Robert Merrihew Adams proposes what he calls a “modified divine command theory”

American philosopher [Robert Merrihew Adams](#) proposes what he calls a “modified divine command theory”.<sup>[13]</sup> Adams presents the basic form of his theory by asserting that two statements are equivalent:

1. It is wrong to do X.
2. It is contrary to God’s commands to do X.<sup>[13]</sup>

He proposes that God’s commands precurse moral truths and must be explained in terms of moral truths, not the other way around. Adams writes that his theory is an attempt to define what being ethically ‘wrong’ consists of and accepts that it is only useful to those within a [Judeo-Christian](#) context. In dealing with the criticism that a seemingly immoral act would be obligatory if God commanded it, he proposes that God does not command cruelty for its own sake. Adams does not propose that it would be logically impossible for God to command cruelty, rather that it would be unthinkable for him to do so because of his nature. Adams emphasises the importance of [faith](#) in God, specifically faith in God’s goodness, as well as his existence.<sup>[14]</sup>

Adams proposes that an action is morally wrong [if and only if](#) it defies the commands of a loving God. If cruelty was commanded, he would not be loving; Adams argued that, in this instance, God’s commands would not have to be obeyed and also that his theory of ethical wrongness would break down. He proposed that divine command morality assumes that human concepts of right and wrong are met by God’s commands and that the theory can only be applied if this is the case.<sup>[15]</sup> Adams’ theory attempts to counter the challenge that morality might be arbitrary, as moral commands are not based solely on the commands of God, but are founded on his [omnibenevolence](#). It attempts to challenge the claim that an external standard of morality prevents God from being sovereign by making him the source of morality and his character the moral law.<sup>[16]</sup>

Adams proposes that in many Judeo-Christian contexts, the term ‘wrong’ is used to mean being contrary to God’s commands. In ethical contexts, he believes that ‘wrong’ [entails](#) an [emotional](#) attitude against an action and that these two uses of wrongness usually correlate.<sup>[17]</sup> Adams suggests that a believer’s concept of morality is founded in their religious belief and that right and wrong are tied to their belief in God; this works because God always commands what believers accept to be right. If God commanded what a believer perceived as wrong, the believer would not say it is right or wrong to disobey him; rather their concept of morality would break down.<sup>[18]</sup>

Michael Austin writes that an implication of this modified divine command theory is that God cannot command cruelty for its own sake; this could be argued to be inconsistent with God’s omnipotence. Thomas Aquinas argued that God’s omnipotence should be understood as the ability to do all things that are possible: he attempted to refute the idea that God’s inability to perform illogical actions challenges his omnipotence. Austin contends that commanding cruelty for its own sake is not illogical, so is not covered by Aquinas’ defence, although Aquinas had argued that sin is the falling short of a perfect action and thus not compatible with omnipotence.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Alternative theories

[Paul Copan](#) argues from a Christian viewpoint that man, made in God’s image, conforms to God’s sense of morality. The description of actions as right or wrong are therefore relevant to God; a person’s sense of what is right or wrong corresponds to God’s.<sup>[19]</sup>

We would not know goodness without God’s endowing us with a moral constitution. We have rights, dignity, freedom, and responsibility because God has designed us this way. In this, we reflect God’s moral goodness as His image-bearers.

— [Paul Copan](#), *Passionate Conviction: Contemporary Discourses on Christian Apologetics*<sup>[19]</sup>

As an alternative to divine command theory, Linda Zagzebski has proposed divine motivation theory, which stills fits into a monotheistic framework. According to this theory, goodness is determined by God's motives, rather than by what he commands. Divine motivation theory is similar to [virtue ethics](#) because it considers the character of an agent, and whether they are in accordance with God's, as the standard for moral value.<sup>[20]</sup> Zagzebski argues that things in the world have objective moral properties, such as being lovable, which are given to them through God's perception of them. God's attitude towards something is cast as a morally good attitude.<sup>[21]</sup> The theory casts God as a good example for morality, and humans should imitate his virtues as much as is possible for finite, imperfect beings.<sup>[22]</sup>

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# JOHN STUART MILL: UTILITARIANISM (CHAPTER 1--"GENERAL REMARKS")

## CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REMARKS. There are few circumstances among those which make up the present condition of human knowledge, more unlike what might have been expected, or more significant of the backward state in which speculation on the most important subjects still lingers, than the little progress which has been made in the decision of the controversy respecting the criterion of right and wrong. From the dawn of philosophy, the question concerning the *summum bonum*, or, what is the same thing, concerning the foundation of morality, has been accounted the main problem in speculative thought, has occupied the most gifted intellects, and divided them into sects and schools, carrying on a vigorous warfare against one another. And after more than two thousand years the same discussions continue, philosophers are still ranged under the same contending banners, and neither thinkers nor mankind at large seem nearer to being unanimous on the subject, than when the youth Socrates listened to the old Protagoras, and asserted (if Plato's dialogue be grounded on a real conversation) the theory of utilitarianism against the popular morality of the so-called sophist.

It is true that similar confusion and uncertainty, and in some cases similar discordance, exist respecting the first principles of all the sciences, not excepting that which is deemed the most certain of them, mathematics; without much impairing, generally indeed without impairing at all, the trustworthiness of the conclusions of those sciences. An apparent anomaly, the explanation of which is, that the detailed doctrines of a science are not usually deduced from, nor depend for their evidence upon, what are called its first principles. Were it not so, there would be no science more precarious, or whose conclusions were more insufficiently made out, than algebra; which derives none of its certainty from what are commonly taught to learners as its elements, since these, as laid down by some of its most eminent teachers, are as full of fictions as English law, and of mysteries as theology. The truths which are ultimately accepted as the first principles of a science, are really the last results of metaphysical analysis, practised on the elementary notions with which the science is conversant; and their relation to the science is not that of foundations to an edifice, but of roots to a tree, which may perform their office equally well though they be never dug down to and exposed to light. But though in science the particular truths precede the general theory, the contrary might be expected to be the case with a practical art, such as morals or legislation. All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient. When we engage in a pursuit, a clear and precise conception of what we are pursuing would seem to be the first thing we need, instead of the last we are to look forward to. A test of right and wrong must be the means, one would think, of ascertaining what is right or wrong, and not a consequence of having already ascertained it.

The difficulty is not avoided by having recourse to the popular theory of a natural faculty, a sense or instinct, informing us of right and wrong. For—besides that the existence of such a moral instinct is itself one of the matters in dispute—those believers in it who have any pretensions to philosophy, have been obliged to abandon the idea that it discerns what is right or wrong in the particular case in hand, as our other senses discern the sight or sound actually present. Our moral faculty, according to all those of its interpreters who are entitled to the name of thinkers, supplies us only with the general principles of moral judgments; it is a branch of our reason, not of our sensitive faculty; and must be looked to for the abstract doctrines of morality, not for perception of it in the concrete. The intuitive, no less than what may be termed the inductive, school of ethics, insists on the necessity of general laws. They both agree that the morality of an individual action is not a question of direct perception, but of the application of a law to an individual case. They recognise also, to a great extent, the same moral laws; but differ as to their evidence, and the source from which they derive their authority. According to the one opinion, the principles of morals are evident *à priori*, requiring nothing to command assent, except that the meaning of the terms be understood. According to the other doctrine, right and wrong, as well as truth and falsehood, are questions of observation and experience. But both hold equally that morality must be deduced from principles; and the intuitive school affirm as strongly as the inductive, that there is a science of morals. Yet they seldom attempt to make out a list of the *à priori* principles which are to serve as the premises of the science; still more rarely do they make any effort to reduce those various principles to one first principle, or common ground of obligation. They either assume the ordinary precepts of morals as of *à priori* authority, or they lay down as the common groundwork of those maxims, some generality much less obviously authoritative than the maxims themselves, and which has never succeeded in gaining popular acceptance. Yet to support their pretensions there ought either to be some one fundamental principle or law, at the root of all morality, or if there be several, there should be a determinate order of precedence among them; and the one principle, or the rule for deciding between the various principles when they conflict, ought to be self-evident.

To inquire how far the bad effects of this deficiency have been mitigated in practice, or to what extent the moral beliefs of mankind have been vitiated or made uncertain by the absence of any distinct recognition of an ultimate standard, would imply a complete survey and criticism of past and present ethical doctrine. It would, however, be easy to show that whatever steadiness or consistency these moral beliefs have attained, has been mainly due to the tacit influence of a standard not recognised. Although the non-existence of an acknowledged first principle has made ethics not so much a guide as a consecration of men's actual sentiments, still, as men's sentiments, both of favour and of aversion, are greatly influenced by what they suppose to be the effects of things upon their happiness, the principle of utility, or as Bentham latterly called it, the greatest happiness principle, has had a large share in forming the moral doctrines even of those who most scornfully reject its authority. Nor is there any school of thought which refuses to admit that the influence of actions on happiness is a most material and even predominant consideration in many of the details of morals, however unwilling to acknowledge it as the fundamental principle of morality, and the source of moral obligation. I might go much further, and say that to all those *à priori* moralists who deem it necessary to argue at all, utilitarian arguments are indispensable. It is not my present purpose to criticise these thinkers; but I cannot help referring, for illustration, to a systematic treatise by one of the most illustrious of them, the *Metaphysics of Ethics*, by Kant. This remarkable man, whose system of thought will long remain one of the landmarks in the history of philosophical speculation, does, in the treatise in question, lay down an universal first principle as the origin and ground of moral obligation; it is this:—'So act, that the rule on which thou actest would admit of being adopted as a law by all rational beings.' But when he begins to deduce from this precept any of the actual duties of morality, he fails, almost grotesquely, to show that there would be any contradiction, any logical (not to say physical) impossibility, in the adoption by all rational beings of the most outrageously immoral rules of conduct. All he shows is that the *consequences* of their universal adoption would be such as no one would choose to incur.

On the present occasion, I shall, without further discussion of the other theories, attempt to contribute something towards the understanding and appreciation of the Utilitarian or Happiness theory, and towards such proof as it is susceptible of. It is evident that this cannot be proof in the ordinary and popular meaning of the term. Questions of ultimate ends are not amenable to direct proof. Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof. The medical art is proved to be good, by its conducing to health; but how is it possible to prove that health is good? The art of music is good, for the reason, among others, that it produces pleasure; but what proof is it possible to give that pleasure is good? If, then, it is asserted that there is a comprehensive formula, including all things which are in themselves good, and that whatever else is good, is not so as an end, but as a mean, the formula may be accepted or rejected, but is not a subject of what is commonly understood by proof. We are not, however, to infer that its acceptance or rejection must depend on blind impulse, or arbitrary choice. There is a larger meaning of the word proof, in which this question is as amenable to it as any other of the disputed questions of philosophy. The subject is within the cognizance of the rational faculty; and neither does that faculty deal with it solely in the way of intuition.

Considerations may be presented capable of determining the intellect either to give or withhold its assent to the doctrine; and this is equivalent to proof.

We shall examine presently of what nature are these considerations; in what manner they apply to the case, and what rational grounds, therefore, can be given for accepting or rejecting the utilitarian formula. But it is a preliminary condition of rational acceptance or rejection, that the formula should be correctly understood. I believe that the very imperfect notion ordinarily formed of its meaning, is the chief obstacle which impedes its reception; and that could it be cleared, even from only the grosser misconceptions, the question would be greatly simplified, and a large proportion of its difficulties removed. Before, therefore, I attempt to enter into the philosophical grounds which can be given for assenting to the utilitarian standard, I shall offer some illustrations of the doctrine itself; with the view of showing more clearly what it is, distinguishing it from what it is not, and disposing of such of the practical objections to it as either originate in, or are closely connected with, mistaken interpretations of its meaning. Having thus prepared the ground, I shall afterwards endeavour to throw such light as I can upon the question, considered as one of philosophical theory.

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## JOHN STUART MILL: UTILITARIANISM (PART 2-- "WHAT UTILITARIANISM IS")

### CHAPTER II.

WHAT UTILITARIANISM IS. A passing remark is all that needs be given to the ignorant blunder of supposing that those who stand up for utility as the test of right and wrong, use the term in that restricted and merely colloquial sense in which utility is opposed to pleasure. An apology is due to the philosophical opponents of utilitarianism, for even the momentary appearance of confounding them with any one capable of so absurd a misconception; which is the more extraordinary, inasmuch as the contrary accusation, of referring everything to pleasure, and that too in its grossest form, is another of the common charges against utilitarianism: and, as has been pointedly remarked by an able writer, the same sort of persons, and often the very same persons, denounce the theory "as impracticably dry when the word utility precedes the word pleasure, and as too practicably voluptuous when the word pleasure precedes the word utility." Those who know anything about the matter are aware that every writer, from Epicurus to Bentham, who maintained the theory of utility, meant by it, not something to be contradistinguished from pleasure, but pleasure itself, together with exemption from pain; and instead of opposing the useful to the agreeable or the ornamental, have always declared that the useful means these, among other things. Yet the common herd, including the herd of writers, not only in newspapers and periodicals, but in books of weight and pretension, are perpetually falling into this shallow mistake. Having caught up the word utilitarian, while knowing nothing whatever about it but its sound, they habitually express by it the rejection, or the neglect, of pleasure in some of its forms; of beauty, of ornament, or of amusement. Nor is the term thus ignorantly misapplied solely in disparagement, but occasionally in compliment; as though it implied superiority to frivolity and the mere pleasures of the moment. And this perverted use is the only one in which the word is popularly known, and the one from which the new generation are acquiring their sole notion of its meaning. Those who introduced the word, but who had for many years discontinued it as a distinctive appellation, may well feel themselves called upon to resume it, if by doing so they can hope to contribute anything towards rescuing it from this utter degradation.<sup>[A]</sup>

The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure; and to what extent this is left an open

question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded—namely, that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.

Now, such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure—no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit—they designate as utterly mean and grovelling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the followers of Epicurus were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened; and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by its German, French, and English assailants.

When thus attacked, the Epicureans have always answered, that it is not they, but their accusers, who represent human nature in a degrading light; since the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable. If this supposition were true, the charge could not be gainsaid, but would then be no longer an imputation; for if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other. The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. I do not, indeed, consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian elements require to be included. But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect; of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness, &c., of the former—that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature. And on all these points utilitarians have fully proved their case; but they might have taken the other, and, as it may be called, higher ground, with entire consistency. It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he, for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and is certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable; we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power, or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it: but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than

momentarily, an object of desire to them. Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness—that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior—confounds the two very different ideas, of happiness, and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied; and a highly-endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good. It may be further objected, that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change, voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupations to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favourable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying. It may be questioned whether any one who has remained equally susceptible to both classes of pleasures, ever knowingly and calmly preferred the lower; though many, in all ages, have broken down in an ineffectual attempt to combine both.

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final. And there needs be the less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even on the question of quantity. What means are there of determining which is the acutest of two pains, or the intensest of two pleasurable sensations, except the general suffrage of those who are familiar with both? Neither pains nor pleasures are homogeneous, and pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. What is there to decide whether a particular pleasure is worth purchasing at the cost of a particular pain, except the feelings and judgment of the experienced? When, therefore, those feelings and judgment declare the pleasures derived from the higher faculties to be preferable *in kind*, apart from the question of intensity, to those of which the animal nature, disjoined from the higher faculties, is susceptible, they are entitled on this subject to the same regard.

I have dwelt on this point, as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of Utility or Happiness, considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people happier, and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it. Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit. But the bare enunciation of such an absurdity as this last, renders refutation superfluous.

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison. This, being, according to the utilitarian opinion, the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and

precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation.

Against this doctrine, however, arises another class of objectors, who say that happiness, in any form, cannot be the rational purpose of human life and action; because, in the first place, it is unattainable: and they contemptuously ask, What right hast thou to be happy? a question which Mr. Carlyle clenches by the addition, What right, a short time ago, hadst thou even *to be*? Next, they say, that men can do *without* happiness; that all noble human beings have felt this, and could not have become noble but by learning the lesson of *Entsagen*, or renunciation; which lesson, thoroughly learnt and submitted to, they affirm to be the beginning and necessary condition of all virtue.

The first of these objections would go to the root of the matter were it well founded; for if no happiness is to be had at all by human beings, the attainment of it cannot be the end of morality, or of any rational conduct. Though, even in that case, something might still be said for the utilitarian theory; since utility includes not solely the pursuit of happiness, but the prevention or mitigation of unhappiness; and if the former aim be chimerical, there will be all the greater scope and more imperative need for the latter, so long at least as mankind think fit to live, and do not take refuge in the simultaneous act of suicide recommended under certain conditions by Novalis. When, however, it is thus positively asserted to be impossible that human life should be happy, the assertion, if not something like a verbal quibble, is at least an exaggeration. If by happiness be meant a continuity of highly pleasurable excitement, it is evident enough that this is impossible. A state of exalted pleasure lasts only moments, or in some cases, and with some intermissions, hours or days, and is the occasional brilliant flash of enjoyment, not its permanent and steady flame. Of this the philosophers who have taught that happiness is the end of life were as fully aware as those who taunt them. The happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture, but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation of the whole, not to expect more from life than it is capable of bestowing. A life thus composed, to those who have been fortunate enough to obtain it, has always appeared worthy of the name of happiness. And such an existence is even now the lot of many, during some considerable portion of their lives. The present wretched education, and wretched social arrangements, are the only real hindrance to its being attainable by almost all.

The objectors perhaps may doubt whether human beings, if taught to consider happiness as the end of life, would be satisfied with such a moderate share of it. But great numbers of mankind have been satisfied with much less. The main constituents of a satisfied life appear to be two, either of which by itself is often found sufficient for the purpose: tranquillity, and excitement. With much tranquillity, many find that they can be content with very little pleasure: with much excitement, many can reconcile themselves to a considerable quantity of pain. There is assuredly no inherent impossibility in enabling even the mass of mankind to unite both; since the two are so far from being incompatible that they are in natural alliance, the prolongation of either being a preparation for, and exciting a wish for, the other. It is only those in whom indolence amounts to a vice, that do not desire excitement after an interval of repose; it is only those in whom the need of excitement is a disease, that feel the tranquillity which follows excitement dull and insipid, instead of pleasurable in direct proportion to the excitement which preceded it. When people who are tolerably fortunate in their outward lot do not find in life sufficient enjoyment to make it valuable to them, the cause generally is, caring for nobody but themselves. To those who have neither public nor private affections, the excitements of life are much curtailed, and in any case dwindle in value as the time approaches when all selfish interests must be terminated by death: while those who leave after them objects of personal affection, and especially those who have also cultivated a fellow-feeling with the collective interests of mankind, retain as lively an interest in life on the eve of death as in the vigour of youth and health. Next to selfishness, the principal cause which makes life unsatisfactory, is want of mental cultivation. A cultivated mind—I do not mean that of a philosopher, but any mind to which the fountains of knowledge have been opened, and which has been taught, in any tolerable degree, to exercise its faculties—finds sources of inexhaustible interest in all that surrounds it; in the objects of nature, the achievements of art, the imaginations of poetry, the incidents of history, the ways of mankind past and present, and their prospects in the future. It is possible, indeed, to become indifferent to all this, and that too without having exhausted a thousandth part of it; but only when one has had from the beginning no moral or human interest in these things, and has sought in them only the gratification of curiosity.

Now there is absolutely no reason in the nature of things why an amount of mental culture sufficient to give an intelligent interest in these objects of contemplation, should not be the inheritance of every one born in a civilized country. As little is there an inherent necessity that any human being should be a selfish egotist, devoid of every feeling or care but those which centre in his own miserable individuality. Something far superior to this is sufficiently common even now, to give ample earnest of what the human species may be made. Genuine private

affections, and a sincere interest in the public good, are possible, though in unequal degrees, to every rightly brought-up human being. In a world in which there is so much to interest, so much to enjoy, and so much also to correct and improve, every one who has this moderate amount of moral and intellectual requisites is capable of an existence which may be called enviable; and unless such a person, through bad laws, or subjection to the will of others, is denied the liberty to use the sources of happiness within his reach, he will not fail to find this enviable existence, if he escape the positive evils of life, the great sources of physical and mental suffering—such as indigence, disease, and the unkindness, worthlessness, or premature loss of objects of affection. The main stress of the problem lies, therefore, in the contest with these calamities, from which it is a rare good fortune entirely to escape; which, as things now are, cannot be obviated, and often cannot be in any material degree mitigated. Yet no one whose opinion deserves a moment's consideration can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty, in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals. Even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be indefinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education, and proper control of noxious influences; while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe. And every advance in that direction relieves us from some, not only of the chances which cut short our own lives, but, what concerns us still more, which deprive us of those in whom our happiness is wrapt up. As for vicissitudes of fortune, and other disappointments connected with worldly circumstances, these are principally the effect either of gross imprudence, of ill-regulated desires, or of bad or imperfect social institutions. All the grand sources, in short, of human suffering are in a great degree, many of them almost entirely, conquerable by human care and effort; and though their removal is grievously slow—though a long succession of generations will perish in the breach before the conquest is completed, and this world becomes all that, if will and knowledge were not wanting, it might easily be made—yet every mind sufficiently intelligent and generous to bear a part, however small and unobtrusive, in the endeavour, will draw a noble enjoyment from the contest itself, which he would not for any bribe in the form of selfish indulgence consent to be without.

And this leads to the true estimation of what is said by the objectors concerning the possibility, and the obligation, of learning to do without happiness. Unquestionably it is possible to do without happiness; it is done involuntarily by nineteen-twentieths of mankind, even in those parts of our present world which are least deep in barbarism; and it often has to be done voluntarily by the hero or the martyr, for the sake of something which he prizes more than his individual happiness. But this something, what is it, unless the happiness of others, or some of the requisites of happiness? It is noble to be capable of resigning entirely one's own portion of happiness, or chances of it: but, after all, this self-sacrifice must be for some end; it is not its own end; and if we are told that its end is not happiness, but virtue, which is better than happiness, I ask, would the sacrifice be made if the hero or martyr did not believe that it would earn for others immunity from similar sacrifices? Would it be made, if he thought that his renunciation of happiness for himself would produce no fruit for any of his fellow creatures, but to make their lot like his, and place them also in the condition of persons who have renounced happiness? All honour to those who can abnegate for themselves the personal enjoyment of life, when by such renunciation they contribute worthily to increase the amount of happiness in the world; but he who does it, or professes to do it, for any other purpose, is no more deserving of admiration than the ascetic mounted on his pillar. He may be an inspiring proof of what men *can* do, but assuredly not an example of what they *should*.

Though it is only in a very imperfect state of the world's arrangements that any one can best serve the happiness of others by the absolute sacrifice of his own, yet so long as the world is in that imperfect state, I fully acknowledge that the readiness to make such a sacrifice is the highest virtue which can be found in man. I will add, that in this condition of the world, paradoxical as the assertion may be, the conscious ability to do without happiness gives the best prospect of realizing such happiness as is attainable. For nothing except that consciousness can raise a person above the chances of life, by making him feel that, let fate and fortune do their worst, they have not power to subdue him: which, once felt, frees him from excess of anxiety concerning the evils of life, and enables him, like many a Stoic in the worst times of the Roman Empire, to cultivate in tranquillity the sources of satisfaction accessible to him, without concerning himself about the uncertainty of their duration, any more than about their inevitable end.

Meanwhile, let utilitarians never cease to claim the morality of self-devotion as a possession which belongs by as good a right to them, as either to the Stoic or to the Transcendentalist. The utilitarian morality does recognise in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others. It only refuses to admit that the sacrifice is itself a good. A sacrifice which does not increase, or tend to increase, the sum total of happiness, it considers as wasted. The only self-renunciation which it applauds, is devotion to the happiness, or to some of the means of happiness, of others; either of mankind collectively, or of individuals within the limits imposed by the collective interests of mankind.

I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality. As the means of making the nearest approach to this ideal, utility would enjoin, first, that laws and social arrangements should place the happiness, or (as speaking practically it may be called) the interest, of every individual, as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole; and secondly, that education and opinion, which have so vast a power over human character, should so use that power as to establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole; especially between his own happiness and the practice of such modes of conduct, negative and positive, as regard for the universal happiness prescribes: so that not only he may be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself, consistently with conduct opposed to the general good, but also that a direct impulse to promote the general good may be in every individual one of the habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being's sentient existence. If the impugners of the utilitarian morality represented it to their own minds in this its true character, I know not what recommendation possessed by any other morality they could possibly affirm to be wanting to it: what more beautiful or more exalted developments of human nature any other ethical system can be supposed to foster, or what springs of action, not accessible to the utilitarian, such systems rely on for giving effect to their mandates.

The objectors to utilitarianism cannot always be charged with representing it in a discreditable light. On the contrary, those among them who entertain anything like a just idea of its disinterested character, sometimes find fault with its standard as being too high for humanity. They say it is exacting too much to require that people shall always act from the inducement of promoting the general interests of society. But this is to mistake the very meaning of a standard of morals, and to confound the rule of action with the motive of it. It is the business of ethics to tell us what are our duties, or by what test we may know them; but no system of ethics requires that the sole motive of all we do shall be a feeling of duty; on the contrary, ninety-nine hundredths of all our actions are done from other motives, and rightly so done, if the rule of duty does not condemn them. It is the more unjust to utilitarianism that this particular misapprehension should be made a ground of objection to it, inasmuch as utilitarian moralists have gone beyond almost all others in affirming that the motive has nothing to do with the morality of the action, though much with the worth of the agent. He who saves a fellow creature from drowning does what is morally right, whether his motive be duty, or the hope of being paid for his trouble: he who betrays the friend that trusts him, is guilty of a crime, even if his object be to serve another friend to whom he is under greater obligations.<sup>[B]</sup> But to speak only of actions done from the motive of duty, and in direct obedience to principle: it is a misapprehension of the utilitarian mode of thought, to conceive it as implying that people should fix their minds upon so wide a generality as the world, or society at large. The great majority of good actions are intended, not for the benefit of the world, but for that of individuals, of which the good of the world is made up; and the thoughts of the most virtuous man need not on these occasions travel beyond the particular persons concerned, except so far as is necessary to assure himself that in benefiting them he is not violating the rights—that is, the legitimate and authorized expectations—of any one else. The multiplication of happiness is, according to the utilitarian ethics, the object of virtue: the occasions on which any person (except one in a thousand) has it in his power to do this on an extended scale, in other words, to be a public benefactor, are but exceptional; and on these occasions alone is he called on to consider public utility; in every other case, private utility, the interest or happiness of some few persons, is all he has to attend to. Those alone the influence of whose actions extends to society in general, need concern themselves habitually about so large an object. In the case of abstinences indeed—of things which people forbear to do, from moral considerations, though the consequences in the particular case might be beneficial—it would be unworthy of an intelligent agent not to be consciously aware that the action is of a class which, if practised generally, would be generally injurious, and that this is the ground of the obligation to abstain from it. The amount of regard for the public interest implied in this recognition, is no greater than is demanded by every system of morals; for they all enjoin to abstain from whatever is manifestly pernicious to society.

The same considerations dispose of another reproach against the doctrine of utility, founded on a still grosser misconception of the purpose of a standard of morality, and of the very meaning of the words right and wrong. It is often affirmed that utilitarianism renders men cold and unsympathizing; that it chills their moral feelings towards individuals; that it makes them regard only the dry and hard consideration of the consequences of actions, not taking into their moral estimate the qualities from which those actions emanate. If the assertion means that they do not allow their judgment respecting the rightness or wrongness of an action to be influenced by their opinion of the qualities of the person who does it, this is a complaint not against utilitarianism, but against having any

standard of morality at all; for certainly no known ethical standard decides an action to be good or bad because it is done by a good or a bad man, still less because done by an amiable, a brave, or a benevolent man or the contrary. These considerations are relevant, not to the estimation of actions, but of persons; and there is nothing in the utilitarian theory inconsistent with the fact that there are other things which interest us in persons besides the rightness and wrongness of their actions. The Stoics, indeed, with the paradoxical misuse of language which was part of their system, and by which they strove to raise themselves above all concern about anything but virtue, were fond of saying that he who has that has everything; that he, and only he, is rich, is beautiful, is a king. But no claim of this description is made for the virtuous man by the utilitarian doctrine. Utilitarians are quite aware that there are other desirable possessions and qualities besides virtue, and are perfectly willing to allow to all of them their full worth. They are also aware that a right action does not necessarily indicate a virtuous character, and that actions which are blameable often proceed from qualities entitled to praise. When this is apparent in any particular case, it modifies their estimation, not certainly of the act, but of the agent. I grant that they are, notwithstanding, of opinion, that in the long run the best proof of a good character is good actions; and resolutely refuse to consider any mental disposition as good, of which the predominant tendency is to produce bad conduct. This makes them unpopular with many people; but it is an unpopularity which they must share with every one who regards the distinction between right and wrong in a serious light; and the reproach is not one which a conscientious utilitarian need be anxious to repel.

If no more be meant by the objection than that many utilitarians look on the morality of actions, as measured by the utilitarian standard, with too exclusive a regard, and do not lay sufficient stress upon the other beauties of character which go towards making a human being loveable or admirable, this may be admitted. Utilitarians who have cultivated their moral feelings, but not their sympathies nor their artistic perceptions, do fall into this mistake; and so do all other moralists under the same conditions. What can be said in excuse for other moralists is equally available for them, namely, that if there is to be any error, it is better that it should be on that side. As a matter of fact, we may affirm that among utilitarians as among adherents of other systems, there is every imaginable degree of rigidity and of laxity in the application of their standard: some are even puritanically rigorous, while others are as indulgent as can possibly be desired by sinner or by sentimentalist. But on the whole, a doctrine which brings prominently forward the interest that mankind have in the repression and prevention of conduct which violates the moral law, is likely to be inferior to no other in turning the sanctions of opinion against such violations. It is true, the question, What does violate the moral law? is one on which those who recognise different standards of morality are likely now and then to differ. But difference of opinion on moral questions was not first introduced into the world by utilitarianism, while that doctrine does supply, if not always an easy, at all events a tangible and intelligible mode of deciding such differences.

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It may not be superfluous to notice a few more of the common misapprehensions of utilitarian ethics, even those which are so obvious and gross that it might appear impossible for any person of candour and intelligence to fall into them: since persons, even of considerable mental endowments, often give themselves so little trouble to understand the bearings of any opinion against which they entertain a prejudice, and men are in general so little conscious of this voluntary ignorance as a defect, that the vulgarest misunderstandings of ethical doctrines are continually met with in the deliberate writings of persons of the greatest pretensions both to high principle and to philosophy. We not uncommonly hear the doctrine of utility inveighed against as a *godless* doctrine. If it be necessary to say anything at all against so mere an assumption, we may say that the question depends upon what idea we have formed of the moral character of the Deity. If it be a true belief that God desires, above all things, the happiness of his creatures, and that this was his purpose in their creation, utility is not only not a godless doctrine, but more profoundly religious than any other. If it be meant that utilitarianism does not recognise the revealed will of God as the supreme law of morals, I answer, that an utilitarian who believes in the perfect goodness and wisdom of God, necessarily believes that whatever God has thought fit to reveal on the subject of morals, must fulfil the requirements of utility in a supreme degree. But others besides utilitarians have been of opinion that the Christian revelation was intended, and is fitted, to inform the hearts and minds of mankind with a spirit which should enable them to find for themselves what is right, and incline them to do it when found, rather than to tell them, except in a very general way, what it is: and that we need a doctrine of ethics, carefully followed out, to *interpret* to us the will of God. Whether this opinion is correct or not, it is superfluous here to discuss; since whatever aid religion, either natural or revealed, can afford to ethical investigation, is as open to the utilitarian moralist as to any other. He can use it as the testimony of God to the usefulness or hurtfulness of any given course of action, by as good a right as others can use it for the indication of a transcendental law, having no connexion with usefulness or with happiness.

Again, Utility is often summarily stigmatized as an immoral doctrine by giving it the name of Expediency, and taking advantage of the popular use of that term to contrast it with Principle. But the Expedient, in the sense in which it is opposed to the Right, generally means that which is expedient for the particular interest of the agent

himself: as when a minister sacrifices the interest of his country to keep himself in place. When it means anything better than this, it means that which is expedient for some immediate object, some temporary purpose, but which violates a rule whose observance is expedient in a much higher degree. The Expedient, in this sense, instead of being the same thing with the useful, is a branch of the hurtful. Thus, it would often be expedient, for the purpose of getting over some momentary embarrassment, or attaining some object immediately useful to ourselves or others, to tell a lie. But inasmuch as the cultivation in ourselves of a sensitive feeling on the subject of veracity, is one of the most useful, and the enfeeblement of that feeling one of the most hurtful, things to which our conduct can be instrumental; and inasmuch as any, even unintentional, deviation from truth, does that much towards weakening the trustworthiness of human assertion, which is not only the principal support of all present social well-being, but the insufficiency of which does more than any one thing that can be named to keep back civilisation, virtue, everything on which human happiness on the largest scale depends; we feel that the violation, for a present advantage, of a rule of such transcendent expediency, is not expedient, and that he who, for the sake of a convenience to himself or to some other individual, does what depends on him to deprive mankind of the good, and inflict upon them the evil, involved in the greater or less reliance which they can place in each other's word, acts the part of one of their worst enemies. Yet that even this rule, sacred as it is, admits of possible exceptions, is acknowledged by all moralists; the chief of which is when the withholding of some fact (as of information from a male-factor, or of bad news from a person dangerously ill) would preserve some one (especially a person other than oneself) from great and unmerited evil, and when the withholding can only be effected by denial. But in order that the exception may not extend itself beyond the need, and may have the least possible effect in weakening reliance on veracity, it ought to be recognized, and, if possible, its limits defined; and if the principle of utility is good for anything, it must be good for weighing these conflicting utilities against one another, and marking out the region within which one or the other preponderates.

Again, defenders of utility often find themselves called upon to reply to such objections as this—that there is not time, previous to action, for calculating and weighing the effects of any line of conduct on the general happiness. This is exactly as if any one were to say that it is impossible to guide our conduct by Christianity, because there is not time, on every occasion on which anything has to be done, to read through the Old and New Testaments. The answer to the objection is, that there has been ample time, namely, the whole past duration of the human species. During all that time mankind have been learning by experience the tendencies of actions; on which experience all the prudence, as well as all the morality of life, is dependent. People talk as if the commencement of this course of experience had hitherto been put off, and as if, at the moment when some man feels tempted to meddle with the property or life of another, he had to begin considering for the first time whether murder and theft are injurious to human happiness. Even then I do not think that he would find the question very puzzling; but, at all events, the matter is now done to his hand. It is truly a whimsical supposition, that if mankind were agreed in considering utility to be the test of morality, they would remain without any agreement as to what is useful, and would take no measures for having their notions on the subject taught to the young, and enforced by law and opinion. There is no difficulty in proving any ethical standard whatever to work ill, if we suppose universal idiocy to be conjoined with it, but on any hypothesis short of that, mankind must by this time have acquired positive beliefs as to the effects of some actions on their happiness; and the beliefs which have thus come down are the rules of morality for the multitude, and for the philosopher until he has succeeded in finding better. That philosophers might easily do this, even now, on many subjects; that the received code of ethics is by no means of divine right; and that mankind have still much to learn as to the effects of actions on the general happiness, I admit, or rather, earnestly maintain. The corollaries from the principle of utility, like the precepts of every practical art, admit of indefinite improvement, and, in a progressive state of the human mind, their improvement is perpetually going on. But to consider the rules of morality as improvable, is one thing; to pass over the intermediate generalizations entirely, and endeavour to test each individual action directly by the first principle, is another. It is a strange notion that the acknowledgment of a first principle is inconsistent with the admission of secondary ones. To inform a traveller respecting the place of his ultimate destination, is not to forbid the use of landmarks and direction-posts on the way. The proposition that happiness is the end and aim of morality, does not mean that no road ought to be laid down to that goal, or that persons going thither should not be advised to take one direction rather than another. Men really ought to leave off talking a kind of nonsense on this subject, which they would neither talk nor listen to on other matters of practical concernment. Nobody argues that the art of navigation is not founded on astronomy, because sailors cannot wait to calculate the Nautical Almanack. Being rational creatures, they go to sea with it ready calculated; and all rational creatures go out upon the sea of life with their minds made up on the common questions of right and wrong, as well as on many of the far more difficult questions of wise and foolish. And this, as long as foresight is a human quality, it is to be presumed they will continue to do. Whatever we adopt as the fundamental principle of morality, we require subordinate principles to apply it by: the impossibility of doing without them, being common to all systems, can afford no argument against any one in particular: but gravely to argue as if no such secondary principles could be had, and as if mankind had remained till now, and always must

remain, without drawing any general conclusions from the experience of human life, is as high a pitch, I think, as absurdity has ever reached in philosophical controversy.

The remainder of the stock arguments against utilitarianism mostly consist in laying to its charge the common infirmities of human nature, and the general difficulties which embarrass conscientious persons in shaping their course through life. We are told that an utilitarian will be apt to make his own particular case an exception to moral rules, and, when under temptation, will see an utility in the breach of a rule, greater than he will see in its observance. But is utility the only creed which is able to furnish us with excuses for evil doing, and means of cheating our own conscience? They are afforded in abundance by all doctrines which recognise as a fact in morals the existence of conflicting considerations; which all doctrines do, that have been believed by sane persons. It is not the fault of any creed, but of the complicated nature of human affairs, that rules of conduct cannot be so framed as to require no exceptions, and that hardly any kind of action can safely be laid down as either always obligatory or always condemnable. There is no ethical creed which does not temper the rigidity of its laws, by giving a certain latitude, under the moral responsibility of the agent, for accommodation to peculiarities of circumstances; and under every creed, at the opening thus made, self-deception and dishonest casuistry get in. There exists no moral system under which there do not arise unequivocal cases of conflicting obligation. These are the real difficulties, the knotty points both in the theory of ethics, and in the conscientious guidance of personal conduct. They are overcome practically with greater or with less success according to the intellect and virtue of the individual; but it can hardly be pretended that any one will be the less qualified for dealing with them, from possessing an ultimate standard to which conflicting rights and duties can be referred. If utility is the ultimate source of moral obligations, utility may be invoked to decide between them when their demands are incompatible. Though the application of the standard may be difficult, it is better than none at all: while in other systems, the moral laws all claiming independent authority, there is no common umpire entitled to interfere between them; their claims to precedence one over another rest on little better than sophistry, and unless determined, as they generally are, by the unacknowledged influence of considerations of utility, afford a free scope for the action of personal desires and partialities. We must remember that only in these cases of conflict between secondary principles is it requisite that first principles should be appealed to. There is no case of moral obligation in which some secondary principle is not involved; and if only one, there can seldom be any real doubt which one it is, in the mind of any person by whom the principle itself is recognized.

FOOTNOTES:

[A]

The author of this essay has reason for believing himself to be the first person who brought the word utilitarian into use. He did not invent it, but adopted it from a passing expression in Mr. Galt's *Annals of the Parish*. After using it as a designation for several years, he and others abandoned it from a growing dislike to anything resembling a badge or watchword of sectarian distinction. But as a name for one single opinion, not a set of opinions—to denote the recognition of utility as a standard, not any particular way of applying it—the term supplies a want in the language, and offers, in many cases, a convenient mode of avoiding tiresome circumlocution.

[B]

An opponent, whose intellectual and moral fairness it is a pleasure to acknowledge (the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davis), has objected to this passage, saying, "Surely the rightness or wrongness of saving a man from drowning does depend very much upon the motive with which it is done. Suppose that a tyrant, when his enemy jumped into the sea to escape from him, saved him from drowning simply in order that he might inflict upon him more exquisite tortures, would it tend to clearness to speak of that rescue as 'a morally right action?' Or suppose again, according to one of the stock illustrations of ethical inquiries, that a man betrayed a trust received from a friend, because the discharge of it would fatally injure that friend himself or some one belonging to him, would utilitarianism compel one to call the betrayal 'a crime' as much as if it had been done from the meanest motive?"

I submit, that he who saves another from drowning in order to kill him by torture afterwards, does not differ only in motive from him who does the same thing from duty or benevolence; the act itself is different. The rescue of the man is, in the case supposed, only the necessary first step of an act far more atrocious than leaving him to drown would have been. Had Mr. Davis said, "The rightness or wrongness of saving a man from drowning does depend very much"—not upon the motive, but—"upon the *intention*" no utilitarian would have differed from him. Mr. Davis, by an oversight too common not to be quite venial, has in this case confounded the very different ideas of Motive and Intention. There is no point which utilitarian thinkers (and Bentham pre-eminently) have taken more pains to illustrate than this. The morality of the action depends entirely upon the intention—that is, upon what the agent

*wills to do*. But the motive, that is, the feeling which makes him will so to do, when it makes no difference in the act, makes none in the morality: though it makes a great difference in our moral estimation of the agent, especially if it indicates a good or a bad habitual *disposition*—a bent of character from which useful, or from which hurtful actions are likely to arise.

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## KANTIAN ETHICS (OVERVIEW)

Kantian ethics refers to a **deontological ethical theory** ascribed to the German philosopher **Immanuel Kant**. The theory, developed as a result of **Enlightenment rationalism**, is based on the view that the only intrinsically good thing is a good **will**; an action can only be good if its **maxim** – the principle behind it – is duty to **the moral law**. Central to Kant's construction of the moral law is the **categorical imperative**, which acts on all people, regardless of their interests or desires. Kant formulated the categorical imperative in various ways. His principle of **universalisability** requires that, for an action to be permissible, it must be possible to apply it to all people without a contradiction occurring. His formulation of humanity as an end in itself requires that humans are never treated merely as a **means to an end**, but always also as ends in themselves. The formulation of **autonomy** concludes that rational agents are bound to the moral law by their own will, while Kant's concept of the **Kingdom of Ends** requires that people act as if the principles of their actions establish a law for a hypothetical kingdom. Kant also distinguished between perfect and imperfect duties. A perfect duty, such as the duty not to lie, always holds true; an imperfect duty, such as the duty to give to charity, can be made flexible and applied in particular time and place.

American philosopher **Louis Pojman** has cited **Pietism**, political philosopher **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**, the modern debate between **rationalism** and **empiricism**, and the influence of **natural law** as influences on the development of Kant's ethics. Other philosophers have argued that Kant's parents and his teacher, **Martin Knutzen**, influenced his ethics. Those influenced by Kantian ethics include philosopher **Jürgen Habermas**, political philosopher **John Rawls**, and **psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan**. German philosopher **G. W. F. Hegel** criticised Kant for not providing specific enough detail in his moral theory to affect decision-making and for denying human nature. German philosopher **Arthur Schopenhauer** argued that ethics should attempt to describe how people behave and criticised Kant for being prescriptive. Michael Stocker has argued that acting out of duty can diminish other moral motivations such as friendship, while Marcia Baron has defended the theory by arguing that duty does not diminish other motivations. The **Catholic Church** has criticised Kant's ethics as contradictory and regards **Christian ethics** as more compatible with **virtue ethics**.

The claim that all humans are due dignity and respect as autonomous agents means that medical professionals should be happy for their treatments to be performed upon anyone, and that patients must never be treated merely as useful for society. Kant's approach to **sexual ethics** emerged from his view that humans should never be used merely as a means to an end, leading him to regard sexual activity as degrading and to condemn certain specific sexual practices. **Feminist philosophers** have used Kantian ethics to condemn practices such as **prostitution** and **pornography** because they do not treat women as ends. Kant also believed that, because animals do not possess rationality, we cannot have duties to them except indirect duties not to develop immoral dispositions through cruelty towards them. Kant used the example of lying as an application of his ethics: because there is a perfect duty to tell the truth, we must never lie, even if it seems that lying would bring about better consequences than telling the truth.

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# KANTIAN ETHICS (MAIN CONCEPTS)

Although all of Kant's work develops his ethical theory, it is most clearly defined in *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, *Critique of Practical Reason* and *Metaphysics of Morals*. As part of the Enlightenment tradition, Kant based his ethical theory on the belief that reason should be used to determine how people ought to act.<sup>[1]</sup> He did not attempt to prescribe specific action, but instructed that reason should be used to determine how to behave.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Good will and duty[[edit](#)]

In his combined works, Kant constructed the basis for an ethical law from the concept of duty.<sup>[3]</sup> Kant began his ethical theory by arguing that the only virtue that can be unqualifiedly good is a good will. No other virtue has this status because every other virtue can be used to achieve immoral ends (the virtue of loyalty is not good if one is loyal to an evil person, for example). The good will is unique in that it is always good and maintains its moral value even when it fails to achieve its moral intentions.<sup>[4]</sup> Kant regarded the good will as a single moral principle which freely chooses to use the other virtues for moral ends.<sup>[5]</sup>

For Kant a good will is a broader conception than a will which acts from duty. A will which acts from duty is distinguishable as a will which overcomes hindrances in order to keep the moral law. A dutiful will is thus a special case of a good will which becomes visible in adverse conditions. Kant argues that only acts performed with regard to duty have moral worth. This is not to say that acts performed merely in accordance with duty are worthless (these still deserve approval and encouragement), but that special esteem is given to acts which are performed out of duty.<sup>[6]</sup>

Kant's conception of duty does not entail that people perform their duties grudgingly. Although duty often constrains people and prompts them to act against their inclinations, it still comes from an agent's volition: they desire to keep the moral law. Thus, when an agent performs an action from duty it is because the rational incentives matter to them more than their opposing inclinations. Kant wished to move beyond the conception morality as externally imposed duties and present an ethics of autonomy, when rational agents freely recognise the claims reason makes upon them.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Perfect and imperfect duties[[edit](#)]

Applying the categorical imperative, duties arise because failure to fulfil them would either result in a contradiction in conception or in a contradiction in the will. The former are classified as perfect duties, the latter as imperfect. A perfect duty always holds true—there is a perfect duty to tell the truth, so we must never lie. An imperfect duty allows flexibility—beneficence is an imperfect duty because we are not obliged to be completely beneficent at all times, but may choose the times and places in which we are.<sup>[8]</sup> Kant believed that perfect duties are more important than imperfect duties: if a conflict between duties arises, the perfect duty must be followed.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Categorical Imperative[[edit](#)]

Main Article: [Categorical Imperative](#)

The primary formulation of Kant's ethics is the categorical imperative,<sup>[10]</sup> from which he derived four further formulations.<sup>[11]</sup> Kant made a distinction between categorical and hypothetical imperatives. A hypothetical imperative is one we must obey if we want to satisfy our desires: 'go to the doctor' is a hypothetical imperative because we are only obliged to obey it if we want to get well. A categorical imperative binds us regardless of our desires: everyone has a duty to not lie, regardless of circumstances and even if it is in our interest to do so. These imperatives are morally binding because they are based on reason, rather than contingent facts about an

agent.<sup>[12]</sup> Unlike hypothetical imperatives, which bind us insofar as we are part of a group or society which we owe duties to, we cannot opt out of the categorical imperative because we cannot opt out of being rational agents. We owe a duty to rationality by virtue of being rational agents; therefore, rational moral principles apply to all rational agents at all times.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Universalizability[edit]

Kant's first formulation of the Categorical Imperative is that of universalizability:<sup>[14]</sup>

Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.

— *Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785)*<sup>[15]</sup>

When someone acts, it is according to a rule, or **maxim**. For Kant, an act is only permissible if one is willing for the maxim that allows the action to be a universal law by which everyone acts.<sup>[15]</sup> Maxims fail this test if they produce either a contradiction in conception or a contradiction in the will when universalized. A contradiction in conception happens when, if a maxim were to be universalized, it ceases to make sense because the "...maxim would necessarily destroy itself as soon as it was made a universal law."<sup>[16]</sup> For example, if the maxim 'It is permissible to break promises' was universalized, no one would trust any promises made, so the idea of a promise would become meaningless; the maxim would be self-contradictory because, when universalized, promises cease to be meaningful. The maxim is not moral because it is logically impossible to universalize—we could not conceive of a world where this maxim was universalized.<sup>[17]</sup> A maxim can also be immoral if it creates a contradiction in the will when universalized. This does not mean a logical contradiction, but that universalizing the maxim leads to a state of affairs that no rational being would desire. For example, Driver argues that the maxim 'I will not give to charity' produces a contradiction in the will when universalized because a world where no one gives to charity would be undesirable for the person who acts by that maxim.<sup>[18]</sup>

Kant believed that morality is the **objective** law of reason: just as objective physical laws necessitate physical actions (apples fall down because of gravity, for example), objective rational laws necessitate rational actions. He thus believed that a perfectly rational being must also be perfectly moral because a perfectly rational being **subjectively** finds it necessary to do what is rationally necessary. Because humans are not perfectly rational (they partly act by instinct), Kant believed that humans must conform their subjective will with objective rational laws, which he called conformity obligation.<sup>[19]</sup> Kant argued that the objective law of reason is *a priori*, existing externally from rational being. Just as physical laws exist prior to physical beings, rational laws (morality) exist prior to rational beings. Therefore, according to Kant, rational morality is universal and cannot change depending on circumstance.<sup>[20]</sup>

## Humanity as an end in itself[edit]

Kant's second formulation of the Categorical Imperative is to treat humanity as an end in itself:

Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means.

— *Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785)*<sup>[21]</sup>

Kant argued that rational beings can never be treated merely as means to ends; they must always also be treated as ends themselves, requiring that their own reasoned motives must be equally respected. This derives from Kant's claim that reason motivates morality: it demands that we respect reason as a motive in all beings, including other people. A rational being cannot rationally consent to being used merely as a means to an end, so they must always be treated as an end.<sup>[22]</sup> Kant justified this by arguing that moral obligation is a rational necessity: that which is rationally willed is morally right. Because all rational agents rationally will themselves to be an end and never merely a means, it is morally obligatory that they are treated as such.<sup>[23][24][25]</sup> This does not mean that we can never treat a human as a means to an end, but that when we do, we also treat him as an end in himself.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Formula of autonomy[[edit](#)]

Kant's Formula of Autonomy expresses the idea that an agent is obliged to follow the Categorical Imperative because of their rational will, rather than any outside influence. Kant believed that any moral law motivated by the desire to fulfill some other interest would deny the Categorical Imperative, leading him to argue that the moral law must only arise from a rational will.<sup>[26]</sup> This principle requires people to recognize the right of others to act autonomously and means that, as moral laws must be universalisable, what is required of one person is required of all.<sup>[27][28][29]</sup>

## Kingdom of Ends[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Kingdom of Ends](#)

Another formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative is the Kingdom of Ends:

A rational being must always regard himself as giving laws either as member or as sovereign in a kingdom of ends which is rendered possible by the freedom of will.

— *Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785)*<sup>[30]</sup>

This formulation requires that actions be considered as if their maxim is to provide a law for a hypothetical Kingdom of Ends. Accordingly, people have an obligation to act upon principles that a community of rational agents would accept as laws.<sup>[31]</sup> In such a community, each individual would only accept maxims that can govern every member of the community without treating any member merely as a means to an end.<sup>[32]</sup> Although the Kingdom of Ends is an ideal—the actions of other people and events of nature ensure that actions with good intentions sometimes result in harm—we are still required to act categorically, as legislators of this ideal kingdom.<sup>[33]</sup>

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# KANTIAN ETHICS (CRITICISMS)

## G. W. F Hegel

German philosopher [G. W. F. Hegel](#) presented two main criticisms of Kantian ethics. He first argued that Kantian ethics provides no specific information about what people should do because Kant's moral law is solely a [principle of non-contradiction](#).<sup>[2]</sup> He argued that Kant's ethics lack any content and so cannot constitute a supreme principle of morality. To illustrate this point, Hegel and his followers have presented a number of cases in which the Formula of Universal Law either provides no meaningful answer or gives an obviously wrong answer. Hegel used Kant's example of being trusted with another man's money to argue that Kant's Formula of Universal Law cannot determine whether a social system of property is a morally good thing, because either answer can entail contradictions. He also used the example of helping the poor: if everyone helped the poor, there would be no poor left to help, so beneficence would be impossible if universalised, making it immoral according to Kant's model.<sup>[52]</sup> Hegel's second criticism was that Kant's ethics forces humans into an internal conflict between reason and desire. For Hegel, it is unnatural for humans to suppress their desire and subordinate it to reason. This means that, by not addressing the tension between self-interest and morality, Kant's ethics cannot give humans any reason to be moral.<sup>[53]</sup>

## Arthur Schopenhauer

German philosopher [Arthur Schopenhauer](#) criticised Kant's belief that ethics should concern what ought to be done, insisting that the scope of ethics should be to attempt to explain and interpret what actually happens. Whereas Kant presented an idealised version of what ought to be done in a perfect world, Schopenhauer argued that ethics should instead be practical and arrive at conclusions that could work in the real world, capable of being presented as a solution to the world's problems.<sup>[54]</sup> Schopenhauer drew a parallel with [aesthetics](#), arguing that in both cases prescriptive rules are not the most important part of the discipline. Because he believed that virtue cannot be taught—a person is either virtuous or is not—he cast the proper place of morality as restraining and guiding people's behaviour, rather than presenting unattainable universal laws.<sup>[55]</sup>

## Friedrich Nietzsche

Philosopher [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) criticised all contemporary moral systems, with a special focus on [Christian](#) and Kantian ethics. He argued that all modern ethical systems share two problematic characteristics: first, they make a metaphysical claim about the nature of humanity, which must be accepted for the system to have any [normative](#) force; and second, the system benefits the interests of certain people, often over those of others. Although Nietzsche's primary objection is not that metaphysical claims about humanity are untenable (he also objected to ethical theories that do not make such claims), his two main targets—Kantianism and Christianity—do make metaphysical claims, which therefore feature prominently in Nietzsche's criticism.<sup>[56]</sup>

Nietzsche rejected fundamental components of Kant's ethics, particularly his argument that morality, God and immorality can be shown through reason. Nietzsche cast suspicion on the use of moral intuition, which Kant used as the foundation of his morality, arguing that it has no normative force in ethics. He further attempted to undermine key concepts in Kant's moral psychology, such as the will and pure reason. Like Kant, Nietzsche developed a concept of autonomy; however, he rejected Kant's idea that valuing our own autonomy requires us to respect the autonomy of others.<sup>[57]</sup> A naturalist reading of Nietzsche's moral psychology stands contrary to Kant's conception of reason and desire. Under the Kantian model, reason is a fundamentally different motive to desire because it has the capacity to stand back from a situation and make an independent decision. Nietzsche conceives of the self as a social structure of all our different drives and motivations; thus, when it seems that our intellect has made a decision against our drives, it is actually just an alternative drive taking dominance over another. This is in direct contrast with Kant's view of the intellect as opposed to instinct; instead, it is just another instinct. There is thus no self capable of standing back and making a decision; the decision the self makes is simply determined by the strongest drive.<sup>[58]</sup> Kantian commentators have argued that Nietzsche's practical philosophy requires the existence of a self capable of standing back in the Kantian sense. For an individual to create values of their own, which is a key idea in Nietzsche's philosophy, they must be able to conceive of themselves as a unified agent. Even if the agent is influenced by their drives, he must regard them as his own, which undermines Nietzsche's conception of autonomy.<sup>[59]</sup>

## John Stuart Mill

[Utilitarian](#) philosopher [John Stuart Mill](#) criticised Kant for not realising that moral laws are justified by a moral intuition based on utilitarian principles (that the greatest good for the greatest number ought to be sought). Mill argued that Kant's ethics could not explain why certain actions are wrong without appealing to utilitarianism.<sup>[60]</sup> As basis for morality, Mill believed that his [principle of utility](#) has a stronger intuitive grounding than Kant's reliance on reason, and can better explain why certain actions are right or wrong.<sup>[61]</sup>

## Virtue ethics

[Virtue ethics](#) is a form of ethical theory which emphasises the character of an agent, rather than specific acts; many of its proponents have criticised Kant's deontological approach to ethics. [Elizabeth Anscombe](#) criticised modern ethical theories, including Kantian ethics, for their obsession with law and obligation. As well as arguing that theories which rely on a universal moral law are too rigid, Anscombe suggested that, because a moral law implies a moral lawgiver, they are irrelevant in modern secular society.<sup>[62]</sup> In his work [After Virtue](#), [Alasdair](#)

[MacIntyre](#) criticises Kant’s formulation of universalisability, arguing that various trivial and immoral maxims can pass the test, such as “Keep all your promises throughout your entire life except one”. He further challenges Kant’s formulation of humanity as an ends in itself by arguing that Kant provided no reason to treat others as means: the maxim “Let everyone except me be treated as a means”, though seemingly immoral, can be universalised.<sup>[63]</sup> [Bernard Williams](#) argues that, by abstracting persons from character, Kant misrepresents persons and morality and [Philippa Foot](#) identified Kant as one of a select group of philosophers responsible for the neglect of virtue by [analytic philosophy](#).<sup>[64]</sup>

## Catholic Church

The [Catholic Church](#) has criticised Kantian ethics for its apparent contradiction, arguing that humans being co-legislators of morality contradicts the claim that morality is a priori. If something is universally a priori (i.e., existing unchangingly prior to experience), then it cannot also be in part dependent upon humans, who have not always existed

The theory of the categorical imperative is, moreover, inconsistent. According to it the human will is the highest lawgiving authority, and yet subject to precepts enjoined on it.

— [Kevin Knight](#), [Catholic Encyclopedia](#)<sup>[65]</sup>

Roman Catholic priest [Servais Pinckaers](#) criticised the modern desire for ethics to be autonomous and free from the authorities such as the Church, a development he partially attributed to thinkers such as Kant. Pinckaers saw this as potentially threatening to the legitimacy of the [Magisterium](#), but maintained that the link between the gospel and the moral law, and the shortcomings of human reason, leave a place for the moral authority of the Church.<sup>[66]</sup> Pinckaers regarded Christian ethics as closer to the virtue ethics of [Aristotle](#) than Kant’s ethics. He presented virtue ethics as *freedom for excellence*, which regards freedom as acting in accordance with nature to develop one’s virtues. Initially, this requires following rules—but the intention is that the agent develop virtuously, and regard acting morally as a joy. This is in contrast with *freedom of indifference*, which Pinckaers attributes to [William Ockham](#) and likens to Kant. On this view, freedom is set against nature: free actions are those not determined by passions or emotions. There is no development or progress in an agent’s virtue, merely the forming of habit. This is closer to Kant’s view of ethics, because Kant’s conception of autonomy requires that an agent is not merely guided by their emotions, and is set in contrast with Pinckaer’s conception of Christian ethics.<sup>[67]</sup>

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# KANTIAN ETHICS (APPLICATIONS)

## Medical ethics

Kant believed that the shared ability of humans to reason should be the basis of morality, and that it is the ability to reason that makes humans morally significant. He therefore believed that all humans should have the right to common dignity and respect.<sup>[68]</sup> Margaret Eaton argues that, according to Kant’s ethics, a medical professional must be happy for their own practices to be used by and on anyone, even if they were the patient themselves. For example, a researcher who wished to perform tests on patients without their knowledge must be happy for all researchers to do so.<sup>[69]</sup> She also argues that Kant’s requirement of autonomy would mean that a patient must be able to make a fully informed decision about treatment, making it immoral to perform tests on unknowing patients. Medical research should be motivated out of respect for the patient, so they must be informed of all facts, even if this would be likely to dissuade the patient.<sup>[70]</sup> Jeremy Sugarman has argued that Kant’s formulation of autonomy requires that patients are never used merely for the benefit of society, but are always treated as rational people

with their own goals.<sup>[71]</sup> Aaron Hinkley notes that a Kantian account of autonomy requires respect for choices that are arrived at rationally, not for choices which are arrived at by idiosyncratic or non-rational means. He argues that there may be some difference between what a purely rational agent would choose and what a patient actually chooses, the difference being the result of non-rational idiosyncrasies. Although a Kantian physician ought not to lie to or coerce a patient, Hinkley suggests that some form of paternalism – such as through withholding information which may prompt a non-rational response – could be acceptable.<sup>[72]</sup>

In her work *How Kantian Ethics Should Treat Pregnancy and Abortion*, Susan Feldman argues that [abortion](#) should be defended according to Kantian ethics. She proposed that a woman should be treated as a dignified autonomous person, with control over their body, as Kant suggested. She believes that the free choice of women would be paramount in Kantian ethics, requiring abortion to be the mother's decision.<sup>[73]</sup> Dean Harris has noted that, if Kantian ethics is to be used in the discussion of abortion, it must be decided whether a fetus is an autonomous person.<sup>[74]</sup> Kantian ethicist Carl Cohen argues that the potential to be rational or participation in a generally rational species is the relevant distinction between humans and inanimate objects or irrational animals. Cohen believes that even when humans are not rational because of age (such as babies or fetuses) or mental disability, agents are still morally obligated to treat them as an ends in themselves, equivalent to a rational adult such as a mother seeking an abortion.<sup>[75]</sup>

## Sexual ethics

Kant viewed humans as being subject to the animalistic desires of self-preservation, species-preservation, and the preservation of enjoyment. He argued that humans have a duty to avoid maxims that harm or degrade themselves, including suicide, sexual degradation, and drunkenness.<sup>[76]</sup> This led Kant to regard [sexual intercourse](#) as degrading because it reduces humans to an object of pleasure. He admitted sex only within marriage, which he regarded as “a merely animal union”. He believed that masturbation is worse than suicide, reducing a person's status to below that of an animal; he argued that rape should be punished with castration and that [bestiality](#) requires expulsion from society.<sup>[77]</sup> Feminist philosopher Catharine MacKinnon has argued that many contemporary practices would be deemed immoral by Kant's standards because they dehumanise women. Sexual harassment, prostitution and pornography, she argues, objectify women and do not meet Kant's standard of human autonomy. Commercial sex has been criticised for turning both parties into objects (and thus using them as a means to an end); mutual consent is problematic because in consenting, people choose to objectify themselves. Alan Soble has noted that more liberal Kantian ethicists believe that, depending on other contextual factors, the consent of women can vindicate their participation in pornography and prostitution.<sup>[78]</sup>

## Animal ethics

Because Kant viewed rationality as the basis for being a [moral patient](#)—one due moral consideration—he believed that animals have no moral rights. Animals, according to Kant, are not rational, thus one cannot behave immorally towards them.<sup>[79]</sup> Although he did not believe we have any duties towards animals, Kant did believe being cruel to them was wrong because our behaviour might influence our attitudes towards human beings: if we become accustomed to harming animals, then we are more likely to see harming humans as acceptable.<sup>[80]</sup>

Ethicist Tom Regan rejects Kant's assessment of the moral worth of animals on three main points: First, he rejects Kant's claim that animals are not self-conscious. He then challenges Kant's claim that animals have no intrinsic moral worth because they cannot make moral judgement. Regan argues that, if a being's moral worth is determined by its ability to make a moral judgement, then we must regard humans who are incapable of moral thought as being equally undue moral consideration. Regan finally argues that Kant's assertion that animals exist merely as a means to an ends is unsupported; the fact that animals have a life that can go well or badly suggests that, like humans, they have their own ends.<sup>[81]</sup>

## Lying

Kant believed that the Categorical Imperative provides us with the maxim that we ought not to lie in any circumstances, even if we are trying to bring about good consequences, such as lying to a murderer to prevent

them from finding their intended victim. Kant argued that, because we cannot fully know what the consequences of any action will be, the result might be unexpectedly harmful. Therefore, we ought to act to avoid the known wrong—lying—rather than to avoid a potential wrong. If there are harmful consequences, we are blameless because we acted according to our duty.<sup>[82]</sup> Driver argues that this might not be a problem if we choose to formulate our maxims differently: the maxim ‘I will lie to save an innocent life’ can be universalised. However, this new maxim may still treat the murderer as a means to an end, which we have a duty to avoid doing. Thus we may still be required to tell the truth to the murderer in Kant’s example.<sup>[83]</sup>

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## VIRTUE ETHICS (COMMENTARY ON ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS--PART 1)

The *Ethics* of Aristotle is one half of a single treatise of which his *Politics* is the other half. Both deal with one and the same subject. This subject is what Aristotle calls in one place the “philosophy of human affairs;” but more frequently Political or Social Science. In the two works taken together we have their author’s whole theory of human conduct or practical activity, that is, of all human activity which is not directed merely to knowledge or truth. The two parts of this treatise are mutually complementary, but in a literary sense each is independent and self-contained. The proem to the *Ethics* is an introduction to the whole subject, not merely to the first part; the last chapter of the *Ethics* points forward to the *Politics*, and sketches for that part of the treatise the order of enquiry to be pursued (an order which in the actual treatise is not adhered to).

The principle of distribution of the subject-matter between the two works is far from obvious, and has been much debated. Not much can be gathered from their titles, which in any case were not given to them by their author. Nor do these titles suggest any very compact unity in the works to which they are applied: the plural forms, which survive so oddly in English (*Ethics*, *Politics*), were intended to indicate the treatment within a single work of a *group* of connected questions. The unity of the first group arises from their centring round the topic of character, that of the second from their connection with the existence and life of the city or state. We have thus to regard the *Ethics* as dealing with one group of problems and the *Politics* with a second, both falling within the wide compass of Political Science. Each of these groups falls into sub-groups which roughly correspond to the several books in each work. The tendency to take up one by one the various problems which had suggested themselves in the wide field obscures both the unity of the subject-matter and its proper articulation. But it is to be remembered that what is offered us is avowedly rather an enquiry than an exposition of hard and fast doctrine.

Nevertheless each work aims at a relative completeness, and it is important to observe the relation of each to the other. The distinction is not that the one treats of Moral and the other of Political Philosophy, nor again that the one deals with the moral activity of the individual and the other with that of the State, nor once more that the one gives us the theory of human conduct, while the other discusses its application in practice, though not all of these misinterpretations are equally erroneous. The clue to the right interpretation is given by Aristotle himself, where in the last chapter of the *Ethics* he is paving the way for the *Politics*. In the *Ethics* he has not confined himself to the abstract or isolated individual, but has always thought of him, or we might say, in his social and political context, with a given nature due to race and heredity and in certain surroundings. So viewing him he has studied the nature and formation of his character—all that he can make himself or be made by others to be. Especially he has investigated the various admirable forms of human character and the mode of their production. But all this, though it brings more clearly before us what goodness or virtue is, and how it is to be reached, remains mere theory or talk. By itself it does not enable us to become, or to help others to become, good. For this it is necessary to bring into play the great force of the Political Community or State, of which the main instrument is Law. Hence arises the demand for the necessary complement to the *Ethics*, *i.e.*, a treatise devoted to the questions which centre round the enquiry; by what organisation of social or political forces, by what laws or institutions can we best secure the greatest amount of good character?

We must, however, remember that the production of good character is not the end of either individual or state action: that is the aim of the one and the other because good character is the indispensable condition and chief determinant of happiness, itself the goal of all human doing. The end of all action, individual or collective, is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. There is, Aristotle insists, no difference of kind between the good of one and the good of many or all. The sole difference is one of amount or scale. This does not mean simply that the State exists to secure in larger measure the objects of degree which the isolated individual attempts, but is too feeble, to secure without it. On the contrary, it rather insists that whatever goods society alone enables a man to secure have always had to the individual—whether he realised it or not—the value which, when so secured, he recognises them to possess. The best and happiest life for the individual is that which the State renders possible, and this it does mainly by revealing to him the value of new objects of desire and educating him to appreciate them. To Aristotle or to Plato the State is, above all, a large and powerful educative agency which gives the individual increased opportunities of self-development and greater capacities for the enjoyment of life.

Looking forward, then, to the life of the State as that which aids support, and combines the efforts of the individual to obtain happiness, Aristotle draws no hard and fast distinction between the spheres of action of Man as individual and Man as citizen. Nor does the division of his discussion into the *Ethics* and the *Politics* rest upon any such distinction. The distinction implied is rather between two stages in the life of the civilised man—the stage of preparation for the full life of the adult citizen, and the stage of the actual exercise or enjoyment of citizenship. Hence the *Ethics*, where his attention is directed upon the formation of character, is largely and centrally a treatise on Moral Education. It discusses especially those admirable human qualities which fit a man for life in an organised civic community, which makes him “a good citizen,” and considers how they can be fostered or created and their opposites prevented.

This is the kernel of the *Ethics*, and all the rest is subordinate to this main interest and purpose. Yet “the rest” is not irrelevant; the whole situation in which character grows and operates is concretely conceived. There is a basis of what we should call Psychology, sketched in firm outlines, the deeper presuppositions and the wider issues of human character and conduct are not ignored, and there is no little of what we should call Metaphysics. But neither the Psychology nor the Metaphysics is elaborated, and only so much is brought forward as appears necessary to put the main facts in their proper perspective and setting. It is this combination of width of outlook with close observation of the concrete facts of conduct which gives its abiding value to the work, and justifies the view of it as containing Aristotle’s Moral Philosophy. Nor is it important merely as summing up the moral judgments and speculations of an age now long past. It seizes and dwells upon those elements and features in human practice which are most essential and permanent, and it is small wonder that so much in it survives in our own ways of regarding conduct and speaking of it. Thus it still remains one of the classics of Moral Philosophy, nor is its value likely soon to be exhausted.

As was pointed out above, the proem (Book I., cc. i-iii.) is a prelude to the treatment of the whole subject covered by the *Ethics* and the *Politics* together. It sets forth the purpose of the enquiry, describes the spirit in which it is to be undertaken and what ought to be the expectation of the reader, and lastly states the necessary conditions of studying it with profit. The aim of it is the acquisition and propagation of a certain kind of knowledge (science), but this knowledge and the thinking which brings it about are subsidiary to a practical end. The knowledge aimed at is of what is best for man and of the conditions of its realisation. Such knowledge is that which in its consummate form we find in great statesmen, enabling them to organise and administer their states and regulate by law the life of the citizens to their advantage and happiness, but it is the same kind of knowledge which on a smaller scale secures success in the management of the family or of private life.

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## VIRTUE ETHICS (COMMENTARY ON ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS--PART 2)

It is characteristic of such knowledge that it should be deficient in “exactness,” in precision of statement, and closeness of logical concatenation. We must not look for a mathematics of conduct. The subject-matter of Human

Conduct is not governed by necessary and uniform laws. But this does not mean that it is subject to no laws. There are general principles at work in it, and these can be formulated in “rules,” which rules can be systematised or unified. It is all-important to remember that practical or moral rules are only general and always admit of exceptions, and that they arise not from the mere complexity of the facts, but from the liability of the facts to a certain unpredictable variation. At their very best, practical rules state probabilities, not certainties; a relative constancy of connection is all that exists, but it is enough to serve as a guide in life. Aristotle here holds the balance between a misleading hope of reducing the subject-matter of conduct to a few simple rigorous abstract principles, with conclusions necessarily issuing from them, and the view that it is the field of operation of inscrutable forces acting without predictable regularity. He does not pretend to find in it absolute uniformities, or to deduce the details from his principles. Hence, too, he insists on the necessity of experience as the source or test of all that he has to say. Moral experience—the actual possession and exercise of good character—is necessary truly to understand moral principles and profitably to apply them. The mere intellectual apprehension of them is not possible, or if possible, profitless.

The *Ethics* is addressed to students who are presumed both to have enough general education to appreciate these points, and also to have a solid foundation of good habits. More than that is not required for the profitable study of it.

If the discussion of the nature and formation of character be regarded as the central topic of the *Ethics*, the contents of Book I., cc. iv.-xii. may be considered as still belonging to the introduction and setting, but these chapters contain matter of profound importance and have exercised an enormous influence upon subsequent thought. They lay down a principle which governs all Greek thought about human life, viz. that it is only intelligible when viewed as directed towards some end or good. This is the Greek way of expressing that all human life involves an ideal element—something which it is not yet and which under certain conditions it is to be. In that sense Greek Moral Philosophy is essentially idealistic. Further it is always assumed that all human practical activity is directed or “oriented” to a *single* end, and that that end is knowable or definable in advance of its realisation. To know it is not merely a matter of speculative interest, it is of the highest practical moment for only in the light of it can life be duly guided, and particularly only so can the state be properly organised and administered. This explains the stress laid throughout by Greek Moral Philosophy upon the necessity of knowledge as a condition of the best life. This knowledge is not, though it includes knowledge of the nature of man and his circumstances, it is knowledge of what is best—of man’s supreme end or good.

But this end is not conceived as presented to him by a superior power nor even as something which *ought* to be. The presentation of the Moral Ideal as Duty is almost absent. From the outset it is identified with the object of desire, of what we not merely judge desirable but actually do desire, or that which would, if realised, satisfy human desire. In fact it is what we all, wise and simple, agree in naming “Happiness” (Welfare or Well-being)

In what then does happiness consist? Aristotle summarily sets aside the more or less popular identifications of it with abundance of physical pleasures, with political power and honour, with the mere possession of such superior gifts or attainments as normally entitle men to these, with wealth. None of these can constitute the end or good of man as such. On the other hand, he rejects his master Plato’s conception of a good which is the end of the whole universe, or at least dismisses it as irrelevant to his present enquiry. The good towards which all human desires and practical activities are directed must be one conformable to man’s special nature and circumstances and attainable by his efforts. There is in Aristotle’s theory of human conduct no trace of Plato’s “other worldliness”, he brings the moral ideal in Bacon’s phrase down to “right earth”—and so closer to the facts and problems of actual human living. Turning from criticism of others he states his own positive view of Happiness, and, though he avowedly states it merely in outline his account is pregnant with significance. Human Happiness lies in activity or energising, and that in a way peculiar to man with his given nature and his given circumstances, it is not theoretical, but practical: it is the activity not of reason but still of a being who possesses reason and applies it, and it presupposes in that being the development, and not merely the natural possession, of certain relevant powers and capacities. The last is the prime condition of successful living and therefore of satisfaction, but Aristotle does not ignore other conditions, such as length of life, wealth and good luck, the absence or diminution of which render happiness not impossible, but difficult of attainment.

It is interesting to compare this account of Happiness with Mill’s in *Utilitarianism*. Mill’s is much the less consistent: at times he distinguishes and at times he identifies, happiness, pleasure, contentment, and satisfaction. He wavers between belief in its general attainability and an absence of hopefulness. He mixes up in an arbitrary way such ingredients as “not expecting more from life than it is capable of bestowing,” “mental cultivation,” “improved laws,” etc., and in fact leaves the whole conception vague, blurred, and uncertain. Aristotle draws the outline with a firmer hand and presents a more definite ideal. He allows for the influence on happiness of conditions only partly, if at all, within the control of man, but he clearly makes the man positive determinant of man’s happiness

he in himself, and more particularly in what he makes directly of his own nature, and so indirectly of his circumstances. “Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus” But once more this does not involve an artificial or abstract isolation of the individual moral agent from his relation to other persons or things from his context in society and nature, nor ignore the relative dependence of his life upon a favourable environment.

The main factor which determines success or failure in human life is the acquisition of certain powers, for Happiness is just the exercise or putting forth of these in actual living, everything else is secondary and subordinate. These powers arise from the due development of certain natural aptitudes which belong (in various degrees) to human nature as such and therefore to all normal human beings. In their developed form they are known as virtues (the Greek means simply “goodnesses,” “perfections,” “excellences,” or “fitnesses”), some of them are physical, but others are psychical, and among the latter some, and these distinctively or peculiarly human, are “rational,” *i e*, presuppose the possession and exercise of mind or intelligence. These last fall into two groups, which Aristotle distinguishes as Goodnesses of Intellect and Goodnesses of Character. They have in common that they all excite in us admiration and praise of their possessors, and that they are not natural endowments, but acquired characteristics But they differ in important ways. (1) the former are excellences or developed powers of the reason as such—of that in us which sees and formulates laws, rules, regularities systems, and is content in the vision of them, while the latter involve a submission or obedience to such rules of something in us which is in itself capricious and irregular, but capable of regulation, viz our instincts and feelings, (2) the former are acquired by study and instruction, the latter by discipline. The latter constitute “character,” each of them as a “moral virtue” (literally “a goodness of character”), and upon them primarily depends the realisation of happiness. This is the case at least for the great majority of men, and for all men their possession is an indispensable basis of the best, *i e*, the most desirable life. They form the chief or central subject-matter of the *Ethics*.

Perhaps the truest way of conceiving Aristotle’s meaning here is to regard a moral virtue as a form of obedience to a maxim or rule of conduct accepted by the agent as valid for a class of recurrent situations in human life. Such obedience requires knowledge of the rule and acceptance of it *as the rule* of the agent’s own actions, but not necessarily knowledge of its ground or of its systematic connexion with other similarly known and similarly accepted rules (It may be remarked that the Greek word usually translated “reason,” means in almost all cases in the *Ethics* such a rule, and not the faculty which apprehends, formulates, considers them).

The “moral virtues and vices” make up what we call character, and the important questions arise: (1) What is character? and (2) How is it formed? (for character in this sense is not a natural endowment; it is formed or produced). Aristotle deals with these questions in the reverse order. His answers are peculiar and distinctive—not that they are absolutely novel (for they are anticipated in Plato), but that by him they are for the first time distinctly and clearly formulated.

(1.) Character, good or bad, is produced by what Aristotle calls “habituation,” that is, it is the result of the repeated doing of acts which have a similar or common quality. Such repetition acting upon natural aptitudes or propensities gradually fixes them in one or other of two opposite directions, giving them a bias towards good or evil. Hence the several acts which determine goodness or badness of character must be done in a certain way, and thus the formation of good character requires discipline and direction from without. Not that the agent himself contributes nothing to the formation of his character, but that at first he needs guidance. The point is not so much that the process cannot be safely left to Nature, but that it cannot be entrusted to merely intellectual instruction. The process is one of assimilation, largely by imitation and under direction and control. The result is a growing understanding of what is done, a choice of it for its own sake, a fixity and steadiness of purpose. Right acts and feelings become, through habit, easier and more pleasant, and the doing of them a “second nature.” The agent acquires the power of doing them freely, willingly, more and more “of himself.”

But what are “right” acts? In the first place, they are those that conform to a rule—to the right rule, and ultimately to reason. The Greeks never waver from the conviction that in the end moral conduct is essentially reasonable conduct. But there is a more significant way of describing their “rightness,” and here for the first time Aristotle introduces his famous “Doctrine of the Mean.” Reasoning from the analogy of “right” physical acts, he pronounces that rightness always means adaptation or adjustment to the special requirements of a situation. To this adjustment he gives a quantitative interpretation. To do (or to feel) what is right in a given situation is to do or to feel just the amount required—neither more nor less: to do wrong is to do or to feel too much or too little—to fall short of or over-shoot, “a mean” determined by the situation. The repetition of acts which lie in the mean is the cause of the formation of each and every “goodness of character,” and for this “rules” can be given.

(2) What then is a “moral virtue,” the result of such a process duly directed? It is no mere mood of feeling, no mere liability to emotion, no mere natural aptitude or endowment, it is a permanent *state* of the agent’s self, or, as

we might in modern phrase put it, of his will, it consists in a steady self-imposed obedience to a rule of action in certain situations which frequently recur in human life. The rule prescribes the control and regulation within limits of the agent's natural impulses to act and feel thus and thus. The situations fall into groups which constitute the "fields" of the several "moral virtues", for each there is a rule, conformity to which secures rightness in the individual acts. Thus the moral ideal appears as a code of rules, accepted by the agent, but as yet *to him* without rational justification and without system or unity. But the rules prescribe no mechanical uniformity: each within its limits permits variety, and the exactly right amount adopted to the requirements of the individual situation (and every actual situation is individual) must be determined by the intuition of the moment. There is no attempt to reduce the rich possibilities of right action to a single monotonous type. On the contrary, there are acknowledged to be many forms of moral virtue, and there is a long list of them, with their correlative vices enumerated.

The Doctrine of the Mean here takes a form in which it has impressed subsequent thinkers, but which has less importance than is usually ascribed to it. In the "Table of the Virtues and Vices," each of the virtues is flanked by two opposite vices, which are respectively the excess and defect of that which in due measure constitutes the virtue. Aristotle tries to show that this is the case in regard to every virtue named and recognised as such, but his treatment is often forced and the endeavour is not very successful. Except as a convenient principle of arrangement of the various forms of praiseworthy or blameworthy characters, generally acknowledged as such by Greek opinion, this form of the doctrine is of no great significance.

Books III-V are occupied with a survey of the moral virtues and vices. These seem to have been undertaken in order to verify in detail the general account, but this aim is not kept steadily in view. Nor is there any well-considered principle of classification. What we find is a sort of portrait-gallery of the various types of moral excellence which the Greeks of the author's age admired and strove to encourage. The discussion is full of acute, interesting and sometimes profound observations. Some of the types are those which are and will be admired at all times, but others are connected with peculiar features of Greek life which have now passed away. The most important is that of Justice or the Just Man, to which we may later return. But the discussion is preceded by an attempt to elucidate some difficult and obscure points in the general account of moral virtue and action (Book III, cc i-v). This section is concerned with the notion of Responsibility. The discussion designedly excludes what we may call the metaphysical issues of the problem, which here present themselves, it moves on the level of thought of the practical man, the statesman, and the legislator. Coercion and ignorance of relevant circumstances render acts involuntary and exempt their doer from responsibility, otherwise the act is voluntary and the agent responsible, choice or preference of what is done, and inner consent to the deed, are to be presumed. Neither passion nor ignorance of the right rule can extenuate responsibility. But there is a difference between acts done voluntarily and acts done of *set* choice or purpose. The latter imply Deliberation. Deliberation involves thinking, thinking out means to ends: in deliberate acts the whole nature of the agent consents to and enters into the act, and in a peculiar sense they are his, they *are* him in action, and the most significant evidence of what he is. Aristotle is unable wholly to avoid allusion to the metaphysical difficulties and what he does here say upon them is obscure and unsatisfactory. But he insists upon the importance in moral action of the agent's inner consent, and on the reality of his individual responsibility. For his present purpose the metaphysical difficulties are irrelevant.

## **VIRTUE ETHICS (COMMENTARY ON ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS--PART 3)**

The treatment of Justice in Book V has always been a source of great difficulty to students of the *Ethics*. Almost more than any other part of the work it has exercised influence upon mediaeval and modern thought upon the subject. The distinctions and divisions have become part of the stock-in-trade of would be philosophic jurists. And yet, oddly enough, most of these distinctions have been misunderstood and the whole purport of the discussion misconceived. Aristotle is here dealing with justice in a restricted sense viz as that special goodness of character which is required of every adult citizen and which can be produced by early discipline or habituation. It is the temper or habitual attitude demanded of the citizen for the due exercise of his functions as taking part in the administration of the civic community—as a member of the judicature and executive. The Greek citizen was only exceptionally, and at rare intervals if ever, a law-maker while at any moment he might be called upon to act as a judge (juryman or arbitrator) or as an administrator. For the work of a legislator far more than the moral virtue of justice or fairmindedness was necessary, these were requisite to the rarer and higher "intellectual virtue" of

practical wisdom. Then here, too, the discussion moves on a low level, and the raising of fundamental problems is excluded. Hence “distributive justice” is concerned not with the large question of the distribution of political power and privileges among the constituent members or classes of the state but with the smaller questions of the distribution among those of casual gains and even with the division among private claimants of a common fund or inheritance, while “corrective justice” is concerned solely with the management of legal redress. The whole treatment is confused by the unhappy attempt to give a precise mathematical form to the principles of justice in the various fields distinguished. Still it remains an interesting first endeavour to give greater exactness to some of the leading conceptions of jurisprudence.

Book VI appears to have in view two aims: (1) to describe goodness of intellect and discover its highest form or forms; (2) to show how this is related to goodness of character, and so to conduct generally. As all thinking is either theoretical or practical, goodness of intellect has *two* supreme forms—Theoretical and Practical Wisdom. The first, which apprehends the eternal laws of the universe, has no direct relation to human conduct: the second is identical with that master science of human life of which the whole treatise, consisting of the *Ethics* and the *Politics*, is an exposition. It is this science which supplies the right rules of conduct. Taking them as they emerge in and from practical experience, it formulates them more precisely and organises them into a system where they are all seen to converge upon happiness. The mode in which such knowledge manifests itself is in the power to show that such and such rules of action follow from the very nature of the end or good for man. It presupposes and starts from a clear conception of the end and the wish for it as conceived, and it proceeds by a deduction which is deUberation writ large. In the man of practical wisdom this process has reached its perfect result, and the code of right rules is apprehended as a system with a single principle and so as something wholly rational or reasonable. He has not on each occasion to seek and find the right rule applicable to the situation, he produces it at once from within himself, and can at need justify it by exhibiting its rationale, *i.e.*, its connection with the end. This is the consummate form of reason applied to conduct, but there are minor forms of it, less independent or original, but nevertheless of great value, such as the power to think out the proper cause of policy in novel circumstances or the power to see the proper line of treatment to follow in a court of law.

The form of the thinking which enters into conduct is that which terminates in the production of a rule which declares some means to the end of life. The process presupposes (a) a clear and just apprehension of the nature of that end—such as the *Ethics* itself endeavours to supply; (b) a correct perception of the conditions of action, (a) at least is impossible except to a man whose character has been duly formed by discipline; it arises only in a man who has acquired moral virtue. For such action and feeling as forms bad character, blinds the eye of the soul and corrupts the moral principle, and the place of practical wisdom is taken by that parody of itself which Aristotle calls “cleverness”—the “wisdom” of the unscrupulous man of the world. Thus true practical wisdom and true goodness of character are interdependent; neither is genuinely possible or “completely” present without the other. This is Aristotle’s contribution to the discussion of the question, so central in Greek Moral Philosophy, of the relation of the intellectual and the passionate factors in conduct.

Aristotle is not an intuitionist, but he recognises the implication in conduct of a direct and immediate apprehension both of the end and of the character of his circumstances under which it is from moment to moment realised. The directness of such apprehension makes it analogous to sensation or sense-perception; but it is on his view in the end due to the existence or activity in man of that power in him which is the highest thing in his nature, and akin to or identical with the divine nature—mind, or intelligence. It is this which reveals to us what is best for us—the ideal of a happiness which is the object of our real wish and the goal of all our efforts. But beyond and above the practical ideal of what is best *for man* begins to show itself another and still higher ideal—that of a life not distinctively human or in a narrow sense practical, yet capable of being participated in by man even under the actual circumstances of this world. For a time, however, this further and higher ideal is ignored.

The next book (Book VII.), is concerned partly with moral conditions, in which the agent seems to rise above the level of moral virtue or fall below that of moral vice, but partly and more largely with conditions in which the agent occupies a middle position between the two. Aristotle’s attention is here directed chiefly towards the phenomena of “Incontinence,” weakness of will or imperfect self-control. This condition was to the Greeks a matter of only too frequent experience, but it appeared to them peculiarly difficult to understand. How can a man know what is good or best for him, and yet chronically fail to act upon his knowledge? Socrates was driven to the paradox of denying the possibility, but the facts are too strong for him. Knowledge of the right rule may be present, nay the rightfulness of its authority may be acknowledged, and yet time after time it may be disobeyed; the will may be good and yet overmastered by the force of desire, so that the act done is contrary to the agent’s will. Nevertheless the act may be the agent’s, and the will therefore divided against itself. Aristotle is aware of the seriousness and difficulty of the problem, but in spite of the vividness with which he pictures, and the acuteness with which he analyses, the situation in which such action occurs, it cannot be said that he solves the problem. It is time that he rises above the abstract view of it as a conflict between reason and passion, recognising that passion is involved

in the knowledge which in conduct prevails or is overborne, and that the force which leads to the wrong act is not blind or ignorant passion, but always has some reason in it. But he tends to lapse back into the abstraction, and his final account is perplexed and obscure. He finds the source of the phenomenon in the nature of the desire for bodily pleasures, which is not irrational but has something rational in it. Such pleasures are not necessarily or inherently bad, as has sometimes been maintained; on the contrary, they are good, but only in certain amounts or under certain conditions, so that the will is often misled, hesitates, and is lost.

Books VIII. and IX. (on Friendship) are almost an interruption of the argument. The subject-matter of them was a favourite topic of ancient writers, and the treatment is smoother and more orderly than elsewhere in the *Ethics*. The argument is clear, and may be left without comment to the readers. These books contain a necessary and attractive complement to the somewhat dry account of Greek morality in the preceding books, and there are in them profound reflections on what may be called the metaphysics of friendship or love.

At the beginning of Book X. we return to the topic of Pleasure, which is now regarded from a different point of view. In Book VII. the antagonists were those who over-emphasised the irrationality or badness of Pleasure: here it is rather those who so exaggerate its value as to confuse or identify it with the good or Happiness. But there is offered us in this section much more than criticism of the errors of others. Answers are given both to the psychological question, "What is Pleasure?" and to the ethical question, "What is its value?" Pleasure, we are told, is the natural concomitant and index of perfect activity, distinguishable but inseparable from it—"the activity of a subject at its best acting upon an object at its best." It is therefore always and in itself a good, but its value rises and falls with that of the activity with which it is conjoined, and which it intensifies and perfects. Hence it follows that the highest and best pleasures are those which accompany the highest and best activity.

Pleasure is, therefore, a necessary element in the best life, but it is not the whole of it nor the principal ingredient. The value of a life depends upon the nature and worth of the activity which it involves; given the maximum of full free action, the maximum of pleasure necessary follows. But on what sort of life is such activity possible? This leads us back to the question, What is happiness? In what life can man find the fullest satisfaction for his desires? To this question Aristotle gives an answer which cannot but surprise us after what has preceded. True Happiness, great satisfaction, cannot be found by man in any form of "practical" life, no, not in the fullest and freest exercise possible of the "moral virtues," not in the life of the citizen or of the great soldier or statesman. To seek it there is to court failure and disappointment. It is to be found in the life of the onlooker, the disinterested spectator; or, to put it more distinctly, "in the life of the philosopher, the life of scientific and philosophic contemplation." The highest and most satisfying form of life possible to man is "the contemplative life"; it is only in a secondary sense and for those incapable of their life, that the practical or moral ideal is the best. It is time that such a life is not distinctively human, but it is the privilege of man to partake in it, and such participation, at however rare intervals and for however short a period, is the highest Happiness which human life can offer. All other activities have value only because and in so far as they render *this* life possible.

But it must not be forgotten that Aristotle conceives of this life as one of intense activity or energising: it is just this which gives it its supremacy. In spite of the almost religious fervour with which he speaks of it ("the most orthodox of his disciples" paraphrases his meaning by describing its content as "the service and vision of God"), it is clear that he identified it with the life of the philosopher, as he understood it, a life of ceaseless intellectual activity in which at least at times all the distractions and disturbances inseparable from practical life seemed to disappear and become as nothing. This ideal was partly an inheritance from the more ardent idealism of his master Plato, but partly it was the expression of personal experience.

The nobility of this ideal cannot be questioned; the conception of the end of man or a life lived for truth—of a life blissfully absorbed in the vision of truth—is a lofty and inspiring one. But we cannot resist certain criticisms upon its presentation by Aristotle: (1) the relation of it to the lower ideal of practice is left somewhat obscure; (2) it is described in such a way as renders its realisation possible only to a gifted few, and under exceptional circumstances; (3) it seems in various ways, as regards its content, to be unnecessarily and unjustifiably limited. But it must be borne in mind that this is a first endeavour to determine its principle, and that similar failures have attended the attempts to describe the "religious" or the "spiritual" ideals of life, which have continually been suggested by the apparently inherent limitations of the "practical" or "moral" life, which is the subject of Moral Philosophy.

The Moral Ideal to those who have most deeply reflected on it leads to the thought of an Ideal beyond and above it, which alone gives it meaning, but which seems to escape from definite conception by man. The richness and variety of this Ideal ceaselessly invite, but as ceaselessly defy, our attempts to imprison it in a definite formula or portray it in detailed imagination. Yet the thought of it is and remains inexpungable from our minds.

This conception of the best life is not forgotten in the *Politics*. The end of life in the state is itself well-living and well-doing—a life which helps to produce the best life. The great agency in the production of such life is the State operating through Law, which is Reason backed by Force. For its greatest efficiency there is required the development of a science of legislation. The main drift of what he says here is that the most desirable thing would be that the best reason of the community should be embodied in its laws. But so far as that is not possible, it still is true that anyone who would make himself and others better must become a miniature legislator—must study the general principles of law, morality, and education. The conception of [Grek: politikae] with which he opened the *Ethics* would serve as a guide to a father educating his children as well as to the legislator legislating for the state. Finding in his predecessors no developed doctrine on this subject, Aristotle proposes himself to undertake the construction of it, and sketches in advance the programme of the *Politics* in the concluding sentence of the *Ethics*. His ultimate object is to answer the questions, What is the best form of Polity, how should each be constituted, and what laws and customs should it adopt and employ? Not till this answer is given will “the philosophy of human affairs” be complete.

On looking back it will be seen that the discussion of the central topic of the nature and formation of character has expanded into a Philosophy of Human Conduct, merging at its beginning and end into metaphysics. The result is a Moral Philosophy set against a background of Political Theory and general Philosophy. The most characteristic features of this Moral Philosophy are due to the fact of its essentially teleological view of human life and action: (1) Every human activity, but especially every human practical activity, is directed towards a simple End discoverable by reflection, and this End is conceived of as the object of universal human desire, as something to be enjoyed, not as something which ought to be done or enacted. Aristotle’s Moral Philosophy is not hedonistic but it is eudæmonistic, the end is the enjoyment of Happiness, not the fulfilment of Duty. (2) Every human practical activity derives its value from its efficiency as a means to that end, it is good or bad, right or wrong, as it conduces or fails to conduce to Happiness. Thus his Moral Philosophy is essentially utilitarian or prudential. Right action presupposes Thought or Thinking, partly on the development of a clearer and distincter conception of the end of desire, partly as the deduction from that of rules which state the normally effective conditions of its realisation. The thinking involved in right conduct is calculation—calculation of means to an end fixed by nature and foreknowable. Action itself is at its best just the realisation of a scheme preconceived and thought out beforehand, commending itself by its inherent attractiveness or promise of enjoyment.

This view has the great advantage of exhibiting morality as essentially reasonable, but the accompanying disadvantage of lowering it into a somewhat prosaic and unideal Prudentialism, nor is it saved from this by the tacking on to it, by a sort of after-thought, of the second and higher Ideal—an addition which ruins the coherence of the account without really transmuting its substance. The source of our dissatisfaction with the whole theory lies deeper than in its tendency to identify the end with the maximum of enjoyment or satisfaction, or to regard the goodness or badness of acts and feelings as lying solely in their efficacy to produce such a result. It arises from the application to morality of the distinction of means and end. For this distinction, for all its plausibility and usefulness in ordinary thought and speech, cannot finally be maintained. In morality—and this is vital to its character—everything is both means and end, and so neither in distinction or separation, and all thinking about it which presupposes the finality of this distinction wanders into misconception and error. The thinking which really matters in conduct is not a thinking which imaginatively forecasts ideals which promise to fulfil desire, or calculates means to their attainment—that is sometimes useful, sometimes harmful, and always subordinate, but thinking which reveals to the agent the situation in which he is to act, both, that is, the universal situation on which as man he always and everywhere stands, and the ever-varying and ever-novel situation in which he as this individual, here and now, finds himself. In such knowledge of given or historic fact lie the natural determinants of his conduct, in such knowledge alone lies the condition of his freedom and his good.

But this does not mean that Moral Philosophy has not still much to learn from Aristotle’s *Ethics*. The work still remains one of the best introductions to a study of its important subject-matter, it spreads before us a view of the relevant facts, it reduces them to manageable compass and order, it raises some of the central problems, and makes acute and valuable suggestions towards their solution. Above all, it perpetually incites to renewed and independent reflection upon them.

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# CHAPTER 4: EPISTEMOLOGY

## "EPISTEMOLOGY" POWER POINT

### Epistemology

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## COMMENTARY ON DAVID HUME

Soon after completing his studies at Edinburgh, Scottish philosopher David Hume began writing his comprehensive statement of the views he believed would contribute to philosophy no less than Newton's had to science. But the public reception for the three books of his magisterial *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739) was less than cordial, and Hume abandoned his hopes of a philosophical career in order to support his family as a librarian, historian, diplomat, and political essayist, a course of action he described in the autobiographical *My Own Life* (1776). Hume's *Essays Moral and Political* (1741-1742) found some success, and the multi-volume *History of England* (1754-1762) finally secured the modest livelihood for which he had hoped. Although he spent most of his life trying to produce more effective statements of his philosophical views, he did not live to see the firm establishment of his reputation by the criticisms of *Kant* and much later appreciation of the **logical positivists**.

The central themes of Book I of the *Treatise* receive a somewhat more accessible treatment in *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (1748), a more popular summary of Hume's **empiricism**. According to Hume, little human knowledge can be derived from the deductively certain **relations of ideas**. Since the causal interactions of physical objects are known to us only as inherently uncertain **matters of fact**, Hume argued, our belief that they exhibit any **necessary connection** (however explicable) can never be rationally justified, but must be acknowledged to rest only upon our acquired **habits**. In similar fashion, Hume argued that we cannot justify our natural beliefs in the reality of the **self** or the **existence** of an **external world**. From all of this, he concluded that a severe (if mitigated) **skepticism** is the only defensible view of the world.

Hume recast the moral philosophy of the *Treatise's* Book III in *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751). In both texts Hume clearly maintained that human agency and moral obligation are best considered as **functions of human passions** rather than as the **dictates of reason**. In the posthumously published *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1780), Hume discussed the possibility of arriving at certain **knowledge of god** through the application of reason and considered defense of a **fideistic alternative**.

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# DAVID HUME: AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING (SECTION 2--"OF THE ORIGIN OF IDEAS")

Every one will readily allow, that there is a considerable difference between the perceptions of the mind, when a man feels the pain of excessive heat, or the pleasure of moderate warmth, and when he afterwards recalls to his memory this sensation, or anticipates it by his imagination. These faculties may mimic or copy the perceptions of the senses; but they never can entirely reach the force and vivacity of the original sentiment. The utmost we say of them, even when they operate with greatest vigour, is, that they represent their object in so lively a manner, that we could *almost* say we feel or see it: But, except the mind be disordered by disease or madness, they never can arrive at such a pitch of vivacity, as to render these perceptions altogether undistinguishable. All the colours of poetry, however splendid, can never paint natural objects in such a manner as to make the description be taken for a real landscape. The most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation.

We may observe a like distinction to run through all the other perceptions of the mind. A man in a fit of anger, is actuated in a very different manner from one who only thinks of that emotion. If you tell me, that any person is in love, I easily understand your meaning, and form a just conception of his situation; but never can mistake that conception for the real disorders and agitations of the passion. When we reflect on our past sentiments and affections, our thought is a faithful mirror, and copies its objects truly; but the colours which it employs are faint and dull, in comparison of those in which our original perceptions were clothed. It requires no nice discernment or metaphysical head to mark the distinction between them.

Here therefore we may divide all the perceptions of the mind into two classes or species, which are distinguished by their different degrees of force and vivacity. The less forcible and lively are commonly denominated *Thoughts* or *Ideas*. The other species want a name in our language, and in most others; I suppose, because it was not requisite for any, but philosophical purposes, to rank them under a general term or appellation. Let us, therefore, use a little freedom, and call them *Impressions*; employing that word in a sense somewhat different from the usual. By the term *impression*, then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will. And impressions are distinguished from ideas, which are the less lively perceptions, of which we are conscious, when we reflect on any of those sensations or movements above mentioned.

Nothing, at first view, may seem more unbounded than the thought of man, which not only escapes all human power and authority, but is not even restrained within the limits of nature and reality. To form monsters, and join incongruous shapes and appearances, costs the imagination no more trouble than to conceive the most natural and familiar objects. And while the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty; the thought can in an instant transport us into the most distant regions of the universe; or even beyond the universe, into the unbounded chaos, where nature is supposed to lie in total confusion. What never was seen, or heard of, may yet be conceived; nor is any thing beyond the power of thought, except what implies an absolute contradiction.

But though our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find, upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two consistent ideas, *gold*, and *mountain*, with which we were formerly acquainted. A virtuous horse we can conceive; because, from our own feeling, we can conceive virtue; and this we may unite to the figure and shape of a horse, which is an animal familiar to us. In short, all the materials of thinking are derived either from our outward or inward sentiment: the mixture and composition of these belongs alone to the mind and will. Or, to express myself in philosophical language, all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones.

To prove this, the two following arguments will, I hope, be sufficient. First, when we analyze our thoughts or ideas, however compounded or sublime, we always find that they resolve themselves into such simple ideas as were copied from a precedent feeling or sentiment. Even those ideas, which, at first view, seem the most wide of this origin, are found, upon a nearer scrutiny, to be derived from it. The idea of God, as meaning an infinitely

intelligent, wise, and good Being, arises from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and augmenting, without limit, those qualities of goodness and wisdom. We may prosecute this enquiry to what length we please; where we shall always find, that every idea which we examine is copied from a similar impression. Those who would assert that this position is not universally true nor without exception, have only one, and that an easy method of refuting it; by producing that idea, which, in their opinion, is not derived from this source. It will then be incumbent on us, if we would maintain our doctrine, to produce the impression, or lively perception, which corresponds to it.

Secondly. If it happen, from a defect of the organ, that a man is not susceptible of any species of sensation, we always find that he is as little susceptible of the correspondent ideas. A blind man can form no notion of colours; a deaf man of sounds. Restore either of them that sense in which he is deficient; by opening this new inlet for his sensations, you also open an inlet for the ideas; and he finds no difficulty in conceiving these objects. The case is the same, if the object, proper for exciting any sensation, has never been applied to the organ. A Laplander or Negro has no notion of the relish of wine. And though there are few or no instances of a like deficiency in the mind, where a person has never felt or is wholly incapable of a sentiment or passion that belongs to his species; yet we find the same observation to take place in a less degree. A man of mild manners can form no idea of inveterate revenge or cruelty; nor can a selfish heart easily conceive the heights of friendship and generosity. It is readily allowed, that other beings may possess many senses of which we can have no conception; because the ideas of them have never been introduced to us in the only manner by which an idea can have access to the mind, to wit, by the actual feeling and sensation.

There is, however, one contradictory phenomenon, which may prove that it is not absolutely impossible for ideas to arise, independent of their correspondent impressions. I believe it will readily be allowed, that the several distinct ideas of colour, which enter by the eye, or those of sound, which are conveyed by the ear, are really different from each other; though, at the same time, resembling. Now if this be true of different colours, it must be no less so of the different shades of the same colour; and each shade produces a distinct idea, independent of the rest. For if this should be denied, it is possible, by the continual gradation of shades, to run a colour insensibly into what is most remote from it; and if you will not allow any of the means to be different, you cannot, without absurdity, deny the extremes to be the same. Suppose, therefore, a person to have enjoyed his sight for thirty years, and to have become perfectly acquainted with colours of all kinds except one particular shade of blue, for instance, which it never has been his fortune to meet with. Let all the different shades of that colour, except that single one, be placed before him, descending gradually from the deepest to the lightest; it is plain that he will perceive a blank, where that shade is wanting, and will be sensible that there is a greater distance in that place between the contiguous colours than in any other. Now I ask, whether it be possible for him, from his own imagination, to supply this deficiency, and raise up to himself the idea of that particular shade, though it had never been conveyed to him by his senses? I believe there are few but will be of opinion that he can: and this may serve as a proof that the simple ideas are not always, in every instance, derived from the correspondent impressions; though this instance is so singular, that it is scarcely worth our observing, and does not merit that for it alone we should alter our general maxim.

Here, therefore, is a proposition, which not only seems, in itself, simple and intelligible; but, if a proper use were made of it, might render every dispute equally intelligible, and banish all that jargon, which has so long taken possession of metaphysical reasonings, and drawn disgrace upon them. All ideas, especially abstract ones, are naturally faint and obscure: the mind has but a slender hold of them: they are apt to be confounded with other resembling ideas; and when we have often employed any term, though without a distinct meaning, we are apt to imagine it has a determinate idea annexed to it. On the contrary, all impressions, that is, all sensations, either outward or inward, are strong and vivid: the limits between them are more exactly determined: nor is it easy to fall into any error or mistake with regard to them. When we entertain, therefore, any suspicion that a philosophical term is employed without any meaning or idea (as is but too frequent), we need but enquire, *from what impression is that supposed idea derived?* And if it be impossible to assign any, this will serve to confirm our suspicion. By bringing ideas into so clear a light we may reasonably hope to remove all dispute, which may arise, concerning their nature and reality.

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# DAVID HUME: AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING (SECTION 3--"OF THE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS")

It is evident that there is a principle of connexion between the different thoughts or ideas of the mind, and that, in their appearance to the memory or imagination, they introduce each other with a certain degree of method and regularity. In our more serious thinking or discourse this is so observable that any particular thought, which breaks in upon the regular tract or chain of ideas, is immediately remarked and rejected. And even in our wildest and most wandering reveries, nay in our very dreams, we shall find, if we reflect, that the imagination ran not altogether at adventures, but that there was still a connexion upheld among the different ideas, which succeeded each other. Were the loosest and freest conversation to be transcribed, there would immediately be observed something which connected it in all its transitions. Or where this is wanting, the person who broke the thread of discourse might still inform you, that there had secretly revolved in his mind a succession of thought, which had gradually led him from the subject of conversation. Among different languages, even where we cannot suspect the least connexion or communication, it is found, that the words, expressive of ideas, the most compounded, do yet nearly correspond to each other: a certain proof that the simple ideas, comprehended in the compound ones, were bound together by some universal principle, which had an equal influence on all mankind.

Though it be too obvious to escape observation, that different ideas are connected together; I do not find that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me, there appear to be only three principles of connexion among ideas, namely, *Resemblance*, *Contiguity* in time or place, and *Cause or Effect*.

That these principles serve to connect ideas will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original<sup>2</sup>: the mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an enquiry or discourse concerning the others<sup>3</sup>: and if we think of a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it<sup>4</sup>. But that this enumeration is complete, and that there are no other principles of association except these, may be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own satisfaction. All we can do, in such cases, is to run over several instances, and examine carefully the principle which binds the different thoughts to each other, never stopping till we render the principle as general as possible. The more instances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more assurance shall we acquire, that the enumeration, which we form from the whole, is complete and entire.

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# DAVID HUME: AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING (PART 7--"OF THE IDEA OF NECESSARY CONNECTION")

## Part 1

The great advantage of the mathematical sciences above the moral consists in this, that the ideas of the former, being sensible, are always clear and determinate, the smallest distinction between them is immediately

perceptible, and the same terms are still expressive of the same ideas, without ambiguity or variation. An oval is never mistaken for a circle, nor an hyperbola for an ellipsis. The isosceles and scalenum are distinguished by boundaries more exact than vice and virtue, right and wrong. If any term be defined in geometry, the mind readily, of itself, substitutes, on all occasions, the definition for the term defined: Or even when no definition is employed, the object itself may be presented to the senses, and by that means be steadily and clearly apprehended. But the finer sentiments of the mind, the operations of the understanding, the various agitations of the passions, though really in themselves distinct, easily escape us, when surveyed by reflection; nor is it in our power to recal the original object, as often as we have occasion to contemplate it. Ambiguity, by this means, is gradually introduced into our reasonings: Similar objects are readily taken to be the same: And the conclusion becomes at last very wide of the premises.

One may safely, however, affirm, that, if we consider these sciences in a proper light, their advantages and disadvantages nearly compensate each other, and reduce both of them to a state of equality. If the mind, with greater facility, retains the ideas of geometry clear and determinate, it must carry on a much longer and more intricate chain of reasoning, and compare ideas much wider of each other, in order to reach the abstruser truths of that science. And if moral ideas are apt, without extreme care, to fall into obscurity and confusion, the inferences are always much shorter in these disquisitions, and the intermediate steps, which lead to the conclusion, much fewer than in the sciences which treat of quantity and number. In reality, there is scarcely a proposition in Euclid so simple, as not to consist of more parts, than are to be found in any moral reasoning which runs not into chimera and conceit. Where we trace the principles of the human mind through a few steps, we may be very well satisfied with our progress; considering how soon nature throws a bar to all our enquiries concerning causes, and reduces us to an acknowledgment of our ignorance. The chief obstacle, therefore, to our improvement in the moral or metaphysical sciences is the obscurity of the ideas, and ambiguity of the terms. The principal difficulty in the mathematics is the length of inferences and compass of thought, requisite to the forming of any conclusion. And, perhaps, our progress in natural philosophy is chiefly retarded by the want of proper experiments and phaenomena, which are often discovered by chance, and cannot always be found, when requisite, even by the most diligent and prudent enquiry. As moral philosophy seems hitherto to have received less improvement than either geometry or physics, we may conclude, that, if there be any difference in this respect among these sciences, the difficulties, which obstruct the progress of the former, require superior care and capacity to be surmounted.

There are no ideas, which occur in metaphysics, more obscure and uncertain, than those of *power, force, energy* or *necessary connexion*, of which it is every moment necessary for us to treat in all our disquisitions. We shall, therefore, endeavour, in this section, to fix, if possible, the precise meaning of these terms, and thereby remove some part of that obscurity, which is so much complained of in this species of philosophy.

It seems a proposition, which will not admit of much dispute, that all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impressions, or, in other words, that it is impossible for us to *think* of any thing, which we have not antecedently *felt*, either by our external or internal senses. I have endeavoured to explain and prove this proposition, and have expressed my hopes, that, by a proper application of it, men may reach a greater clearness and precision in philosophical reasonings, than what they have hitherto been able to attain. Complex ideas may, perhaps, be well known by definition, which is nothing but an enumeration of those parts or simple ideas, that compose them. But when we have pushed up definitions to the most simple ideas, and find still some ambiguity and obscurity; what resource are we then possessed of? By what invention can we throw light upon these ideas, and render them altogether precise and determinate to our intellectual view? Produce the impressions or original sentiments, from which the ideas are copied. These impressions are all strong and sensible. They admit not of ambiguity. They are not only placed in a full light themselves, but may throw light on their correspondent ideas, which lie in obscurity. And by this means, we may, perhaps, attain a new microscope or species of optics, by which, in the moral sciences, the most minute, and most simple ideas may be so enlarged as to fall readily under our apprehension, and be equally known with the grossest and most sensible ideas, that can be the object of our enquiry.

To be fully acquainted, therefore, with the idea of power or necessary connexion, let us examine its impression; and in order to find the impression with greater certainty, let us search for it in all the sources, from which it may possibly be derived.

When we look about us towards external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able, in a single instance, to discover any power or necessary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other. We only find, that the one does actually, in fact, follow the other. The impulse of one billiard-ball is attended with motion in the second. This is the whole that appears to the *outward* senses. The mind feels no sentiment or *inward* impression from this succession of objects:

Consequently, there is not, in any single, particular instance of cause and effect, any thing which can suggest the idea of power or necessary connexion.

From the first appearance of an object, we never can conjecture what effect will result from it. But were the power or energy of any cause discoverable by the mind, we could foresee the effect, even without experience; and might, at first, pronounce with certainty concerning it, by mere dint of thought and reasoning.

In reality, there is no part of matter, that does ever, by its sensible qualities, discover any power or energy, or give us ground to imagine, that it could produce any thing, or be followed by any other object, which we could denominate its effect. Solidity, extension, motion; these qualities are all complete in themselves, and never point out any other event which may result from them. The scenes of the universe are continually shifting, and one object follows another in an uninterrupted succession; but the power of force, which actuates the whole machine, is entirely concealed from us, and never discovers itself in any of the sensible qualities of body. We know, that, in fact, heat is a constant attendant of flame; but what is the connexion between them, we have no room so much as to conjecture or imagine. It is impossible, therefore, that the idea of power can be derived from the contemplation of bodies, in single instances of their operation; because no bodies ever discover any power, which can be the original of this idea.<sup>11</sup>

Since, therefore, external objects as they appear to the senses, give us no idea of power or necessary connexion, by their operation in particular instances, let us see, whether this idea be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds, and be copied from any internal impression. It may be said, that we are every moment conscious of internal power; while we feel, that, by the simple command of our will, we can move the organs of our body, or direct the faculties of our mind. An act of volition produces motion in our limbs, or raises a new idea in our imagination. This influence of the will we know by consciousness. Hence we acquire the idea of power or energy; and are certain, that we ourselves and all other intelligent beings are possessed of power. This idea, then, is an idea of reflection, since it arises from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and on the command which is exercised by will, both over the organs of the body and faculties of the soul.

We shall proceed to examine this pretension; and first with regard to the influence of volition over the organs of the body. This influence, we may observe, is a fact, which, like all other natural events, can be known only by experience, and can never be foreseen from any apparent energy or power in the cause, which connects it with the effect, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other. The motion of our body follows upon the command of our will. Of this we are every moment conscious. But the means, by which this is effected; the energy, by which the will performs so extraordinary an operation; of this we are so far from being immediately conscious, that it must for ever escape our most diligent enquiry.

For *first*; is there any principle in all nature more mysterious than the union of soul with body; by which a supposed spiritual substance acquires such an influence over a material one, that the most refined thought is able to actuate the grossest matter? Were we empowered, by a secret wish, to remove mountains, or control the planets in their orbit; this extensive authority would not be more extraordinary, nor more beyond our comprehension. But if by consciousness we perceived any power or energy in the will, we must know this power; we must know its connexion with the effect; we must know the secret union of soul and body, and the nature of both these substances; by which the one is able to operate, in so many instances, upon the other.

*Secondly*, We are not able to move all the organs of the body with a like authority; though we cannot assign any reason besides experience, for so remarkable a difference between one and the other. Why has the will an influence over the tongue and fingers, not over the heart or liver? This question would never embarrass us, were we conscious of a power in the former case, not in the latter. We should then perceive, independent of experience, why the authority of will over the organs of the body is circumscribed within such particular limits. Being in that case fully acquainted with the power or force, by which it operates, we should also know, why its influence reaches precisely to such boundaries, and no farther.

A man, suddenly struck with palsy in the leg or arm, or who had newly lost those members, frequently endeavours, at first to move them, and employ them in their usual offices. Here he is as much conscious of power to command such limbs, as a man in perfect health is conscious of power to actuate any member which remains in its natural state and condition. But consciousness never deceives. Consequently, neither in the one case nor in the other, are we ever conscious of any power. We learn the influence of our will from experience alone. And experience only teaches us, how one event constantly follows another; without instructing us in the secret connexion, which binds them together, and renders them inseparable.

*Thirdly*, We learn from anatomy, that the immediate object of power in voluntary motion, is not the member itself which is moved, but certain muscles, and nerves, and animal spirits, and, perhaps, something still more minute and more unknown, through which the motion is successively propagated, ere it reach the member itself whose motion is the immediate object of volition. Can there be a more certain proof, that the power, by which this whole operation is performed, so far from being directly and fully known by an inward sentiment or consciousness, is, to the last degree mysterious and unintelligible? Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourselves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced: This event produces another, equally unknown: Till at last, through a long succession, the desired event is produced. But if the original power were felt, it must be known: Were it known, its effect also must be known; since all power is relative to its effect. And *vice versa*, if the effect be not known, the power cannot be known nor felt. How indeed can we be conscious of a power to move our limbs, when we have no such power; but only that to move certain animal spirits, which, though they produce at last the motion of our limbs, yet operate in such a manner as is wholly beyond our comprehension?

We may, therefore, conclude from the whole, I hope, without any temerity, though with assurance; that our idea of power is not copied from any sentiment or consciousness of power within ourselves, when we give rise to animal motion, or apply our limbs to their proper use and office. That their motion follows the command of the will is a matter of common experience, like other natural events: But the power or energy by which this is effected, like that in other natural events, is unknown and inconceivable.<sup>12</sup>

Shall we then assert, that we are conscious of a power or energy in our own minds, when, by an act or command of our will, we raise up a new idea, fix the mind to the contemplation of it, turn it on all sides, and at last dismiss it for some other idea, when we think that we have surveyed it with sufficient accuracy? I believe the same arguments will prove, that even this command of the will gives us no real idea of force or energy.

*First*, It must be allowed, that, when we know a power, we know that very circumstance in the cause, by which it is enabled to produce the effect: For these are supposed to be synonymous. We must, therefore, know both the cause and effect, and the relation between them. But do we pretend to be acquainted with the nature of the human soul and the nature of an idea, or the aptitude of the one to produce the other? This is a real creation; a production of something out of nothing: Which implies a power so great, that it may seem, at first sight, beyond the reach of any being, less than infinite. At least it must be owned, that such a power is not felt, nor known, nor even conceivable by the mind. We only feel the event, namely, the existence of an idea, consequent to a command of the will: But the manner, in which this operation is performed, the power by which it is produced, is entirely beyond our comprehension.

*Secondly*, The command of the mind over itself is limited, as well as its command over the body; and these limits are not known by reason, or any acquaintance with the nature of cause and effect, but only by experience and observation, as in all other natural events and in the operation of external objects. Our authority over our sentiments and passions is much weaker than that over our ideas; and even the latter authority is circumscribed within very narrow boundaries. Will any one pretend to assign the ultimate reason of these boundaries, or show why the power is deficient in one case, not in another.

*Thirdly*, This self-command is very different at different times. A man in health possesses more of it than one languishing with sickness. We are more master of our thoughts in the morning than in the evening: Fasting, than after a full meal. Can we give any reason for these variations, except experience? Where then is the power, of which we pretend to be conscious? Is there not here, either in a spiritual or material substance, or both, some secret mechanism or structure of parts, upon which the effect depends, and which, being entirely unknown to us, renders the power or energy of the will equally unknown and incomprehensible?

Volition is surely an act of the mind, with which we are sufficiently acquainted. Reflect upon it. Consider it on all sides. Do you find anything in it like this creative power, by which it raises from nothing a new idea, and with a kind of *Fiat*, imitates the omnipotence of its Maker, if I may be allowed so to speak, who called forth into existence all the various scenes of nature? So far from being conscious of this energy in the will, it requires as certain experience as that of which we are possessed, to convince us that such extraordinary effects do ever result from a simple act of volition.

The generality of mankind never find any difficulty in accounting for the more common and familiar operations of nature—such as the descent of heavy bodies, the growth of plants, the generation of animals, or the nourishment of bodies by food: But suppose that, in all these cases, they perceive the very force or energy of the cause, by which it is connected with its effect, and is for ever infallible in its operation. They acquire, by long habit, such a turn of mind, that, upon the appearance of the cause, they immediately expect with assurance its usual attendant,

and hardly conceive it possible that any other event could result from it. It is only on the discovery of extraordinary phaenomena, such as earthquakes, pestilence, and prodigies of any kind, that they find themselves at a loss to assign a proper cause, and to explain the manner in which the effect is produced by it. It is usual for men, in such difficulties, to have recourse to some invisible intelligent principle<sup>13</sup> as the immediate cause of that event which surprises them, and which, they think, cannot be accounted for from the common powers of nature. But philosophers, who carry their scrutiny a little farther, immediately perceive that, even in the most familiar events, the energy of the cause is as unintelligible as in the most unusual, and that we only learn by experience the frequent *Conjunction* of objects, without being ever able to comprehend anything like *Connexion* between them.

Here then, many philosophers think themselves obliged by reason to have recourse, on all occasions, to the same principle, which the vulgar never appeal to but in cases that appear miraculous and supernatural. They acknowledge mind and intelligence to be, not only the ultimate and original cause of all things, but the immediate and sole cause of every event which appears in nature. They pretend that those objects which are commonly denominated *causes*, are in reality nothing but *occasions*; and that the true and direct principle of every effect is not any power or force in nature, but a volition of the Supreme Being, who wills that such particular objects should for ever be conjoined with each other. Instead of saying that one billiard-ball moves another by a force which it has derived from the author of nature, it is the Deity himself, they say, who, by a particular volition, moves the second ball, being determined to this operation by the impulse of the first ball, in consequence of those general laws which he has laid down to himself in the government of the universe. But philosophers advancing still in their inquiries, discover that, as we are totally ignorant of the power on which depends the mutual operation of bodies, we are no less ignorant of that power on which depends the operation of mind on body, or of body on mind; nor are we able, either from our senses or consciousness, to assign the ultimate principle in one case more than in the other. The same ignorance, therefore, reduces them to the same conclusion. They assert that the Deity is the immediate cause of the union between soul and body; and that they are not the organs of sense, which, being agitated by external objects, produce sensations in the mind; but that it is a particular volition of our omnipotent Maker, which excites such a sensation, in consequence of such a motion in the organ. In like manner, it is not any energy in the will that produces local motion in our members: It is God himself, who is pleased to second our will, in itself impotent, and to command that motion which we erroneously attribute to our own power and efficacy. Nor do philosophers stop at this conclusion. They sometimes extend the same inference to the mind itself, in its internal operations. Our mental vision or conception of ideas is nothing but a revelation made to us by our Maker. When we voluntarily turn our thoughts to any object, and raise up its image in the fancy, it is not the will which creates that idea: It is the universal Creator, who discovers it to the mind, and renders it present to us.

Thus, according to these philosophers, every thing is full of God. Not content with the principle, that nothing exists but by his will, that nothing possesses any power but by his concession: They rob nature, and all created beings, of every power, in order to render their dependence on the Deity still more sensible and immediate. They consider not that, by this theory, they diminish, instead of magnifying, the grandeur of those attributes, which they affect so much to celebrate. It argues surely more power in the Deity to delegate a certain degree of power to inferior creatures than to produce every thing by his own immediate volition. It argues more wisdom to contrive at first the fabric of the world with such perfect foresight that, of itself, and by its proper operation, it may serve all the purposes of providence, than if the great Creator were obliged every moment to adjust its parts, and animate by his breath all the wheels of that stupendous machine.

But if we would have a more philosophical confutation of this theory, perhaps the two following reflections may suffice.

*First* it seems to me that this theory of the universal energy and operation of the Supreme Being is too bold ever to carry conviction with it to a man, sufficiently apprized of the weakness of human reason, and the narrow limits to which it is confined in all its operations. Though the chain of arguments which conduct to it were ever so logical, there must arise a strong suspicion, if not an absolute assurance, that it has carried us quite beyond the reach of our faculties, when it leads to conclusions so extraordinary, and so remote from common life and experience. We are got into fairy land, long ere we have reached the last steps of our theory; and *there* we have no reason to trust our common methods of argument, or to think that our usual analogies and probabilities have any authority. Our line is too short to fathom such immense abysses. And however we may flatter ourselves that we are guided, in every step which we take, by a kind of verisimilitude and experience, we may be assured that this fancied experience has no authority when we thus apply it to subjects that lie entirely out of the sphere of experience. But on this we shall have occasion to touch afterwards.<sup>14</sup>

*Secondly*, I cannot perceive any force in the arguments on which this theory is founded. We are ignorant, it is true, of the manner in which bodies operate on each other: Their force or energy is entirely incomprehensible: But

are we not equally ignorant of the manner or force by which a mind, even the supreme mind, operates either on itself or on body? Whence, I beseech you, do we acquire any idea of it? We have no sentiment or consciousness of this power in ourselves. We have no idea of the Supreme Being but what we learn from reflection on our own faculties. Were our ignorance, therefore, a good reason for rejecting any thing, we should be led into that principle of denying all energy in the Supreme Being as much as in the grossest matter. We surely comprehend as little the operations of one as of the other. Is it more difficult to conceive that motion may arise from impulse than that it may arise from volition? All we know is our profound ignorance in both cases<sup>15</sup>.

## Part 2

But to hasten to a conclusion of this argument, which is already drawn out to too great a length: We have sought in vain for an idea of power or necessary connexion in all the sources from which we could suppose it to be derived. It appears that, in single instances of the operation of bodies, we never can, by our utmost scrutiny, discover any thing but one event following another, without being able to comprehend any force or power by which the cause operates, or any connexion between it and its supposed effect. The same difficulty occurs in contemplating the operations of mind on body—where we observe the motion of the latter to follow upon the volition of the former, but are not able to observe or conceive the tie which binds together the motion and volition, or the energy by which the mind produces this effect. The authority of the will over its own faculties and ideas is not a whit more comprehensible: So that, upon the whole, there appears not, throughout all nature, any one instance of connexion which is conceivable by us. All events seem entirely loose and separate. One event follows another; but we never can observe any tie between them. They seem *conjoined*, but never *connected*. And as we can have no idea of any thing which never appeared to our outward sense or inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion *seems* to be that we have no idea of connexion or power at all, and that these words are absolutely without any meaning, when employed either in philosophical reasonings or common life.

But there still remains one method of avoiding this conclusion, and one source which we have not yet examined. When any natural object or event is presented, it is impossible for us, by any sagacity or penetration, to discover, or even conjecture, without experience, what event will result from it, or to carry our foresight beyond that object which is immediately present to the memory and senses. Even after one instance or experiment where we have observed a particular event to follow upon another, we are not entitled to form a general rule, or foretell what will happen in like cases; it being justly esteemed an unpardonable temerity to judge of the whole course of nature from one single experiment, however accurate or certain. But when one particular species of event has always, in all instances, been conjoined with another, we make no longer any scruple of foretelling one upon the appearance of the other, and of employing that reasoning, which can alone assure us of any matter of fact or existence. We then call the one object, *Cause*; the other, *Effect*. We suppose that there is some connexion between them; some power in the one, by which it infallibly produces the other, and operates with the greatest certainty and strongest necessity.

It appears, then, that this idea of a necessary connexion among events arises from a number of similar instances which occur of the constant conjunction of these events; nor can that idea ever be suggested by any one of these instances, surveyed in all possible lights and positions. But there is nothing in a number of instances, different from every single instance, which is supposed to be exactly similar; except only, that after a repetition of similar instances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event, to expect its usual attendant, and to believe that it will exist. This connexion, therefore, which we *feel* in the mind, this customary transition of the imagination from one object to its usual attendant, is the sentiment or impression from which we form the idea of power or necessary connexion. Nothing farther is in the case. Contemplate the subject on all sides; you will never find any other origin of that idea. This is the sole difference between one instance, from which we can never receive the idea of connexion, and a number of similar instances, by which it is suggested. The first time a man saw the communication of motion by impulse, as by the shock of two billiard balls, he could not pronounce that the one event was *connected*: but only that it was *conjoined* with the other. After he has observed several instances of this nature, he then pronounces them to be *connected*. What alteration has happened to give rise to this new idea of *connexion*? Nothing but that he now *feels* these events to be connected in his imagination, and can readily foretell the existence of one from the appearance of the other. When we say, therefore, that one object is connected with another, we mean only that they have acquired a connexion in our thought, and give rise to this inference, by which they become proofs of each other's existence: A conclusion which is somewhat extraordinary, but which seems founded on sufficient evidence. Nor will its evidence be weakened by any general diffidence of the understanding, or sceptical suspicion concerning every conclusion which is new and extraordinary. No conclusions can be more agreeable to scepticism than such as make discoveries concerning the weakness and narrow limits of human reason and capacity.

And what stronger instance can be produced of the surprising ignorance and weakness of the understanding than the present? For surely, if there be any relation among objects which it imports to us to know perfectly, it is that of cause and effect. On this are founded all our reasonings concerning matter of fact or existence. By means of it alone we attain any assurance concerning objects which are removed from the present testimony of our memory and senses. The only immediate utility of all sciences, is to teach us, how to control and regulate future events by their causes. Our thoughts and enquiries are, therefore, every moment, employed about this relation: Yet so imperfect are the ideas which we form concerning it, that it is impossible to give any just definition of cause, except what is drawn from something extraneous and foreign to it. Similar objects are always conjoined with similar. Of this we have experience. Suitably to this experience, therefore, we may define a cause to be *an object, followed by another, and where all the objects similar to the first are followed by objects similar to the second*. Or in other words *where, if the first object had not been, the second never had existed*. The appearance of a cause always conveys the mind, by a customary transition, to the idea of the effect. Of this also we have experience. We may, therefore, suitably to this experience, form another definition of cause, and call it, *an object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to that other*. But though both these definitions be drawn from circumstances foreign to the cause, we cannot remedy this inconvenience, or attain any more perfect definition, which may point out that circumstance in the cause, which gives it a connexion with its effect. We have no idea of this connexion, nor even any distinct notion what it is we desire to know, when we endeavour at a conception of it. We say, for instance, that the vibration of this string is the cause of this particular sound. But what do we mean by that affirmation? We either mean *that this vibration is followed by this sound, and that all similar vibrations have been followed by similar sounds*: Or, *that this vibration is followed by this sound, and that upon the appearance of one the mind anticipates the senses, and forms immediately an idea of the other*. We may consider the relation of cause and effect in either of these two lights; but beyond these, we have no idea of it. <sup>16</sup>

To recapitulate, therefore, the reasonings of this section: Every idea is copied from some preceding impression or sentiment; and where we cannot find any impression, we may be certain that there is no idea. In all single instances of the operation of bodies or minds, there is nothing that produces any impression, nor consequently can suggest any idea of power or necessary connexion. But when many uniform instances appear, and the same object is always followed by the same event; we then begin to entertain the notion of cause and connexion. We then *feel* a new sentiment or impression, to wit, a customary connexion in the thought or imagination between one object and its usual attendant; and this sentiment is the original of that idea which we seek for. For as this idea arises from a number of similar instances, and not from any single instance, it must arise from that circumstance, in which the number of instances differ from every individual instance. But this customary connexion or transition of the imagination is the only circumstance in which they differ. In every other particular they are alike. The first instance which we saw of motion communicated by the shock of two billiard balls (to return to this obvious illustration) is exactly similar to any instance that may, at present, occur to us; except only, that we could not, at first, *infer* one event from the other; which we are enabled to do at present, after so long a course of uniform experience. I know not whether the reader will readily apprehend this reasoning. I am afraid that, should I multiply words about it, or throw it into a greater variety of lights, it would only become more obscure and intricate. In all abstract reasonings there is one point of view which, if we can happily hit, we shall go farther towards illustrating the subject than by all the eloquence and copious expression in the world. This point of view we should endeavour to reach, and reserve the flowers of rhetoric for subjects which are more adapted to them.

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## COMMENTARY ON RENE DESCARTES

After receiving a sound education in mathematics, classics, and law at La Flèche and Poitiers, René Descartes embarked on a brief career in military service with Prince Maurice in Holland and Bavaria. Unsatisfied with **scholastic** philosophy and troubled by **skepticism** of the sort expounded by **Montaigne**, Descartes soon conceived a comprehensive plan for applying mathematical methods in order to achieve perfect certainty in human knowledge. During a twenty-year period of secluded life in Holland, he produced the body of work that secured his philosophical reputation. Descartes moved to Sweden in 1649, but did not survive his first winter there.

Although he wrote extensively, Descartes chose not to publish his earliest efforts at expressing the universal method and deriving its consequences. The *Regulae ad directionem ingenii* (*Rules for the Direction of the Mind*) (1628) contain his first full statement of the principles underlying the method and his confidence in the success of their application.

In *Le Monde* (*The World*) (1634), Descartes clearly espoused a Copernican astronomy, but he withheld the book from the public upon learning of Galileo's condemnation.

Descartes finally presented (in French) his **rationalist** vision of the progress of human knowledge in the *Discours de la méthode pour bien conduire sa Raison et chercher la Vérité dans les Sciences* (*Discourse on Method*) (1637). In this **expository essay**, Descartes assessed the deficient outcomes of a traditional education, proposed a set of rules with which to make a new start, and described the original experience upon which his hope for unifying human knowledge was based. The final sections of the *Discourse* and the essays (on dipotric, meteors, and geometry) appended to it illustrate **the consequences** of employing this method.

A few years later, Descartes offered (in Latin) **a more formal exposition** of his central tenets in *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia* (*Meditations on First Philosophy*) (1641).

After an expanded statement of the **method of doubt**, he argued that even **the most dire skepticism** is overcome by the certainty of **one's own existence** as **a thinking thing**. From this beginning, he believed it possible to use our **clear and distinct ideas** to demonstrate **the existence of god**, to establish the reliability of our reason generally despite the possibility of **error**, to deduce the **essence of body**, and to prove that **material things do exist**. On these grounds, Descartes defended a strict **dualism**, according to which **the mind and body are wholly distinct**, even though it seems evident that they interact. The *Meditations* were published together with an extensive set of objections (by *Hobbes*, *Gassendi*, *Arnauld*, and others) and Descartes's replies. Descartes later attempted a more systematic exposition of his views in the *Principia Philosophiae* (*Principles of Philosophy*) (1644) and an explanation of human emotion in *Les Passions de L'Ame* (*The Passions of the Soul*)

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## RENE DESCARTES: MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST PHILOSOPHY (MEDITATION 1--"OF THE THINGS ON WHICH WE MAY DOUBT")

Several years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted, even from my youth, many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterward based on such principles was highly doubtful; and from that time I was convinced of the necessity of undertaking once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew the work of building from the foundation, if I desired to establish a firm and abiding superstructure in the sciences. But as this enterprise appeared to me to be one of great magnitude, I waited until I had attained an age so mature as to leave me no hope that at any stage of life more advanced I should be better able to execute my design. On this account, I have delayed so long that I should henceforth consider I was doing wrong were I still to consume in deliberation any of the time that now remains for action. To-day, then, since I have opportunely freed my mind from all cares [and am happily disturbed by no passions], and since I am in the secure possession of leisure in a peaceable retirement, I will at length apply myself earnestly and freely to the general [220] overthrow of all my former opinions. But, to this end, it will not be necessary for me to show that the whole of these are false—a point, perhaps, which I shall never reach; but as even now my reason convinces me that I ought not the less carefully to withhold belief from what is not entirely certain and indubitable, than from what is manifestly false, it will be sufficient to justify the rejection of the whole if I shall find in each some ground for doubt. Nor for this purpose will it be necessary even to deal with each belief individually,

which would be truly an endless labor; but, as the removal from below of the foundation necessarily involves the downfall of the whole edifice, I will at once approach the criticism of the principles on which all my former beliefs rested.

All that I have, up to this moment, accepted as possessed of the highest truth and certainty, I received either from or through the senses. I observed, however, that these sometimes misled us; and it is the part of prudence not to place absolute confidence in that by which we have even once been deceived.

But it may be said, perhaps, that, although the senses occasionally mislead us respecting minute objects, and such as are so far removed from us as to be beyond the reach of close observation, there are yet many other of their informations (presentations), of the truth of which it is manifestly impossible to doubt; as for example, that I am in this place, seated by the fire, clothed in a winter dressing gown, that I hold in my hands this piece of paper, with other intimations of the same nature. But how could I deny that I possess these hands and this body, and withal escape being classed with persons in a state of insanity, whose brains are so disordered: and clouded by dark bilious vapors as to cause them pertinaciously to assert that they are monarchs when they are in the greatest poverty; or clothed [in gold] and purple when destitute of any covering; or that their head is made of clay, their body of glass, or that they are gourds? I should certainly be not less insane than they, were I to regulate my procedure according to examples so extravagant.

Though this be true, I must nevertheless here consider that I am a man, and that, consequently, I am in the habit of sleeping, and representing to myself in dreams [221] those same things, or even sometimes others less probable, which the insane think are presented to them in their waking moments. How often have I dreamt that I was in these familiar circumstances, that I was dressed, and occupied this place by the fire, when I was lying undressed in bed? At the present moment, however, I certainly look upon this paper with eyes wide awake; the head which I now move is not asleep; I extend this hand consciously and with express purpose, and I perceive it; the occurrences in sleep are not so distinct as all this. But I cannot forget that, at other times I have been deceived in sleep by similar illusions; and, attentively considering those cases, I perceive so clearly that there exist no certain marks by which the state of waking can ever be distinguished from sleep, that I feel greatly astonished; and in amazement I almost persuade myself that I am now dreaming.

Let us suppose, then, that we are dreaming, and that all these particulars — namely, the opening of the eyes, the motion of the head, the forth-putting of the hands — are merely illusions; and even that we really possess neither an entire body nor hands such as we see. Nevertheless it must be admitted at least that the objects which appear to us in sleep are, as it were, painted representations which could not have been formed unless in the likeness of realities; and, therefore, that those general objects, at all events, namely, eyes, a head, hands, and an entire body, are not simply imaginary, but really existent. For, in truth, painters themselves, even when they study to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most fantastic and extraordinary, cannot bestow upon them natures absolutely new, but can only make a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if they chance to imagine something so novel that nothing at all similar has ever been seen before, and such as is, therefore, purely fictitious and absolutely false, it is at least certain that the colors of which this is composed are real.

And on the same principle, although these general objects, viz, [a body], eyes, a head, hands, and the like, be imaginary, we are nevertheless absolutely necessitated to admit the reality at least of some other objects still more simple and universal than these, of which, just as of certain real colors, all those images of things, whether [222] true and real, or false and fantastic, that are found in our consciousness (cogitatio), are formed.

To this class of objects seem to belong corporeal nature in general and its extension; the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude, and their number, as also the place in, and the time during, which they exist, and other things of the same sort. We will not, therefore, perhaps reason illegitimately if we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine, and all the other sciences that have for their end the consideration of composite objects, are indeed of a doubtful character; but that Arithmetic, Geometry, and the other sciences of the same class, which regard merely the simplest and most general objects, and scarcely inquire whether or not these are really existent, contain somewhat that is certain and indubitable: for whether I am awake or dreaming, it remains true that two and three make five, and that a square has but four sides; nor does it seem possible that truths so apparent can ever fall under a suspicion of falsity [or incertitude].

Nevertheless, the belief that there is a God who is all powerful, and who created me, such as I am, has, for a long time, obtained steady possession of my mind. How, then, do I know that he has not arranged that there should be neither earth, nor sky, nor any extended thing, nor figure, nor magnitude, nor place, providing at the same time, however, for [the rise in me of the perceptions of all these objects, and] the persuasion that these do not exist otherwise than as I perceive them? And further, as I sometimes think that others are in error respecting matters of

which they believe themselves to possess a perfect knowledge, how do I know that I am not also deceived each time I add together two and three, or number the sides of a square, or form some judgment still more simple, if more simple indeed can be imagined? But perhaps Deity has not been willing that I should be thus deceived, for he is said to be supremely good. If, however, it were repugnant to the goodness of Deity to have created me subject to constant deception, it would seem likewise to be contrary to his goodness to allow me to be occasionally deceived; and yet it is clear that this is permitted. Some, indeed, might perhaps [223] be found who would be disposed rather to deny the existence of a Being so powerful than to believe that there is nothing certain. But let us for the present refrain from opposing this opinion, and grant that all which is here said of a Deity is fabulous: nevertheless, in whatever way it be supposed that I reach the state in which I exist, whether by fate, or chance, or by an endless series of antecedents and consequents, or by any other means, it is clear (since to be deceived and to err is a certain defect) that the probability of my being so imperfect as to be the constant victim of deception, will be increased exactly in proportion as the power possessed by the cause, to which they assign my origin, is lessened. To these reasonings I have assuredly nothing to reply, but am constrained at last to avow that there is nothing of all that I formerly believed to be true of which it is impossible to doubt, and that not through thoughtlessness or levity, but from cogent and maturely considered reasons; so that henceforward, if I desire to discover anything certain, I ought not the less carefully to refrain from assenting to those same opinions than to what might be shown to be manifestly false.

But it is not sufficient to have made these observations; care must be taken likewise to keep them in remembrance. For those old and customary opinions perpetually recur—long and familiar usage giving them the right of occupying my mind, even almost against my will, and subduing my belief; nor will I lose the habit of deferring to them and confiding in them so long as I shall consider them to be what in truth they are, viz, opinions to some extent doubtful, as I have already shown, but still highly probable, and such as it is much more reasonable to believe than deny. It is for this reason I am persuaded that I shall not be doing wrong, if, taking an opposite judgment of deliberate design, I become my own deceiver, by supposing, for a time, that all those opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at length, having thus balanced my old by my new prejudices, my judgment shall no longer be turned aside by perverted usage from the path that may conduct to the perception of truth. For I am assured that, meanwhile, there will arise neither peril nor error from this course, and that I [224] cannot for the present yield too much to distrust, since the end I now seek is not action but knowledge.

I will suppose, then, not that Deity, who is sovereignly good and the fountain of truth, but that some malignant demon, who is at once exceedingly potent and deceitful, has employed all his artifice to deceive me; I will suppose that the sky, the air, the earth, colors, figures, sounds, and all external things, are nothing better than the illusions of dreams, by means of which this being has laid snares for my credulity; I will consider myself as without hands, eyes, flesh, blood, or any of the senses, and as falsely believing that I am possessed of these; I will continue resolutely fixed in this belief, and if indeed by this means it be not in my power to arrive at the knowledge of truth, I shall at least do what is in my power, viz [suspend my judgment], and guard with settled purpose against giving my assent to what is false, and being imposed upon by this deceiver, whatever be his power and artifice.

But this undertaking is arduous, and a certain indolence insensibly leads me back to my ordinary course of life; and just as the captive, who, perchance, was enjoying in his dreams an imaginary liberty, when he begins to suspect that it is but a vision, dreads awakening, and conspires with the agreeable illusions that the deception may be prolonged; so I, of my own accord, fall back into the train of my former beliefs, and fear to arouse myself from my slumber, lest the time of laborious wakefulness that would succeed this quiet rest, in place of bringing any light of day, should prove inadequate to dispel the darkness that will arise from the difficulties that have now been raised.

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## RENE DESCARTES: MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST PHILOSOPHY (MEDITATION 2--"OF THE NATURE

## OF THE HUMAN MIND; AND THAT IT IS MORE EASILY KNOWN THAN THE BODY")

The Meditation of yesterday has filled my mind with so many doubts, that it is no longer in my power to forget them. Nor do I see, meanwhile, any principle on which they can be resolved; and, just as if I had fallen all of a [225] sudden into very deep water, I am so greatly disconcerted as to be unable either to plant my feet firmly on the bottom or sustain myself by swimming on the surface. I will, nevertheless, make an effort, and try anew the same path on which I had entered yesterday, that is, proceed by casting aside all that admits of the slightest doubt, not less than if I had discovered it to be absolutely false; and I will continue always in this track until I shall find something that is certain, or at least, if I can do nothing more, until I shall know with certainty that there is nothing certain. Archimedes, that he might transport the entire globe from the place it occupied to another, demanded only a point that was firm and immovable; so, also, I shall be entitled to entertain the highest expectations, if I am fortunate enough to discover only one thing that is certain and indubitable.

I suppose, accordingly, that all the things which I see are false (fictitious); I believe that none of those objects which my fallacious memory represents ever existed; I suppose that I possess no senses; I believe that body, figure, extension, motion, and place are merely fictions of my mind. What is there, then, that can be esteemed true? Perhaps this only, that there is absolutely nothing certain.

But how do I know that there is not something different altogether from the objects I have now enumerated, of which it is impossible to entertain the slightest doubt? Is there not a God, or some being, by whatever name I may designate him, who causes these thoughts, to arise in my mind? But why suppose such a being, for it may be I myself am capable of producing them? Am I, then, at least not something? But I before denied that I possessed senses or a body; I hesitate, however, for what follows from that? Am I so dependent on the body and the senses that without these I cannot exist? But I had the persuasion that there was absolutely nothing in the world, that there was no sky and no earth, neither minds nor bodies; was I not, therefore, at the same time, persuaded that I did not exist? Far from it; I assuredly existed, since I was persuaded. But there is I know not what being, who is possessed at once of the highest power and the deepest cunning, who is constantly employing all his ingenuity in deceiving me. [226] Doubtless, then, I exist, since I am deceived; and, let him deceive me as he may, he can never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I shall be conscious that I am something. So that it most, in fine, be maintained, all things being maturely and carefully considered, that this proposition (pronunciatum) I am, I exist, is necessarily true each time it is expressed by me, or conceived in my mind.

But I do not yet know with sufficient clearness what I am, though assured that I am; and hence, in the next place, I must take care, lest perchance I inconsiderately substitute some other object in room of what is properly myself, and thus wander from truth, even in that knowledge (cognition) which I hold to be of all others the most certain and evident. For this reason, I will now consider anew what I formerly believed myself to be, before I entered on the present train of thought; and of my previous opinion I will retrench all that can in the least be invalidated by the grounds of doubt I have adduced, in order that there may at length remain nothing but what is certain and indubitable. What then did I formerly think I was? Undoubtedly I judged that I was a man. But what is a man? Shall I say a rational animal? Assuredly not; for it would be necessary forthwith to inquire into what is meant by animal, and what by rational, and thus, from a single question, I should insensibly glide into others, and these more difficult than the first; nor do I now possess enough of leisure to warrant me in wasting my time amid subtleties of this sort. I prefer here to attend to the thoughts that sprung up of themselves in my mind, and were inspired by my own nature alone, when I applied myself to the consideration of what I was. In the first place, then, I thought that I possessed a countenance, hands, arms, and all the fabric of members that appears in a corpse, and which I called by the name of body. It further occurred to me that I was nourished, that I walked, perceived, and thought, and all those actions I referred to the soul; but what the soul itself was I either did not stay to consider, or, if I did, I imagined that it was something extremely rare and subtile, like wind, or flame, or ether, spread through my grosser parts. As regarded the body, I did not even doubt of its nature, but thought I distinctly knew it, and if I had wished to describe it according to the notions I then [227] entertained, I should have explained myself in this manner: By body I understand all that can be terminated by a certain figure; that can be comprised in a certain place, and so fill a certain space as therefrom to exclude every other body; that can be perceived either by touch, sight, hearing, taste, or smell; that can be moved in different ways, not indeed of itself,

but by something foreign to it by which it is touched [and from which it receives the impression]; for the power of self-motion, as likewise that of perceiving and thinking, I held as by no means pertaining to the nature of body; on the contrary, I was somewhat astonished to find such faculties existing in some bodies.

But [as to myself, what can I now say that I am], since I suppose there exists an extremely powerful, and, if I may so speak, malignant being, whose whole endeavors are directed toward deceiving me? Can I affirm that I possess any one of all those attributes of which I have lately spoken as belonging to the nature of body? After attentively considering them in my own mind, I find none of them that can properly be said to belong to myself. To recount them were idle and tedious. Let us pass, then, to the attributes of the soul. The first mentioned were the powers of nutrition and walking; but, if it be true that I have no body, it is true likewise that I am capable neither of walking nor of being nourished. Perception is another attribute of the soul; but perception too is impossible without the body; besides, I have frequently, during sleep, believed that I perceived objects which I afterward observed I did not in reality perceive. Thinking is another attribute of the soul; and here I discover what properly belongs to myself. This alone is inseparable from me. I am — I exist: this is certain; but how often? As often as I think; for perhaps it would even happen, if I should wholly cease to think, that I should at the same time altogether cease to be. I now admit nothing that is not necessarily true. I am therefore, precisely speaking, only a thinking thing, that is, a mind (*mens sive animus*), understanding, or reason, terms whose signification was before unknown to me. I am, however, a real thing, and really existent; but what thing? The answer was, a thinking thing. The question now arises, am I aught besides? I will stimulate my imagination with [228] a view to discover whether I am not still something more than a thinking being. Now it is plain I am not the assemblage of members called the human body; I am not a thin and penetrating air diffused through all these members, or wind, or flame, or vapor, or breath, or any of all the things I can imagine; for I supposed that all these were not, and, without changing the supposition, I find that I still feel assured of my existence.

But it is true, perhaps, that those very things which I suppose to be non-existent, because they are unknown to me, are not in truth different from myself whom I know. This is a point I cannot determine, and do not now enter into any dispute regarding it. I can only judge of things that are known to me: I am conscious that I exist, and I who know that I exist inquire into what I am. It is, however, perfectly certain that the knowledge of my existence, thus precisely taken, is not dependent on things, the existence of which is as yet unknown to me: and consequently it is not dependent on any of the things I can feign in imagination. Moreover, the phrase itself, I frame an image (*effingo*), reminds me of my error; for I should in truth frame one if I were to imagine myself to be anything, since to imagine is nothing more than to contemplate the figure or image of a corporeal thing; but I already know that I exist, and that it is possible at the same time that all those images, and in general all that relates to the nature of body, are merely dreams [or chimeras]. From this I discover that it is not more reasonable to say, I will excite my imagination that I may know more distinctly what I am, than to express myself as follows: I am now awake, and perceive something real; but because my perception is not sufficiently clear, I will of express purpose go to sleep that my dreams may represent to me the object of my perception with more truth and clearness. And, therefore, I know that nothing of all that I can embrace in imagination belongs to the knowledge which I have of myself, and that there is need to recall with the utmost care the mind from this mode of thinking, that it may be able to know its own nature with perfect distinctness.

But what, then, am I? A thinking thing, it has been said. But what is a thinking thing? It is a thing that [229] doubts, understands, [conceives], affirms, denies, wills, refuses; that imagines also, and perceives. Assuredly it is not little, if all these properties belong to my nature. But why should they not belong to it? Am I not that very being who now doubts of almost everything; who, for all that, understands and conceives certain things; who affirms one alone as true, and denies the others; who desires to know more of them, and does not wish to be deceived; who imagines many things, sometimes even despite his will; and is likewise percipient of many, as if through the medium of the senses. Is there nothing of all this as true as that I am, even although I should be always dreaming, and although he who gave me being employed all his ingenuity to deceive me? Is there also any one of these attributes that can be properly distinguished from my thought, or that can be said to be separate from myself? For it is of itself so evident that it is I who doubt, I who understand, and I who desire, that it is here unnecessary to add anything by way of rendering it more clear. And I am as certainly the same being who imagines; for although it maybe (as I before supposed) that nothing I imagine is true, still the power of imagination does not cease really to exist in me and to form part of my thought. In fine, I am the same being who perceives, that is, who apprehends certain objects as by the organs of sense, since, in truth, I see light, hear a noise, and feel heat. But it will be said that these presentations are false, and that I am dreaming. Let it be so. At all events it is certain that I seem to see light, hear a noise, and feel heat; this cannot be false, and this is what in me is properly called perceiving (*sentire*), which is nothing else than thinking. From this I begin to know what I am with somewhat greater clearness and distinctness than heretofore.

But, nevertheless, it still seems to me, and I cannot help believing, that corporeal things, whose images are formed by thought [which fall under the senses], and are examined by the same, are known with much greater distinctness than that I know not what part of myself which is not imaginable; although, in truth, it may seem strange to say that I know and comprehend with greater distinctness things whose existence appears to me doubtful, that are unknown, and do not belong to me, than [230] others of whose reality I am persuaded, that are known to me, and appertain to my proper nature; in a word, than myself. But I see clearly what is the state of the case. My mind is apt to wander, and will not yet submit to be restrained within the limits of truth. Let us therefore leave the mind to itself once more, and, according to it every kind of liberty [permit it to consider the objects that appear to it from without], in order that, having afterward withdrawn it from these gently and opportunely [and fixed it on the consideration of its being and the properties it finds in itself], it may then be the more easily controlled.

Let us now accordingly consider the objects that are commonly thought to be [the most easily, and likewise] the most distinctly known, viz, the bodies we touch and see; not, indeed, bodies in general, for these general notions are usually somewhat more confused, but one body in particular. Take, for example, this piece of wax; it is quite fresh, having been but recently taken from the beehive; it has not yet lost the sweetness of the honey it contained; it still retains somewhat of the odor of the flowers from which it was gathered; its color, figure, size, are apparent (to the sight); it is hard, cold, easily handled; and sounds when struck upon with the finger. In fine, all that contributes to make a body as distinctly known as possible, is found in the one before us. But, while I am speaking, let it be placed near the fire — what remained of the taste exhales, the smell evaporates, the color changes, its figure is destroyed, its size increases, it becomes liquid, it grows hot, it can hardly be handled, and, although struck upon, it emits no sound. Does the same wax still remain after this change? It must be admitted that it does remain; no one doubts it, or judges otherwise. What, then, was it I knew with so much distinctness in the piece of wax? Assuredly, it could be nothing of all that I observed by means of the senses, since all the things that fell under taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing are changed, and yet the same wax remains. It was perhaps what I now think, viz, that this wax was neither the sweetness of honey, the pleasant odor of flowers, the whiteness, the figure, nor the sound, but only a body that a little before appeared to me conspicuous under these forms, and which is now [231] perceived under others. But, to speak precisely, what is it that I imagine when I think of it in this way? Let it be attentively considered, and, retrenching all that does not belong to the wax, let us see what remains. There certainly remains nothing, except something extended, flexible, and movable. But what is meant by flexible and movable? Is it not that I imagine that the piece of wax, being round, is capable of becoming square, or of passing from a square into a triangular figure? Assuredly such is not the case, because I conceive that it admits of an infinity of similar changes; and I am, moreover, unable to compass this infinity by imagination, and consequently this conception which I have of the wax is not the product of the faculty of imagination. But what now is this extension? Is it not also unknown? for it becomes greater when the wax is melted, greater when it is boiled, and greater still when the heat increases; and I should not conceive [clearly and] according to truth, the wax as it is, if I did not suppose that the piece we are considering admitted even of a wider variety of extension than I ever imagined. I must, therefore, admit that I cannot even comprehend by imagination what the piece of wax is, and that it is the mind alone (wens, Lat., entendement, F.) which perceives it. I speak of one piece in particular; for as to wax in general, this is still more evident. But what is the piece of wax that can be perceived only by the [understanding or] mind? It is certainly the same which I see, touch, imagine; and, in fine, it is the same which, from the beginning, I believed it to be. But (and this it is of moment to observe) the perception of it is neither an act of sight, of touch, nor of imagination, and never was either of these, though it might formerly seem so, but is simply an intuition (inspectio) of the mind, which may be imperfect and confused, as it formerly was, or very clear and distinct, as it is at present, according as the attention is more or less directed to the elements which it contains, and of which it is composed.

But, meanwhile, I feel greatly astonished when I observe [the weakness of my mind, and] its proneness to error. For although, without at all giving expression to what I think, I consider all this in my own mind, words yet occasionally impede my progress, and I am almost [232] led into error by the terms of ordinary language. We say, for example, that we see the same wax when it is before us, and not that we judge it to be the same from its retaining the same color and figure: whence I should forthwith be disposed to conclude that the wax is known by the act of sight, and not by the intuition of the mind alone, were it not for the analogous instance of human beings passing on in the street below, as observed from a window. In this case I do not fail to say that I see the men themselves, just as I say that I see the wax; and yet what do I see from the window beyond hats and cloaks that might cover artificial machines, whose motions might be determined by springs? But I judge that there are human beings from these appearances, and thus I comprehend, by the faculty of judgment alone which is in the mind, what I believed I saw with my eyes.

The man who makes it his aim to rise to knowledge superior to the common, ought to be ashamed to seek occasions of doubting from the vulgar forms of speech: instead, therefore, of doing this, I shall proceed with the

matter in hand, and inquire whether I had a clearer and more perfect perception of the piece of wax when I first saw it, and when I thought I knew it by means of the external sense itself, or, at all events, by the common sense (sensus communis), as it is called, that is, by the imaginative faculty; or whether I rather apprehend it more clearly at present, after having examined with greater care, both what it is, and in what way it can be known. It would certainly be ridiculous to entertain any doubt on this point. For what, in that first perception, was there distinct? What did I perceive which any animal might not have perceived? But when I distinguish the wax from its exterior forms, and when, as if I had stripped it of its vestments, I consider it quite naked, it is certain, although some error may still be found in my judgment, that I cannot, nevertheless, thus apprehend it without possessing a human mind.

But, finally, what shall I say of the mind itself, that is, of myself? for as yet I do not admit that I am anything but mind. What, then! I who seem to possess so distinct an apprehension of the piece of wax, do I not know [233] myself, both with greater truth and certitude, and also much more distinctly and clearly? For if I judge that the wax exists because I see it, it assuredly follows, much more evidently, that I myself am or exist, for the same reason: for it is possible that what I see may not in truth be wax, and that I do not even possess eyes with which to see anything; but it cannot be that when I see, or, which comes to the same thing, when I think I see, I myself who think am nothing. So likewise, if I judge that the wax exists because I touch it, it will still also follow that I am; and if I determine that my imagination, or any other cause, whatever it be, persuades me of the existence of the wax, I will still draw the same conclusion. And what is here remarked of the piece of wax, is applicable to all the other things that are external to me. And further, if the [notion or] perception of wax appeared to me more precise and distinct, after that not only sight and touch, but many other causes besides, rendered it manifest to my apprehension, with how much greater distinctness must I now know myself, since all the reasons that contribute to the knowledge of the nature of wax, or of any body whatever, manifest still better the nature of my mind? And there are besides so many other things in the mind itself that contribute to the illustration of its nature, that those dependent on the body, to which I have here referred, scarcely merit to be taken into account.

But, in conclusion, I find I have insensibly reverted to the point I desired; for, since it is now manifest to me that bodies themselves are not properly perceived by the senses nor by the faculty of imagination, but by the intellect alone; and since they are not perceived because they are seen and touched, but only because they are understood [or rightly comprehended by thought], I readily discover that there is nothing more Easily or clearly apprehended than my own mind. But because it is difficult to rid one's self so promptly of an opinion to which one has been long accustomed, it will be desirable to tarry for some time at this stage, that, by long continued meditation, I may more deeply impress upon my memory this new knowledge.

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## IMMANUEL KANT'S CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Next we turn to the philosophy of *Immanuel Kant*, a watershed figure who forever altered the course of philosophical thinking in the Western tradition. Long after his thorough indoctrination into the quasi-scholastic German appreciation of the metaphysical systems of *Leibniz* and *Wolff*, Kant said, it was a careful reading of *David Hume* that “interrupted my dogmatic slumbers and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a quite new direction.” Having appreciated the full force of such *skeptical* arguments, Kant supposed that the only adequate response would be a “Copernican Revolution” in philosophy, a recognition that the appearance of the external world depends in some measure upon the position and movement of its observers. This central idea became the basis for his life-long project of developing a critical philosophy that could withstand them.

Kant's aim was to move beyond the traditional dichotomy between rationalism and empiricism. The *rationalists* had tried to show that we can understand the world by careful use of reason; this guarantees the indubitability of our knowledge but leaves serious questions about its practical content. The *empiricists*, on the other hand, had argued that all of our knowledge must be firmly grounded in experience; practical content is thus secured, but it turns out that we can be certain of very little. Both approaches have failed, Kant supposed, because both are premised on the same mistaken assumption.

Progress in philosophy, according to Kant, requires that we frame the epistemological problem in an entirely different way. The crucial question is not how we can bring ourselves to understand the world, but how the world comes to be understood by us. Instead of trying, by reason or experience, to make our concepts match the nature of objects, Kant held, we must allow the structure of our concepts shape our experience of objects. This is the purpose of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787): to show how reason determines the conditions under which experience and knowledge are possible.

## Varieties of Judgment

In the *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysic* (1783) Kant presented the central themes of the first *Critique* in a somewhat different manner, starting from instances in which we do appear to have achieved knowledge and asking under what conditions each case becomes possible. So he began by carefully drawing a pair of crucial distinctions among the judgments we do actually make.

The first distinction separates *a priori* from *a posteriori* judgments by reference to the origin of our knowledge of them. **A priori** judgments are based upon reason alone, independently of all sensory experience, and therefore apply with strict universality. **A posteriori** judgments, on the other hand, must be grounded upon experience and are consequently limited and uncertain in their application to specific cases. Thus, this distinction also marks the difference traditionally noted in logic between *necessary and contingent* truths.

But Kant also made a less familiar distinction between *analytic and synthetic* judgments, according to the information conveyed as their content. **Analytic** judgments are those whose predicates are wholly contained in their subjects; since they add nothing to our concept of the subject, such judgments are purely explicative and can be deduced from the principle of non-contradiction. **Synthetic** judgments, on the other hand, are those whose predicates are wholly distinct from their subjects, to which they must be shown to relate because of some real connection external to the concepts themselves. Hence, synthetic judgments are genuinely informative but require justification by reference to some outside principle.

Kant supposed that previous philosophers had failed to differentiate properly between these two distinctions. Both *Leibniz* and *Hume* had made just one distinction, between matters of fact based on sensory experience and the uninformative truths of pure reason. In fact, Kant held, the two distinctions are not entirely coextensive; we need at least to consider all four of their logically possible combinations:

- Analytic *a posteriori* judgments cannot arise, since there is never any need to appeal to experience in support of a purely explicative assertion.
- Synthetic *a posteriori* judgments are the relatively uncontroversial matters of fact we come to know by means of our sensory experience (though *Wolff* had tried to derive even these from the principle of contradiction).
- Analytic *a priori* judgments, everyone agrees, include all merely logical truths and straightforward matters of definition; they are necessarily true.
- **Synthetic *a priori*** judgments are the crucial case, since only they could provide new information that is necessarily true. But neither *Leibniz* nor *Hume* considered the possibility of any such case.

Unlike his predecessors, Kant maintained that synthetic *a priori* judgments not only are possible but actually provide the basis for significant portions of human knowledge. In fact, he supposed (*pace* *Hume*) that arithmetic and geometry comprise such judgments and that natural science depends on them for its power to explain and predict events. What is more, metaphysics—if it turns out to be possible at all—must rest upon synthetic *a priori* judgments, since anything else would be either uninformative or unjustifiable. But how are synthetic *a priori* judgments possible at all? This is the central question Kant sought to answer.

## Mathematics

Consider, for example, our knowledge that two plus three is equal to five and that the interior angles of any triangle add up to a straight line. These (and similar) truths of mathematics are synthetic judgments, *Kant* held, since they contribute significantly to our knowledge of the world; the sum of the interior angles is not contained in the concept of a triangle. Yet, clearly, such truths are known *a priori*, since they apply with strict and universal necessity to all of the objects of our experience, without having been derived from that experience itself. In these instances, Kant supposed, no one will ask whether or not we have synthetic *a priori* knowledge; plainly, we do.

The question is, how do we come to have such knowledge? If experience does not supply the required connection between the concepts involved, what does?

Kant's answer is that we do it ourselves. Conformity with the truths of mathematics is a precondition that we impose upon every possible object of our experience. Just as *Descartes* had noted in the Fifth Meditation, the essence of bodies is manifested to us in Euclidean solid geometry, which determines *a priori* the structure of the spatial world we experience. In order to be perceived by us, any object must be regarded as being uniquely located in space and time, so it is the spatio-temporal framework itself that provides the missing connection between the concept of the triangle and that of the sum of its angles. Space and time, Kant argued in the "Transcendental Aesthetic" of the first *Critique*, are the "pure forms of sensible intuition" under which we perceive what we do.

Understanding mathematics in this way makes it possible to rise above an old controversy between rationalists and empiricists regarding the very nature of space and time. *Leibniz* had maintained that space and time are not intrinsic features of the world itself, but merely a product of our minds. *Newton*, on the other hand, had insisted that space and time are absolute, not merely a set of spatial and temporal relations. Kant now declares that both of them were correct! Space and time are absolute, and they do derive from our minds. As synthetic *a priori* judgments, the truths of mathematics are both informative and necessary.

This is our first instance of a *transcendental argument*, Kant's method of reasoning from the fact that we have knowledge of a particular sort to the conclusion that all of the logical presuppositions of such knowledge must be satisfied. We will see additional examples in later lessons, and can defer our assessment of them until then. But notice that there is a price to be paid for the certainty we achieve in this manner. Since mathematics derives from our own sensible intuition, we can be absolutely sure that it must apply to everything we perceive, but for the same reason we can have no assurance that it has anything to do with the way things are apart from our perception of them. Next time, we'll look at Kant's very similar treatment of the synthetic *a priori* principles upon which our knowledge of natural science depends.

## Preconditions for Natural Science

In natural science no less than in mathematics, *Kant* held, synthetic *a priori* judgments provide the necessary foundations for human knowledge. The most general laws of nature, like the truths of mathematics, cannot be justified by experience, yet must apply to it universally. In this case, the negative portion of Hume's analysis—his demonstration that *matters of fact rest upon an unjustifiable belief* that there is a necessary connection between causes and their effects—was entirely correct. But of course Kant's more constructive approach is to offer a transcendental argument from the fact that we do have knowledge of the natural world to the truth of synthetic *a priori* propositions about the structure of our experience of it.

As we saw last time, applying the concepts of space and time as forms of sensible intuition is necessary condition for any perception. But the possibility of scientific knowledge requires that our experience of the world be not only perceivable but thinkable as well, and Kant held that the general intelligibility of experience entails the satisfaction of two further conditions:

First, it must be possible in principle to arrange and organize the chaos of our many individual sensory images by tracing the connections that hold among them. This Kant called the synthetic unity of the sensory manifold.

Second, it must be possible in principle for a single subject to perform this organization by discovering the connections among perceived images. This is satisfied by what Kant called the transcendental unity of apperception.

Experiential knowledge is thinkable only if there is some regularity in what is known and there is some knower in whom that regularity can be represented. Since we do actually have knowledge of the world as we experience it, Kant held, both of these conditions must in fact obtain.

## Deduction of the Categories

Since (as Hume had noted) individual images are perfectly separable as they occur within the sensory manifold, connections between them can be drawn only by the knowing subject, in which the principles of connection are to be found. As in mathematics, so in science the synthetic *a priori* judgments must derive from the structure of the understanding itself.

Consider, then, the sorts of judgments distinguished by logicians (in *Kant's* day): each of them has some quantity (applying to all things, some, or only one); some quality (affirmative, negative, or complementary); some relation (absolute, conditional, or alternative); and some modality (*problematic, assertoric, or apodeictic*). Kant supposed that any intelligible thought can be expressed in judgments of these sorts. But then it follows that any thinkable experience must be understood in these ways, and we are justified in projecting this entire way of thinking outside ourselves, as the inevitable structure of any possible experience.

The result of this "Transcendental Logic" is the schematized table of categories, Kant's summary of the central concepts we employ in thinking about the world, each of which is discussed in a separate section of the *Critique*:

<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Quality</b>
Unity	Reality
Plurality	Negation
Totality	Limitation
Axioms of Intuition	Anticipations of Perception
<b>Relation</b>	<b>Modality</b>
Substance	Possibility
Cause	Existence
Community	Necessity
Analogies of Experience	Postulates of Empirical Thought

Our most fundamental convictions about the natural world derive from these concepts, according to Kant. The most general principles of natural science are not empirical generalizations from what we have experienced, but synthetic *a priori* judgments about what we could experience, in which these concepts provide the crucial connectives.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON (PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION)

Human reason, in one sphere of its cognition, is called upon to consider questions, which it cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind.

It falls into this difficulty without any fault of its own. It begins with principles, which cannot be dispensed with in the field of experience, and the truth and sufficiency of which are, at the same time, insured by experience. With these principles it rises, in obedience to the laws of its own nature, to ever higher and more remote conditions. But it quickly discovers that, in this way, its labours must remain ever incomplete, because new questions never cease to present themselves; and thus it finds itself compelled to have recourse to principles which transcend the region of experience, while they are regarded by common sense without distrust. It thus falls into confusion and

contradictions, from which it conjectures the presence of latent errors, which, however, it is unable to discover, because the principles it employs, transcending the limits of experience, cannot be tested by that criterion. The arena of these endless contests is called Metaphysic.

Time was, when she was the queen of all the sciences; and, if we take the will for the deed, she certainly deserves, so far as regards the high importance of her object-matter, this title of honour. Now, it is the fashion of the time to heap contempt and scorn upon her; and the matron mourns, forlorn and forsaken, like Hecuba:

Modo maxima rerum,  
Tot generis, natisque potens...  
Nunc trahor exul, inops.  
—Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. xiii

At first, her government, under the administration of the dogmatists, was an absolute despotism. But, as the legislative continued to show traces of the ancient barbaric rule, her empire gradually broke up, and intestine wars introduced the reign of anarchy; while the sceptics, like nomadic tribes, who hate a permanent habitation and settled mode of living, attacked from time to time those who had organized themselves into civil communities. But their number was, very happily, small; and thus they could not entirely put a stop to the exertions of those who persisted in raising new edifices, although on no settled or uniform plan. In recent times the hope dawned upon us of seeing those disputes settled, and the legitimacy of her claims established by a kind of physiology of the human understanding—that of the celebrated Locke. But it was found that—although it was affirmed that this so-called queen could not refer her descent to any higher source than that of common experience, a circumstance which necessarily brought suspicion on her claims—as this genealogy was incorrect, she persisted in the advancement of her claims to sovereignty. Thus metaphysics necessarily fell back into the antiquated and rotten constitution of dogmatism, and again became obnoxious to the contempt from which efforts had been made to save it. At present, as all methods, according to the general persuasion, have been tried in vain, there reigns nought but weariness and complete indifferentism—the mother of chaos and night in the scientific world, but at the same time the source of, or at least the prelude to, the re-creation and reinstallation of a science, when it has fallen into confusion, obscurity, and disuse from ill directed effort.

For it is in reality vain to profess indifference in regard to such inquiries, the object of which cannot be indifferent to humanity. Besides, these pretended indifferentists, however much they may try to disguise themselves by the assumption of a popular style and by changes on the language of the schools, unavoidably fall into metaphysical declarations and propositions, which they profess to regard with so much contempt. At the same time, this indifference, which has arisen in the world of science, and which relates to that kind of knowledge which we should wish to see destroyed the last, is a phenomenon that well deserves our attention and reflection. It is plainly not the effect of the levity, but of the matured judgement\* of the age, which refuses to be any longer entertained with illusory knowledge. It is, in fact, a call to reason, again to undertake the most laborious of all tasks—that of self-examination, and to establish a tribunal, which may secure it in its well-grounded claims, while it pronounces against all baseless assumptions and pretensions, not in an arbitrary manner, but according to its own eternal and unchangeable laws. This tribunal is nothing less than the critical investigation of pure reason.

[\*Footnote: We very often hear complaints of the shallowness of the present age, and of the decay of profound science. But I do not think that those which rest upon a secure foundation, such as mathematics, physical science, etc., in the least deserve this reproach, but that they rather maintain their ancient fame, and in the latter case, indeed, far surpass it. The same would be the case with the other kinds of cognition, if their principles were but firmly established. In the absence of this security, indifference, doubt, and finally, severe criticism are rather signs of a profound habit of thought. Our age is the age of criticism, to which everything must be subjected. The sacredness of religion, and the authority of legislation, are by many regarded as grounds of exemption from the examination of this tribunal. But, if they on they are exempted, they become the subjects of just suspicion, and cannot lay claim to sincere respect, which reason accords only to that which has stood the test of a free and public examination.]

I do not mean by this a criticism of books and systems, but a critical inquiry into the faculty of reason, with reference to the cognitions to which it strives to attain without the aid of experience; in other words, the solution of the question regarding the possibility or impossibility of metaphysics, and the determination of the origin, as well as of the extent and limits of this science. All this must be done on the basis of principles.

This path—the only one now remaining—has been entered upon by me; and I flatter myself that I have, in this way, discovered the cause of—and consequently the mode of removing—all the errors which have hitherto set reason at variance with itself, in the sphere of non-empirical thought. I have not returned an evasive answer to the

questions of reason, by alleging the inability and limitation of the faculties of the mind; I have, on the contrary, examined them completely in the light of principles, and, after having discovered the cause of the doubts and contradictions into which reason fell, have solved them to its perfect satisfaction. It is true, these questions have not been solved as dogmatism, in its vain fancies and desires, had expected; for it can only be satisfied by the exercise of magical arts, and of these I have no knowledge. But neither do these come within the compass of our mental powers; and it was the duty of philosophy to destroy the illusions which had their origin in misconceptions, whatever darling hopes and valued expectations may be ruined by its explanations. My chief aim in this work has been thoroughness; and I make bold to say that there is not a single metaphysical problem that does not find its solution, or at least the key to its solution, here. Pure reason is a perfect unity; and therefore, if the principle presented by it prove to be insufficient for the solution of even a single one of those questions to which the very nature of reason gives birth, we must reject it, as we could not be perfectly certain of its sufficiency in the case of the others.

While I say this, I think I see upon the countenance of the reader signs of dissatisfaction mingled with contempt, when he hears declarations which sound so boastful and extravagant; and yet they are beyond comparison more moderate than those advanced by the commonest author of the commonest philosophical programme, in which the dogmatist professes to demonstrate the simple nature of the soul, or the necessity of a primal being. Such a dogmatist promises to extend human knowledge beyond the limits of possible experience; while I humbly confess that this is completely beyond my power. Instead of any such attempt, I confine myself to the examination of reason alone and its pure thought; and I do not need to seek far for the sum-total of its cognition, because it has its seat in my own mind. Besides, common logic presents me with a complete and systematic catalogue of all the simple operations of reason; and it is my task to answer the question how far reason can go, without the material presented and the aid furnished by experience.

So much for the completeness and thoroughness necessary in the execution of the present task. The aims set before us are not arbitrarily proposed, but are imposed upon us by the nature of cognition itself.

The above remarks relate to the matter of our critical inquiry. As regards the form, there are two indispensable conditions, which any one who undertakes so difficult a task as that of a critique of pure reason, is bound to fulfil. These conditions are certitude and clearness.

As regards certitude, I have fully convinced myself that, in this sphere of thought, opinion is perfectly inadmissible, and that everything which bears the least semblance of an hypothesis must be excluded, as of no value in such discussions. For it is a necessary condition of every cognition that is to be established upon a priori grounds that it shall be held to be absolutely necessary; much more is this the case with an attempt to determine all pure a priori cognition, and to furnish the standard—and consequently an example—of all apodeictic (philosophical) certitude. Whether I have succeeded in what I professed to do, it is for the reader to determine; it is the author's business merely to adduce grounds and reasons, without determining what influence these ought to have on the mind of his judges. But, lest anything he may have said may become the innocent cause of doubt in their minds, or tend to weaken the effect which his arguments might otherwise produce—he may be allowed to point out those passages which may occasion mistrust or difficulty, although these do not concern the main purpose of the present work. He does this solely with the view of removing from the mind of the reader any doubts which might affect his judgement of the work as a whole, and in regard to its ultimate aim.

I know no investigations more necessary for a full insight into the nature of the faculty which we call understanding, and at the same time for the determination of the rules and limits of its use, than those undertaken in the second chapter of the "Transcendental Analytic," under the title of "Deduction of the Pure Conceptions of the Understanding"; and they have also cost me by far the greatest labour—labour which, I hope, will not remain uncompensated. The view there taken, which goes somewhat deeply into the subject, has two sides, The one relates to the objects of the pure understanding, and is intended to demonstrate and to render comprehensible the objective validity of its a priori conceptions; and it forms for this reason an essential part of the Critique. The other considers the pure understanding itself, its possibility and its powers of cognition—that is, from a subjective point of view; and, although this exposition is of great importance, it does not belong essentially to the main purpose of the work, because the grand question is what and how much can reason and understanding, apart from experience, cognize, and not, how is the faculty of thought itself possible? As the latter is an inquiry into the cause of a given effect, and has thus in it some semblance of an hypothesis (although, as I shall show on another occasion, this is really not the fact), it would seem that, in the present instance, I had allowed myself to enounce a mere opinion, and that the reader must therefore be at liberty to hold a different opinion. But I beg to remind him that, if my subjective deduction does not produce in his mind the conviction of its certitude at which I aimed, the objective deduction, with which alone the present work is properly concerned, is in every respect satisfactory.

As regards clearness, the reader has a right to demand, in the first place, discursive or logical clearness, that is, on the basis of conceptions, and, secondly, intuitive or aesthetic clearness, by means of intuitions, that is, by examples or other modes of illustration in concreto. I have done what I could for the first kind of intelligibility. This was essential to my purpose; and it thus became the accidental cause of my inability to do complete justice to the second requirement. I have been almost always at a loss, during the progress of this work, how to settle this question. Examples and illustrations always appeared to me necessary, and, in the first sketch of the Critique, naturally fell into their proper places. But I very soon became aware of the magnitude of my task, and the numerous problems with which I should be engaged; and, as I perceived that this critical investigation would, even if delivered in the driest scholastic manner, be far from being brief, I found it unadvisable to enlarge it still more with examples and explanations, which are necessary only from a popular point of view. I was induced to take this course from the consideration also that the present work is not intended for popular use, that those devoted to science do not require such helps, although they are always acceptable, and that they would have materially interfered with my present purpose. Abbe Terrasson remarks with great justice that, if we estimate the size of a work, not from the number of its pages, but from the time which we require to make ourselves master of it, it may be said of many a book that it would be much shorter, if it were not so short. On the other hand, as regards the comprehensibility of a system of speculative cognition, connected under a single principle, we may say with equal justice: many a book would have been much clearer, if it had not been intended to be so very clear. For explanations and examples, and other helps to intelligibility, aid us in the comprehension of parts, but they distract the attention, dissipate the mental power of the reader, and stand in the way of his forming a clear conception of the whole; as he cannot attain soon enough to a survey of the system, and the colouring and embellishments bestowed upon it prevent his observing its articulation or organization—which is the most important consideration with him, when he comes to judge of its unity and stability.

The reader must naturally have a strong inducement to co-operate with the present author, if he has formed the intention of erecting a complete and solid edifice of metaphysical science, according to the plan now laid before him. Metaphysics, as here represented, is the only science which admits of completion—and with little labour, if it is united, in a short time; so that nothing will be left to future generations except the task of illustrating and applying it didactically. For this science is nothing more than the inventory of all that is given us by pure reason, systematically arranged. Nothing can escape our notice; for what reason produces from itself cannot lie concealed, but must be brought to the light by reason itself, so soon as we have discovered the common principle of the ideas we seek. The perfect unity of this kind of cognitions, which are based upon pure conceptions, and uninfluenced by any empirical element, or any peculiar intuition leading to determinate experience, renders this completeness not only practicable, but also necessary.

Tecum habita, et noris quam sit tibi curta supellex.  
—Persius. Satirae iv. 52.

Such a system of pure speculative reason I hope to be able to publish under the title of Metaphysic of Nature\*. The content of this work (which will not be half so long) will be very much richer than that of the present Critique, which has to discover the sources of this cognition and expose the conditions of its possibility, and at the same time to clear and level a fit foundation for the scientific edifice. In the present work, I look for the patient hearing and the impartiality of a judge; in the other, for the good-will and assistance of a co-labourer. For, however complete the list of principles for this system may be in the Critique, the correctness of the system requires that no deduced conceptions should be absent. These cannot be presented a priori, but must be gradually discovered; and, while the synthesis of conceptions has been fully exhausted in the Critique, it is necessary that, in the proposed work, the same should be the case with their analysis. But this will be rather an amusement than a labour.

[\*Footnote: In contradistinction to the Metaphysic of Ethics. This work was never published.]

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# IMMANUEL KANT: CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON (PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION)

Whether the treatment of that portion of our knowledge which lies within the province of pure reason advances with that undeviating certainty which characterizes the progress of science, we shall be at no loss to determine. If we find those who are engaged in metaphysical pursuits, unable to come to an understanding as to the method which they ought to follow; if we find them, after the most elaborate preparations, invariably brought to a stand before the goal is reached, and compelled to retrace their steps and strike into fresh paths, we may then feel quite sure that they are far from having attained to the certainty of scientific progress and may rather be said to be merely groping about in the dark. In these circumstances we shall render an important service to reason if we succeed in simply indicating the path along which it must travel, in order to arrive at any results—even if it should be found necessary to abandon many of those aims which, without reflection, have been proposed for its attainment.

That logic has advanced in this sure course, even from the earliest times, is apparent from the fact that, since Aristotle, it has been unable to advance a step and, thus, to all appearance has reached its completion. For, if some of the moderns have thought to enlarge its domain by introducing psychological discussions on the mental faculties, such as imagination and wit, metaphysical, discussions on the origin of knowledge and the different kinds of certitude, according to the difference of the objects (idealism, scepticism, and so on), or anthropological discussions on prejudices, their causes and remedies: this attempt, on the part of these authors, only shows their ignorance of the peculiar nature of logical science. We do not enlarge but disfigure the sciences when we lose sight of their respective limits and allow them to run into one another. Now logic is enclosed within limits which admit of perfectly clear definition; it is a science which has for its object nothing but the exposition and proof of the formal laws of all thought, whether it be a priori or empirical, whatever be its origin or its object, and whatever the difficulties—natural or accidental—which it encounters in the human mind.

The early success of logic must be attributed exclusively to the narrowness of its field, in which abstraction may, or rather must, be made of all the objects of cognition with their characteristic distinctions, and in which the understanding has only to deal with itself and with its own forms. It is, obviously, a much more difficult task for reason to strike into the sure path of science, where it has to deal not simply with itself, but with objects external to itself. Hence, logic is properly only a propaedeutic—forms, as it were, the vestibule of the sciences; and while it is necessary to enable us to form a correct judgement with regard to the various branches of knowledge, still the acquisition of real, substantive knowledge is to be sought only in the sciences properly so called, that is, in the objective sciences.

Now these sciences, if they can be termed rational at all, must contain elements of a priori cognition, and this cognition may stand in a twofold relation to its object. Either it may have to determine the conception of the object—which must be supplied extraneously, or it may have to establish its reality. The former is theoretical, the latter practical, rational cognition. In both, the pure or a priori element must be treated first, and must be carefully distinguished from that which is supplied from other sources. Any other method can only lead to irremediable confusion.

Mathematics and physics are the two theoretical sciences which have to determine their objects a priori. The former is purely a priori, the latter is partially so, but is also dependent on other sources of cognition.

In the earliest times of which history affords us any record, mathematics had already entered on the sure course of science, among that wonderful nation, the Greeks. Still it is not to be supposed that it was as easy for this science to strike into, or rather to construct for itself, that royal road, as it was for logic, in which reason has only to deal with itself. On the contrary, I believe that it must have remained long—chiefly among the Egyptians—in the stage of blind groping after its true aims and destination, and that it was revolutionized by the happy idea of one man, who struck out and determined for all time the path which this science must follow, and which admits of an indefinite advancement. The history of this intellectual revolution—much more important in its results than the discovery of the passage round the celebrated Cape of Good Hope—and of its author, has not been preserved. But Diogenes Laertius, in naming the supposed discoverer of some of the simplest elements of geometrical demonstration—elements which, according to the ordinary opinion, do not even require to be proved—makes it

apparent that the change introduced by the first indication of this new path, must have seemed of the utmost importance to the mathematicians of that age, and it has thus been secured against the chance of oblivion. A new light must have flashed on the mind of the first man (Thales, or whatever may have been his name) who demonstrated the properties of the isosceles triangle. For he found that it was not sufficient to meditate on the figure, as it lay before his eyes, or the conception of it, as it existed in his mind, and thus endeavour to get at the knowledge of its properties, but that it was necessary to produce these properties, as it were, by a positive a priori construction; and that, in order to arrive with certainty at a priori cognition, he must not attribute to the object any other properties than those which necessarily followed from that which he had himself, in accordance with his conception, placed in the object.

A much longer period elapsed before physics entered on the highway of science. For it is only about a century and a half since the wise Bacon gave a new direction to physical studies, or rather—as others were already on the right track—imparted fresh vigour to the pursuit of this new direction. Here, too, as in the case of mathematics, we find evidence of a rapid intellectual revolution. In the remarks which follow I shall confine myself to the empirical side of natural science.

When Galilei experimented with balls of a definite weight on the inclined plane, when Torricelli caused the air to sustain a weight which he had calculated beforehand to be equal to that of a definite column of water, or when Stahl, at a later period, converted metals into lime, and reconverted lime into metal, by the addition and subtraction of certain elements; [Footnote: I do not here follow with exactness the history of the experimental method, of which, indeed, the first steps are involved in some obscurity.] a light broke upon all natural philosophers. They learned that reason only perceives that which it produces after its own design; that it must not be content to follow, as it were, in the leading-strings of nature, but must proceed in advance with principles of judgement according to unvarying laws, and compel nature to reply its questions. For accidental observations, made according to no preconceived plan, cannot be united under a necessary law. But it is this that reason seeks for and requires. It is only the principles of reason which can give to concordant phenomena the validity of laws, and it is only when experiment is directed by these rational principles that it can have any real utility. Reason must approach nature with the view, indeed, of receiving information from it, not, however, in the character of a pupil, who listens to all that his master chooses to tell him, but in that of a judge, who compels the witnesses to reply to those questions which he himself thinks fit to propose. To this single idea must the revolution be ascribed, by which, after groping in the dark for so many centuries, natural science was at length conducted into the path of certain progress.

We come now to metaphysics, a purely speculative science, which occupies a completely isolated position and is entirely independent of the teachings of experience. It deals with mere conceptions—not, like mathematics, with conceptions applied to intuition—and in it, reason is the pupil of itself alone. It is the oldest of the sciences, and would still survive, even if all the rest were swallowed up in the abyss of an all-destroying barbarism. But it has not yet had the good fortune to attain to the sure scientific method. This will be apparent; if we apply the tests which we proposed at the outset. We find that reason perpetually comes to a stand, when it attempts to gain a priori the perception even of those laws which the most common experience confirms. We find it compelled to retrace its steps in innumerable instances, and to abandon the path on which it had entered, because this does not lead to the desired result. We find, too, that those who are engaged in metaphysical pursuits are far from being able to agree among themselves, but that, on the contrary, this science appears to furnish an arena specially adapted for the display of skill or the exercise of strength in mock-contests—a field in which no combatant ever yet succeeded in gaining an inch of ground, in which, at least, no victory was ever yet crowned with permanent possession.

This leads us to inquire why it is that, in metaphysics, the sure path of science has not hitherto been found. Shall we suppose that it is impossible to discover it? Why then should nature have visited our reason with restless aspirations after it, as if it were one of our weightiest concerns? Nay, more, how little cause should we have to place confidence in our reason, if it abandons us in a matter about which, most of all, we desire to know the truth—and not only so, but even allures us to the pursuit of vain phantoms, only to betray us in the end? Or, if the path has only hitherto been missed, what indications do we possess to guide us in a renewed investigation, and to enable us to hope for greater success than has fallen to the lot of our predecessors?

It appears to me that the examples of mathematics and natural philosophy, which, as we have seen, were brought into their present condition by a sudden revolution, are sufficiently remarkable to fix our attention on the essential circumstances of the change which has proved so advantageous to them, and to induce us to make the experiment of imitating them, so far as the analogy which, as rational sciences, they bear to metaphysics may permit. It has hitherto been assumed that our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to ascertain anything about these objects a priori, by means of conceptions, and thus to extend the range of our knowledge, have been rendered abortive by this assumption. Let us then make the experiment whether we may not be more

successful in metaphysics, if we assume that the objects must conform to our cognition. This appears, at all events, to accord better with the possibility of our gaining the end we have in view, that is to say, of arriving at the cognition of objects a priori, of determining something with respect to these objects, before they are given to us. We here propose to do just what Copernicus did in attempting to explain the celestial movements. When he found that he could make no progress by assuming that all the heavenly bodies revolved round the spectator, he reversed the process, and tried the experiment of assuming that the spectator revolved, while the stars remained at rest. We may make the same experiment with regard to the intuition of objects. If the intuition must conform to the nature of the objects, I do not see how we can know anything of them a priori. If, on the other hand, the object conforms to the nature of our faculty of intuition, I can then easily conceive the possibility of such an a priori knowledge. Now as I cannot rest in the mere intuitions, but—if they are to become cognitions—must refer them, as representations, to something, as object, and must determine the latter by means of the former, here again there are two courses open to me. Either, first, I may assume that the conceptions, by which I effect this determination, conform to the object—and in this case I am reduced to the same perplexity as before; or secondly, I may assume that the objects, or, which is the same thing, that experience, in which alone as given objects they are cognized, conform to my conceptions—and then I am at no loss how to proceed. For experience itself is a mode of cognition which requires understanding. Before objects, are given to me, that is, a priori, I must presuppose in myself laws of the understanding which are expressed in conceptions a priori. To these conceptions, then, all the objects of experience must necessarily conform. Now there are objects which reason thinks, and that necessarily, but which cannot be given in experience, or, at least, cannot be given so as reason thinks them. The attempt to think these objects will hereafter furnish an excellent test of the new method of thought which we have adopted, and which is based on the principle that we only cognize in things a priori that which we ourselves place in them.\*

[\*Footnote: This method, accordingly, which we have borrowed from the natural philosopher, consists in seeking for the elements of pure reason in that which admits of confirmation or refutation by experiment. Now the propositions of pure reason, especially when they transcend the limits of possible experience, do not admit of our making any experiment with their objects, as in natural science. Hence, with regard to those conceptions and principles which we assume a priori, our only course will be to view them from two different sides. We must regard one and the same conception, on the one hand, in relation to experience as an object of the senses and of the understanding, on the other hand, in relation to reason, isolated and transcending the limits of experience, as an object of mere thought. Now if we find that, when we regard things from this double point of view, the result is in harmony with the principle of pure reason, but that, when we regard them from a single point of view, reason is involved in self-contradiction, then the experiment will establish the correctness of this distinction.]

This attempt succeeds as well as we could desire, and promises to metaphysics, in its first part—that is, where it is occupied with conceptions a priori, of which the corresponding objects may be given in experience—the certain course of science. For by this new method we are enabled perfectly to explain the possibility of a priori cognition, and, what is more, to demonstrate satisfactorily the laws which lie a priori at the foundation of nature, as the sum of the objects of experience—neither of which was possible according to the procedure hitherto followed. But from this deduction of the faculty of a priori cognition in the first part of metaphysics, we derive a surprising result, and one which, to all appearance, militates against the great end of metaphysics, as treated in the second part. For we come to the conclusion that our faculty of cognition is unable to transcend the limits of possible experience; and yet this is precisely the most essential object of this science. The estimate of our rational cognition a priori at which we arrive is that it has only to do with phenomena, and that things in themselves, while possessing a real existence, lie beyond its sphere. Here we are enabled to put the justice of this estimate to the test. For that which of necessity impels us to transcend the limits of experience and of all phenomena is the unconditioned, which reason absolutely requires in things as they are in themselves, in order to complete the series of conditions. Now, if it appears that when, on the one hand, we assume that our cognition conforms to its objects as things in themselves, the unconditioned cannot be thought without contradiction, and that when, on the other hand, we assume that our representation of things as they are given to us, does not conform to these things as they are in themselves, but that these objects, as phenomena, conform to our mode of representation, the contradiction

disappears: we shall then be convinced of the truth of that which we began by assuming for the sake of experiment; we may look upon it as established that the unconditioned does not lie in things as we know them, or as they are given to us, but in things as they are in themselves, beyond the range of our cognition.\*

[\*Footnote: This experiment of pure reason has a great similarity to that of the chemists, which they term the experiment of reduction, or, more usually, the synthetic process. The analysis of the metaphysician separates pure cognition a priori into two heterogeneous elements, viz., the cognition of things as phenomena, and of things in themselves. Dialectic combines these again into harmony with the necessary rational idea of the unconditioned, and finds that this harmony never results except through the above distinction, which is, therefore, concluded to be just.]

But, after we have thus denied the power of speculative reason to make any progress in the sphere of the supersensible, it still remains for our consideration whether data do not exist in practical cognition which may enable us to determine the transcendent conception of the unconditioned, to rise beyond the limits of all possible experience from a practical point of view, and thus to satisfy the great ends of metaphysics. Speculative reason has thus, at least, made room for such an extension of our knowledge: and, if it must leave this space vacant, still it does not rob us of the liberty to fill it up, if we can, by means of practical data—nay, it even challenges us to make the attempt.\*

[\*Footnote: So the central laws of the movements of the heavenly bodies established the truth of that which Copernicus, first, assumed only as a hypothesis, and, at the same time, brought to light that invisible force (Newtonian attraction) which holds the universe together. The latter would have remained forever undiscovered, if Copernicus had not ventured on the experiment—contrary to the senses but still just—of looking for the observed movements not in the heavenly bodies, but in the spectator. In this Preface I treat the new metaphysical method as a hypothesis with the view of rendering apparent the first attempts at such a change of method, which are always hypothetical. But in the Critique itself it will be demonstrated, not hypothetically, but apodeictically, from the nature of our representations of space and time, and from the elementary conceptions of the understanding.]

This attempt to introduce a complete revolution in the procedure of metaphysics, after the example of the geometers and natural philosophers, constitutes the aim of the Critique of Pure Speculative Reason. It is a treatise on the method to be followed, not a system of the science itself. But, at the same time, it marks out and defines both the external boundaries and the internal structure of this science. For pure speculative reason has this peculiarity, that, in choosing the various objects of thought, it is able to define the limits of its own faculties, and even to give a complete enumeration of the possible modes of proposing problems to itself, and thus to sketch out the entire system of metaphysics. For, on the one hand, in cognition a priori, nothing must be attributed to the objects but what the thinking subject derives from itself; and, on the other hand, reason is, in regard to the principles of cognition, a perfectly distinct, independent unity, in which, as in an organized body, every member exists for the sake of the others, and all for the sake of each, so that no principle can be viewed, with safety, in one relationship, unless it is, at the same time, viewed in relation to the total use of pure reason. Hence, too, metaphysics has this singular advantage—an advantage which falls to the lot of no other science which has to do with objects—that, if once it is conducted into the sure path of science, by means of this criticism, it can then take in the whole sphere of its cognitions, and can thus complete its work, and leave it for the use of posterity, as a capital which can never receive fresh accessions. For metaphysics has to deal only with principles and with the limitations of its own employment as determined by these principles. To this perfection it is, therefore, bound, as the fundamental science, to attain, and to it the maxim may justly be applied:

*Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum.*

But, it will be asked, what kind of a treasure is this that we propose to bequeath to posterity? What is the real value of this system of metaphysics, purified by criticism, and thereby reduced to a permanent condition? A cursory view of the present work will lead to the supposition that its use is merely negative, that it only serves to warn us against venturing, with speculative reason, beyond the limits of experience. This is, in fact, its primary use. But this, at once, assumes a positive value, when we observe that the principles with which speculative reason endeavours to transcend its limits lead inevitably, not to the extension, but to the contraction of the use of reason, inasmuch as they threaten to extend the limits of sensibility, which is their proper sphere, over the entire realm of thought and, thus, to supplant the pure (practical) use of reason. So far, then, as this criticism is occupied in confining speculative reason within its proper bounds, it is only negative; but, inasmuch as it thereby, at the same time, removes an obstacle which impedes and even threatens to destroy the use of practical reason, it possesses a positive and very important value. In order to admit this, we have only to be convinced that there is an absolutely necessary use of pure reason—the moral use—in which it inevitably transcends the limits of sensibility, without the aid of speculation, requiring only to be insured against the effects of a speculation which would involve it in contradiction with itself. To deny the positive advantage of the service which this criticism renders us would be as absurd as to maintain that the system of police is productive of no positive benefit, since its main business is to prevent the violence which citizen has to apprehend from citizen, that so each may pursue his vocation in peace and security. That space and time are only forms of sensible intuition, and hence are only conditions of the existence of things as phenomena; that, moreover, we have no conceptions of the understanding, and, consequently, no elements for the cognition of things, except in so far as a corresponding intuition can be given to these conceptions; that, accordingly, we can have no cognition of an object, as a thing in itself, but only as an object of sensible intuition, that is, as phenomenon—all this is proved in the analytical part of the Critique; and from this the limitation of all possible speculative cognition to the mere objects of experience, follows as a necessary result. At the same time, it must be carefully borne in mind that, while we surrender the power of cognizing, we still reserve the power of thinking objects, as things in themselves.\* For, otherwise, we should require to affirm the existence of an appearance, without something that appears—which would be absurd. Now let us suppose, for a moment, that we had not undertaken this criticism and, accordingly, had not drawn the necessary distinction between things as objects of experience and things as they are in themselves. The principle of causality, and, by consequence, the mechanism of nature as determined by causality, would then have absolute validity in relation to all things as efficient causes. I should then be unable to assert, with regard to one and the same being, e.g., the human soul, that its will is free, and yet, at the same time, subject to natural necessity, that is, not free, without falling into a palpable contradiction, for in both propositions I should take the soul in the same signification, as a thing in general, as a thing in itself—as, without previous criticism, I could not but take it. Suppose now, on the other hand, that we have undertaken this criticism, and have learnt that an object may be taken in two senses, first, as a phenomenon, secondly, as a thing in itself; and that, according to the deduction of the conceptions of the understanding, the principle of causality has reference only to things in the first sense. We then see how it does not involve any contradiction to assert, on the one hand, that the will, in the phenomenal sphere—in visible action—is necessarily obedient to the law of nature, and, in so far, not free; and, on the other hand, that, as belonging to a thing in itself, it is not subject to that law, and, accordingly, is free. Now, it is true that I cannot, by means of speculative reason, and still less by empirical observation, cognize my soul as a thing in itself and consequently, cannot cognize liberty as the property of a being to which I ascribe effects in the world of sense. For, to do so, I must cognize this being as existing, and yet not in time, which—since I cannot support my conception by any intuition—is impossible. At the same time, while I cannot cognize, I can quite well think freedom, that is to say, my representation of it involves at least no contradiction, if we bear in mind the critical distinction of the two modes of representation (the sensible and the intellectual) and the consequent limitation of the conceptions of the pure understanding and of the principles which flow from them. Suppose now that morality necessarily presupposed liberty, in the strictest sense, as a property of our will; suppose that reason contained certain practical, original principles a priori, which were absolutely impossible without this presupposition; and suppose, at the same time, that speculative reason had proved that liberty was incapable of being thought at all. It would then follow that the moral presupposition must give way to the speculative affirmation, the opposite of which involves an obvious contradiction, and that liberty and, with it, morality must yield to the mechanism of nature; for the negation of morality involves no contradiction, except on the presupposition of liberty. Now morality does not require the speculative cognition of liberty; it is enough that I can think it, that its conception involves no contradiction, that it does not interfere with the mechanism of nature. But even this requirement we could not satisfy, if we had not learnt the twofold sense in which things may be taken; and it is only in this way that the doctrine of morality and the doctrine of nature are confined within their proper limits. For this result, then, we are indebted to a criticism which warns us of our unavoidable ignorance with regard to things in themselves, and establishes the necessary limitation of our theoretical cognition to mere phenomena.

[\*Footnote: In order to cognize an object, I must be able to prove its possibility, either from its reality as attested by experience, or a priori, by means of reason. But I can think what I please, provided only I do not contradict myself; that is, provided my conception is a possible thought, though I may be unable to answer for the existence of a corresponding object in the sum of possibilities. But something more is required before I can attribute to such a conception objective validity, that is real possibility—the other possibility being merely logical. We are not, however, confined to theoretical sources of cognition for the means of satisfying this additional requirement, but may derive them from practical sources.]

The positive value of the critical principles of pure reason in relation to the conception of God and of the simple nature of the soul, admits of a similar exemplification; but on this point I shall not dwell. I cannot even make the assumption—as the practical interests of morality require—of God, freedom, and immortality, if I do not deprive speculative reason of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For to arrive at these, it must make use of principles which, in fact, extend only to the objects of possible experience, and which cannot be applied to objects beyond this sphere without converting them into phenomena, and thus rendering the practical extension of pure reason impossible. I must, therefore, abolish knowledge, to make room for belief. The dogmatism of metaphysics, that is, the presumption that it is possible to advance in metaphysics without previous criticism, is the true source of the unbelief (always dogmatic) which militates against morality.

Thus, while it may be no very difficult task to bequeath a legacy to posterity, in the shape of a system of metaphysics constructed in accordance with the Critique of Pure Reason, still the value of such a bequest is not to be depreciated. It will render an important service to reason, by substituting the certainty of scientific method for that random groping after results without the guidance of principles, which has hitherto characterized the pursuit of metaphysical studies. It will render an important service to the inquiring mind of youth, by leading the student to apply his powers to the cultivation of genuine science, instead of wasting them, as at present, on speculations which can never lead to any result, or on the idle attempt to invent new ideas and opinions. But, above all, it will confer an inestimable benefit on morality and religion, by showing that all the objections urged against them may be silenced for ever by the Socratic method, that is to say, by proving the ignorance of the objector. For, as the world has never been, and, no doubt, never will be without a system of metaphysics of one kind or another, it is the highest and weightiest concern of philosophy to render it powerless for harm, by closing up the sources of error.

This important change in the field of the sciences, this loss of its fancied possessions, to which speculative reason must submit, does not prove in any way detrimental to the general interests of humanity. The advantages which the world has derived from the teachings of pure reason are not at all impaired. The loss falls, in its whole extent, on the monopoly of the schools, but does not in the slightest degree touch the interests of mankind. I appeal to the most obstinate dogmatist, whether the proof of the continued existence of the soul after death, derived from the simplicity of its substance; of the freedom of the will in opposition to the general mechanism of nature, drawn from the subtle but impotent distinction of subjective and objective practical necessity; or of the existence of God, deduced from the conception of an ens realissimum—the contingency of the changeable, and the necessity of a prime mover, has ever been able to pass beyond the limits of the schools, to penetrate the public mind, or to exercise the slightest influence on its convictions. It must be admitted that this has not been the case and that, owing to the unfitness of the common understanding for such subtle speculations, it can never be expected to take place. On the contrary, it is plain that the hope of a future life arises from the feeling, which exists in the breast of every man, that the temporal is inadequate to meet and satisfy the demands of his nature. In like manner, it cannot be doubted that the clear exhibition of duties in opposition to all the claims of inclination, gives rise to the consciousness of freedom, and that the glorious order, beauty, and providential care, everywhere displayed in nature, give rise to the belief in a wise and great Author of the Universe. Such is the genesis of these general convictions of mankind, so far as they depend on rational grounds; and this public property not only remains undisturbed, but is even raised to greater importance, by the doctrine that the schools have no right to arrogate to themselves a more profound insight into a matter of general human concernment than that to which the great mass of men, ever held by us in the highest estimation, can without difficulty attain, and that the schools should, therefore, confine themselves to the elaboration of these universally comprehensible and, from a moral point of view, amply satisfactory proofs. The change, therefore, affects only the arrogant pretensions of the schools, which would gladly retain, in their own exclusive possession, the key to the truths which they impart to the public.

Quod mecum nescit, solus vult scire videri.

At the same time it does not deprive the speculative philosopher of his just title to be the sole depositor of a science which benefits the public without its knowledge—I mean, the Critique of Pure Reason. This can never become popular and, indeed, has no occasion to be so; for finespun arguments in favour of useful truths make just as little impression on the public mind as the equally subtle objections brought against these truths. On the other hand, since both inevitably force themselves on every man who rises to the height of speculation, it becomes the manifest duty of the schools to enter upon a thorough investigation of the rights of speculative reason and, thus, to prevent the scandal which metaphysical controversies are sure, sooner or later, to cause even to the masses. It is only by criticism that metaphysicians (and, as such, theologians too) can be saved from these controversies and from the consequent perversion of their doctrines. Criticism alone can strike a blow at the root of materialism, fatalism, atheism, free-thinking, fanaticism, and superstition, which are universally injurious—as well as of idealism and scepticism, which are dangerous to the schools, but can scarcely pass over to the public. If governments think proper to interfere with the affairs of the learned, it would be more consistent with a wise regard for the interests of science, as well as for those of society, to favour a criticism of this kind, by which alone the labours of reason can be established on a firm basis, than to support the ridiculous despotism of the schools, which raise a loud cry of danger to the public over the destruction of cobwebs, of which the public has never taken any notice, and the loss of which, therefore, it can never feel.

This critical science is not opposed to the dogmatic procedure of reason in pure cognition; for pure cognition must always be dogmatic, that is, must rest on strict demonstration from sure principles a priori—but to dogmatism, that is, to the presumption that it is possible to make any progress with a pure cognition, derived from (philosophical) conceptions, according to the principles which reason has long been in the habit of employing—without first inquiring in what way and by what right reason has come into the possession of these principles. Dogmatism is thus the dogmatic procedure of pure reason without previous criticism of its own powers, and in opposing this procedure, we must not be supposed to lend any countenance to that loquacious shallowness which arrogates to itself the name of popularity, nor yet to scepticism, which makes short work with the whole science of metaphysics. On the contrary, our criticism is the necessary preparation for a thoroughly scientific system of metaphysics which must perform its task entirely a priori, to the complete satisfaction of speculative reason, and must, therefore, be treated, not popularly, but scholastically. In carrying out the plan which the Critique prescribes, that is, in the future system of metaphysics, we must have recourse to the strict method of the celebrated Wolf, the greatest of all dogmatic philosophers. He was the first to point out the necessity of establishing fixed principles, of clearly defining our conceptions, and of subjecting our demonstrations to the most severe scrutiny, instead of rashly jumping at conclusions. The example which he set served to awaken that spirit of profound and thorough investigation which is not yet extinct in Germany. He would have been peculiarly well fitted to give a truly scientific character to metaphysical studies, had it occurred to him to prepare the field by a criticism of the organum, that is, of pure reason itself. That he failed to perceive the necessity of such a procedure must be ascribed to the dogmatic mode of thought which characterized his age, and on this point the philosophers of his time, as well as of all previous times, have nothing to reproach each other with. Those who reject at once the method of Wolf, and of the Critique of Pure Reason, can have no other aim but to shake off the fetters of science, to change labour into sport, certainty into opinion, and philosophy into philodoxy.

In this second edition, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to remove the difficulties and obscurity which, without fault of mine perhaps, have given rise to many misconceptions even among acute thinkers. In the propositions themselves, and in the demonstrations by which they are supported, as well as in the form and the entire plan of the work, I have found nothing to alter; which must be attributed partly to the long examination to which I had subjected the whole before offering it to the public and partly to the nature of the case. For pure speculative reason is an organic structure in which there is nothing isolated or independent, but every Single part is essential to all the rest; and hence, the slightest imperfection, whether defect or positive error, could not fail to betray itself in use. I venture, further, to hope, that this system will maintain the same unalterable character for the future. I am led to entertain this confidence, not by vanity, but by the evidence which the equality of the result affords, when we proceed, first, from the simplest elements up to the complete whole of pure reason and, and then, backwards from the whole to each part. We find that the attempt to make the slightest alteration, in any part, leads inevitably to contradictions, not merely in this system, but in human reason itself. At the same time, there is still much room for improvement in the exposition of the doctrines contained in this work. In the present edition, I have endeavoured to remove misapprehensions of the aesthetical part, especially with regard to the conception of time; to clear away the obscurity which has been found in the deduction of the conceptions of the understanding; to supply the supposed want of sufficient evidence in the demonstration of the principles of the pure understanding; and, lastly, to obviate the misunderstanding of the paralogisms which immediately precede the rational psychology. Beyond this point—the end of the second main division of the “Transcendental Dialectic”—I have not extended my alterations,\* partly from want of time, and partly because I am not aware that

any portion of the remainder has given rise to misconceptions among intelligent and impartial critics, whom I do not here mention with that praise which is their due, but who will find that their suggestions have been attended to in the work itself.

[\*Footnote: The only addition, properly so called—and that only in the method of proof—which I have made in the present edition, consists of a new refutation of psychological idealism, and a strict demonstration—the only one possible, as I believe—of the objective reality of external intuition. However harmless idealism may be considered—although in reality it is not so—in regard to the essential ends of metaphysics, it must still remain a scandal to philosophy and to the general human reason to be obliged to assume, as an article of mere belief, the existence of things external to ourselves (from which, yet, we derive the whole material of cognition for the internal sense), and not to be able to oppose a satisfactory proof to any one who may call it in question. As there is some obscurity of expression in the demonstration as it stands in the text, I propose to alter the passage in question as follows: "But this permanent cannot be an intuition in me. For all the determining grounds of my existence which can be found in me are representations and, as such, do themselves require a permanent, distinct from them, which may determine my existence in relation to their changes, that is, my existence in time, wherein they change." It may, probably, be urged in opposition to this proof that, after all, I am only conscious immediately of that which is in me, that is, of my representation of external things, and that, consequently, it must always remain uncertain whether anything corresponding to this representation does or does not exist externally to me. But I am conscious, through internal experience, of my existence in time (consequently, also, of the determinability of the former in the latter), and that is more than the simple consciousness of my representation. It is, in fact, the same as the empirical consciousness of my existence, which can only be determined in relation to something, which, while connected with my existence, is external to me. This consciousness of my existence in time is, therefore, identical with the consciousness of a relation to something external to me, and it is, therefore, experience, not fiction, sense, not imagination, which inseparably connects the external with my internal sense. For the external sense is, in itself, the relation of intuition to something real, external to me; and the reality of this something, as opposed to the mere imagination of it, rests solely on its inseparable connection with internal experience as the condition of its possibility. If with the intellectual consciousness of my existence, in the representation: I am, which accompanies all my judgements, and all the operations of my understanding, I could, at the same time, connect a determination of my existence by intellectual intuition, then the consciousness of a relation to something external to me would not be necessary. But the internal intuition in which alone my existence can be determined, though preceded by that purely intellectual consciousness, is itself sensible and attached to the condition of time. Hence this determination of my existence, and consequently my internal experience itself, must depend on something permanent which is not in me, which can be, therefore, only in something external to me, to which I must look upon myself as being

related. Thus the reality of the external sense is necessarily connected with that of the internal, in order to the possibility of experience in general; that is, I am just as certainly conscious that there are things external to me related to my sense as I am that I myself exist as determined in time. But in order to ascertain to what given intuitions objects, external me, really correspond, in other words, what intuitions belong to the external sense and not to imagination, I must have recourse, in every particular case, to those rules according to which experience in general (even internal experience) is distinguished from imagination, and which are always based on the proposition that there really is an external experience. We may add the remark that the representation of something permanent in existence, is not the same thing as the permanent representation; for a representation may be very variable and changing—as all our representations, even that of matter, are—and yet refer to something permanent, which must, therefore, be distinct from all my representations and external to me, the existence of which is necessarily included in the determination of my own existence, and with it constitutes one experience—an experience which would not even be possible internally, if it were not also at the same time, in part, external. To the question How? we are no more able to reply, than we are, in general, to think the stationary in time, the coexistence of which with the variable, produces the conception of change.]

In attempting to render the exposition of my views as intelligible as possible, I have been compelled to leave out or abridge various passages which were not essential to the completeness of the work, but which many readers might consider useful in other respects, and might be unwilling to miss. This trifling loss, which could not be avoided without swelling the book beyond due limits, may be supplied, at the pleasure of the reader, by a comparison with the first edition, and will, I hope, be more than compensated for by the greater clearness of the exposition as it now stands.

I have observed, with pleasure and thankfulness, in the pages of various reviews and treatises, that the spirit of profound and thorough investigation is not extinct in Germany, though it may have been overborne and silenced for a time by the fashionable tone of a licence in thinking, which gives itself the airs of genius, and that the difficulties which beset the paths of criticism have not prevented energetic and acute thinkers from making themselves masters of the science of pure reason to which these paths conduct—a science which is not popular, but scholastic in its character, and which alone can hope for a lasting existence or possess an abiding value. To these deserving men, who so happily combine profundity of view with a talent for lucid exposition—a talent which I myself am not conscious of possessing—I leave the task of removing any obscurity which may still adhere to the statement of my doctrines. For, in this case, the danger is not that of being refuted, but of being misunderstood. For my own part, I must henceforward abstain from controversy, although I shall carefully attend to all suggestions, whether from friends or adversaries, which may be of use in the future elaboration of the system of this propaedeutic. As, during these labours, I have advanced pretty far in years this month I reach my sixty-fourth year—it will be necessary for me to economize time, if I am to carry out my plan of elaborating the metaphysics of nature as well as of morals, in confirmation of the correctness of the principles established in this Critique of Pure Reason, both speculative and practical; and I must, therefore, leave the task of clearing up the obscurities of the present work—inevitable, perhaps, at the outset—as well as, the defence of the whole, to those deserving men, who have made my system their own. A philosophical system cannot come forward armed at all points like a mathematical treatise, and hence it may be quite possible to take objection to particular passages, while the organic structure of the system, considered as a unity, has no danger to apprehend. But few possess the ability, and still fewer the inclination, to take a comprehensive view of a new system. By confining the view to particular passages, taking these out of their connection and comparing them with one another, it is easy to pick out apparent contradictions, especially in a work written with any freedom of style. These contradictions place the work in an unfavourable light in the eyes of those who rely on the judgement of others, but are easily reconciled by those who have mastered the idea of the whole. If a theory possesses stability in itself, the action and reaction which seemed at first to threaten its existence serve only, in the course of time, to smooth down any superficial

roughness or inequality, and—if men of insight, impartiality, and truly popular gifts, turn their attention to it—to secure to it, in a short time, the requisite elegance also.

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# IMMANUEL KANT: CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON (INTRODUCTION)

## I. Of the difference between Pure and Empirical Knowledge

That all our knowledge begins with experience there can be no doubt. For how is it possible that the faculty of cognition should be awakened into exercise otherwise than by means of objects which affect our senses, and partly of themselves produce representations, partly rouse our powers of understanding into activity, to compare to connect, or to separate these, and so to convert the raw material of our sensuous impressions into a knowledge of objects, which is called experience? In respect of time, therefore, no knowledge of ours is antecedent to experience, but begins with it.

But, though all our knowledge begins with experience, it by no means follows that all arises out of experience. For, on the contrary, it is quite possible that our empirical knowledge is a compound of that which we receive through impressions, and that which the faculty of cognition supplies from itself (sensuous impressions giving merely the occasion), an addition which we cannot distinguish from the original element given by sense, till long practice has made us attentive to, and skilful in separating it. It is, therefore, a question which requires close investigation, and not to be answered at first sight, whether there exists a knowledge altogether independent of experience, and even of all sensuous impressions? Knowledge of this kind is called *a priori*, in contradistinction to empirical knowledge, which has its sources *a posteriori*, that is, in experience.

But the expression, “*a priori*,” is not as yet definite enough adequately to indicate the whole meaning of the question above started. For, in speaking of knowledge which has its sources in experience, we are wont to say, that this or that may be known *a priori*, because we do not derive this knowledge immediately from experience, but from a general rule, which, however, we have itself borrowed from experience. Thus, if a man undermined his house, we say, “he might know *a priori* that it would have fallen;” that is, he needed not to have waited for the experience that it did actually fall. But still, *a priori*, he could not know even this much. For, that bodies are heavy, and, consequently, that they fall when their supports are taken away, must have been known to him previously, by means of experience.

By the term “knowledge *a priori*,” therefore, we shall in the sequel understand, not such as is independent of this or that kind of experience, but such as is absolutely so of all experience. Opposed to this is empirical knowledge, or that which is possible only *a posteriori*, that is, through experience. Knowledge *a priori* is either pure or impure. Pure knowledge *a priori* is that with which no empirical element is mixed up. For example, the proposition, “Every change has a cause,” is a proposition *a priori*, but impure, because change is a conception which can only be derived from experience.

## II. The Human Intellect, even in an Unphilosophical State, is in Possession of Certain Cognitions “*a priori*”.

The question now is as to a criterion, by which we may securely distinguish a pure from an empirical cognition. Experience no doubt teaches us that this or that object is constituted in such and such a manner, but not that it could not possibly exist otherwise. Now, in the first place, if we have a proposition which contains the idea of necessity in its very conception, it is a *if*, moreover, it is not derived from any other proposition, unless from one equally involving the idea of necessity, it is absolutely *a priori*. Secondly, an empirical judgement never exhibits strict and absolute, but only assumed and comparative universality (by induction); therefore, the most we can say is—so far as we have hitherto observed, there is no exception to this or that rule. If, on the other hand, a judgement carries with it strict and absolute universality, that is, admits of no possible exception, it is not derived from experience, but is valid absolutely *a priori*.

Empirical universality is, therefore, only an arbitrary extension of validity, from that which may be predicated of a proposition valid in most cases, to that which is asserted of a proposition which holds good in all; as, for example, in the affirmation, "All bodies are heavy." When, on the contrary, strict universality characterizes a judgement, it necessarily indicates another peculiar source of knowledge, namely, a faculty of cognition a priori. Necessity and strict universality, therefore, are infallible tests for distinguishing pure from empirical knowledge, and are inseparably connected with each other. But as in the use of these criteria the empirical limitation is sometimes more easily detected than the contingency of the judgement, or the unlimited universality which we attach to a judgement is often a more convincing proof than its necessity, it may be advisable to use the criteria separately, each being by itself infallible.

Now, that in the sphere of human cognition we have judgements which are necessary, and in the strictest sense universal, consequently pure a priori, it will be an easy matter to show. If we desire an example from the sciences, we need only take any proposition in mathematics. If we cast our eyes upon the commonest operations of the understanding, the proposition, "Every change must have a cause," will amply serve our purpose. In the latter case, indeed, the conception of a cause so plainly involves the conception of a necessity of connection with an effect, and of a strict universality of the law, that the very notion of a cause would entirely disappear, were we to derive it, like Hume, from a frequent association of what happens with that which precedes; and the habit thence originating of connecting representations—the necessity inherent in the judgement being therefore merely subjective. Besides, without seeking for such examples of principles existing a priori in cognition, we might easily show that such principles are the indispensable basis of the possibility of experience itself, and consequently prove their existence a priori. For whence could our experience itself acquire certainty, if all the rules on which it depends were themselves empirical, and consequently fortuitous? No one, therefore, can admit the validity of the use of such rules as first principles. But, for the present, we may content ourselves with having established the fact, that we do possess and exercise a faculty of pure a priori cognition; and, secondly, with having pointed out the proper tests of such cognition, namely, universality and necessity.

Not only in judgements, however, but even in conceptions, is an a priori origin manifest. For example, if we take away by degrees from our conceptions of a body all that can be referred to mere sensuous experience—colour, hardness or softness, weight, even impenetrability—the body will then vanish; but the space which it occupied still remains, and this it is utterly impossible to annihilate in thought. Again, if we take away, in like manner, from our empirical conception of any object, corporeal or incorporeal, all properties which mere experience has taught us to connect with it, still we cannot think away those through which we cogitate it as substance, or adhering to substance, although our conception of substance is more determined than that of an object. Compelled, therefore, by that necessity with which the conception of substance forces itself upon us, we must confess that it has its seat in our faculty of cognition a priori.

III. Philosophy stands in need of a Science which shall Determine the Possibility, Principles, and Extent of Human Knowledge "a priori"

Of far more importance than all that has been above said, is the consideration that certain of our cognitions rise completely above the sphere of all possible experience, and by means of conceptions, to which there exists in the whole extent of experience no corresponding object, seem to extend the range of our judgements beyond its bounds. And just in this transcendental or supersensible sphere, where experience affords us neither instruction nor guidance, lie the investigations of reason, which, on account of their importance, we consider far preferable to, and as having a far more elevated aim than, all that the understanding can achieve within the sphere of sensuous phenomena. So high a value do we set upon these investigations, that even at the risk of error, we persist in following them out, and permit neither doubt nor disregard nor indifference to restrain us from the pursuit. These unavoidable problems of mere pure reason are God, freedom (of will), and immortality. The science which, with all its preliminaries, has for its especial object the solution of these problems is named metaphysics—a science which is at the very outset dogmatical, that is, it confidently takes upon itself the execution of this task without any previous investigation of the ability or inability of reason for such an undertaking.

Now the safe ground of experience being thus abandoned, it seems nevertheless natural that we should hesitate to erect a building with the cognitions we possess, without knowing whence they come, and on the strength of principles, the origin of which is undiscovered. Instead of thus trying to build without a foundation, it is rather to be expected that we should long ago have put the question, how the understanding can arrive at these a priori cognitions, and what is the extent, validity, and worth which they may possess? We say, "This is natural enough," meaning by the word natural, that which is consistent with a just and reasonable way of thinking; but if we understand by the term, that which usually happens, nothing indeed could be more natural and more comprehensible than that this investigation should be left long unattempted. For one part of our pure knowledge,

the science of mathematics, has been long firmly established, and thus leads us to form flattering expectations with regard to others, though these may be of quite a different nature. Besides, when we get beyond the bounds of experience, we are of course safe from opposition in that quarter; and the charm of widening the range of our knowledge is so great that, unless we are brought to a standstill by some evident contradiction, we hurry on undoubtingly in our course. This, however, may be avoided, if we are sufficiently cautious in the construction of our fictions, which are not the less fictions on that account.

Mathematical science affords us a brilliant example, how far, independently of all experience, we may carry our a priori knowledge. It is true that the mathematician occupies himself with objects and cognitions only in so far as they can be represented by means of intuition. But this circumstance is easily overlooked, because the said intuition can itself be given a priori, and therefore is hardly to be distinguished from a mere pure conception. Deceived by such a proof of the power of reason, we can perceive no limits to the extension of our knowledge. The light dove cleaving in free flight the thin air, whose resistance it feels, might imagine that her movements would be far more free and rapid in airless space. Just in the same way did Plato, abandoning the world of sense because of the narrow limits it sets to the understanding, venture upon the wings of ideas beyond it, into the void space of pure intellect. He did not reflect that he made no real progress by all his efforts; for he met with no resistance which might serve him for a support, as it were, whereon to rest, and on which he might apply his powers, in order to let the intellect acquire momentum for its progress. It is, indeed, the common fate of human reason in speculation, to finish the imposing edifice of thought as rapidly as possible, and then for the first time to begin to examine whether the foundation is a solid one or no. Arrived at this point, all sorts of excuses are sought after, in order to console us for its want of stability, or rather, indeed, to enable us to dispense altogether with so late and dangerous an investigation. But what frees us during the process of building from all apprehension or suspicion, and flatters us into the belief of its solidity, is this. A great part, perhaps the greatest part, of the business of our reason consists in the analysis of the conceptions which we already possess of objects. By this means we gain a multitude of cognitions, which although really nothing more than elucidations or explanations of that which (though in a confused manner) was already thought in our conceptions, are, at least in respect of their form, prized as new introspections; whilst, so far as regards their matter or content, we have really made no addition to our conceptions, but only disinvolved them. But as this process does furnish a real a priori knowledge, which has a sure progress and useful results, reason, deceived by this, slips in, without being itself aware of it, assertions of a quite different kind; in which, to given conceptions it adds others, a priori indeed, but entirely foreign to them, without our knowing how it arrives at these, and, indeed, without such a question ever suggesting itself. I shall therefore at once proceed to examine the difference between these two modes of knowledge.

#### IV. Of the Difference Between Analytical and Synthetical Judgements.

In all judgements wherein the relation of a subject to the predicate is cogitated (I mention affirmative judgements only here; the application to negative will be very easy), this relation is possible in two different ways. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A, as somewhat which is contained (though covertly) in the conception A; or the predicate B lies completely out of the conception A, although it stands in connection with it. In the first instance, I term the judgement analytical, in the second, synthetical. Analytical judgements (affirmative) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject is cogitated through identity; those in which this connection is cogitated without identity, are called synthetical judgements. The former may be called explicative, the latter augmentative judgements; because the former add in the predicate nothing to the conception of the subject, but only analyse it into its constituent conceptions, which were thought already in the subject, although in a confused manner; the latter add to our conceptions of the subject a predicate which was not contained in it, and which no analysis could ever have discovered therein. For example, when I say, "All bodies are extended," this is an analytical judgement. For I need not go beyond the conception of body in order to find extension connected with it, but merely analyse the conception, that is, become conscious of the manifold properties which I think in that conception, in order to discover this predicate in it: it is therefore an analytical judgement. On the other hand, when I say, "All bodies are heavy," the predicate is something totally different from that which I think in the mere conception of a body. By the addition of such a predicate, therefore, it becomes a synthetical judgement.

Judgements of experience, as such, are always synthetical. For it would be absurd to think of grounding an analytical judgement on experience, because in forming such a judgement I need not go out of the sphere of my conceptions, and therefore recourse to the testimony of experience is quite unnecessary. That "bodies are extended" is not an empirical judgement, but a proposition which stands firm a priori. For before addressing myself to experience, I already have in my conception all the requisite conditions for the judgement, and I have only to extract the predicate from the conception, according to the principle of contradiction, and thereby at the same time become conscious of the necessity of the judgement, a necessity which I could never learn from

experience. On the other hand, though at first I do not at all include the predicate of weight in my conception of body in general, that conception still indicates an object of experience, a part of the totality of experience, to which I can still add other parts; and this I do when I recognize by observation that bodies are heavy. I can cognize beforehand by analysis the conception of body through the characteristics of extension, impenetrability, shape, etc., all which are cogitated in this conception. But now I extend my knowledge, and looking back on experience from which I had derived this conception of body, I find weight at all times connected with the above characteristics, and therefore I synthetically add to my conceptions this as a predicate, and say, "All bodies are heavy." Thus it is experience upon which rests the possibility of the synthesis of the predicate of weight with the conception of body, because both conceptions, although the one is not contained in the other, still belong to one another (only contingently, however), as parts of a whole, namely, of experience, which is itself a synthesis of intuitions.

But to synthetical judgements a priori, such aid is entirely wanting. If I go out of and beyond the conception A, in order to recognize another B as connected with it, what foundation have I to rest on, whereby to render the synthesis possible? I have here no longer the advantage of looking out in the sphere of experience for what I want. Let us take, for example, the proposition, "Everything that happens has a cause." In the conception of "something that happens," I indeed think an existence which a certain time antecedes, and from this I can derive analytical judgements. But the conception of a cause lies quite out of the above conception, and indicates something entirely different from "that which happens," and is consequently not contained in that conception. How then am I able to assert concerning the general conception—"that which happens"—something entirely different from that conception, and to recognize the conception of cause although not contained in it, yet as belonging to it, and even necessarily? what is here the unknown = X, upon which the understanding rests when it believes it has found, out of the conception A a foreign predicate B, which it nevertheless considers to be connected with it? It cannot be experience, because the principle adduced annexes the two representations, cause and effect, to the representation existence, not only with universality, which experience cannot give, but also with the expression of necessity, therefore completely a priori and from pure conceptions. Upon such synthetical, that is augmentative propositions, depends the whole aim of our speculative knowledge a priori; for although analytical judgements are indeed highly important and necessary, they are so, only to arrive at that clearness of conceptions which is requisite for a sure and extended synthesis, and this alone is a real acquisition.

V. In all Theoretical Sciences of Reason, Synthetical Judgements "a priori" are contained as Principles.

1. Mathematical judgements are always synthetical. Hitherto this fact, though incontestably true and very important in its consequences, seems to have escaped the analysts of the human mind, nay, to be in complete opposition to all their conjectures. For as it was found that mathematical conclusions all proceed according to the principle of contradiction (which the nature of every apodeictic certainty requires), people became persuaded that the fundamental principles of the science also were recognized and admitted in the same way. But the notion is fallacious; for although a synthetical proposition can certainly be discerned by means of the principle of contradiction, this is possible only when another synthetical proposition precedes, from which the latter is deduced, but never of itself.

Before all, be it observed, that proper mathematical propositions are always judgements a priori, and not empirical, because they carry along with them the conception of necessity, which cannot be given by experience. If this be demurred to, it matters not; I will then limit my assertion to pure mathematics, the very conception of which implies that it consists of knowledge altogether non-empirical and a priori.

We might, indeed at first suppose that the proposition  $7 + 5 = 12$  is a merely analytical proposition, following (according to the principle of contradiction) from the conception of a sum of seven and five. But if we regard it more narrowly, we find that our conception of the sum of seven and five contains nothing more than the uniting of both sums into one, whereby it cannot at all be cogitated what this single number is which embraces both. The conception of twelve is by no means obtained by merely cogitating the union of seven and five; and we may analyse our conception of such a possible sum as long as we will, still we shall never discover in it the notion of twelve. We must go beyond these conceptions, and have recourse to an intuition which corresponds to one of the two—our five fingers, for example, or like Segner in his Arithmetic five points, and so by degrees, add the units contained in the five given in the intuition, to the conception of seven. For I first take the number 7, and, for the conception of 5 calling in the aid of the fingers of my hand as objects of intuition, I add the units, which I before took together to make up the number 5, gradually now by means of the material image my hand, to the number 7, and by this process, I at length see the number 12 arise. That 7 should be added to 5, I have certainly cogitated in my conception of a sum =  $7 + 5$ , but not that this sum was equal to 12. Arithmetical propositions are therefore always synthetical, of which we may become more clearly convinced by trying large numbers. For it will thus become quite evident that, turn and twist our conceptions as we may, it is impossible, without having recourse to

intuition, to arrive at the sum total or product by means of the mere analysis of our conceptions. Just as little is any principle of pure geometry analytical. "A straight line between two points is the shortest," is a synthetical proposition. For my conception of straight contains no notion of quantity, but is merely qualitative. The conception of the shortest is therefore fore wholly an addition, and by no analysis can it be extracted from our conception of a straight line. Intuition must therefore here lend its aid, by means of which, and thus only, our synthesis is possible.

Some few principles preposited by geometricians are, indeed, really analytical, and depend on the principle of contradiction. They serve, however, like identical propositions, as links in the chain of method, not as principles—for example,  $a = a$ , the whole is equal to itself, or  $(a+b) \rightarrow a$ , the whole is greater than its part. And yet even these principles themselves, though they derive their validity from pure conceptions, are only admitted in mathematics because they can be presented in intuition. What causes us here commonly to believe that the predicate of such apodeictic judgements is already contained in our conception, and that the judgement is therefore analytical, is merely the equivocal nature of the expression. We must join in thought a certain predicate to a given conception, and this necessity cleaves already to the conception. But the question is, not what we must join in thought to the given conception, but what we really think therein, though only obscurely, and then it becomes manifest that the predicate pertains to these conceptions, necessarily indeed, yet not as thought in the conception itself, but by virtue of an intuition, which must be added to the conception.

2. The science of natural philosophy (physics) contains in itself synthetical judgements a priori, as principles. I shall adduce two propositions. For instance, the proposition, "In all changes of the material world, the quantity of matter remains unchanged"; or, that, "In all communication of motion, action and reaction must always be equal." In both of these, not only is the necessity, and therefore their origin a priori clear, but also that they are synthetical propositions. For in the conception of matter, I do not cogitate its permanency, but merely its presence in space, which it fills. I therefore really go out of and beyond the conception of matter, in order to think on to it something a priori, which I did not think in it. The proposition is therefore not analytical, but synthetical, and nevertheless conceived a priori; and so it is with regard to the other propositions of the pure part of natural philosophy.

3. As to metaphysics, even if we look upon it merely as an attempted science, yet, from the nature of human reason, an indispensable one, we find that it must contain synthetical propositions a priori. It is not merely the duty of metaphysics to dissect, and thereby analytically to illustrate the conceptions which we form a priori of things; but we seek to widen the range of our a priori knowledge. For this purpose, we must avail ourselves of such principles as add something to the original conception—something not identical with, nor contained in it, and by means of synthetical judgements a priori, leave far behind us the limits of experience; for example, in the proposition, "the world must have a beginning," and such like. Thus metaphysics, according to the proper aim of the science, consists merely of synthetical propositions a priori.

## VI. The Universal Problem of Pure Reason.

It is extremely advantageous to be able to bring a number of investigations under the formula of a single problem. For in this manner, we not only facilitate our own labour, inasmuch as we define it clearly to ourselves, but also render it more easy for others to decide whether we have done justice to our undertaking. The proper problem of pure reason, then, is contained in the question: "How are synthetical judgements a priori possible?"

That metaphysical science has hitherto remained in so vacillating a state of uncertainty and contradiction, is only to be attributed to the fact that this great problem, and perhaps even the difference between analytical and synthetical judgements, did not sooner suggest itself to philosophers. Upon the solution of this problem, or upon sufficient proof of the impossibility of synthetical knowledge a priori, depends the existence or downfall of the science of metaphysics. Among philosophers, David Hume came the nearest of all to this problem; yet it never acquired in his mind sufficient precision, nor did he regard the question in its universality. On the contrary, he stopped short at the synthetical proposition of the connection of an effect with its cause (*principium causalitatis*), insisting that such proposition a priori was impossible. According to his conclusions, then, all that we term metaphysical science is a mere delusion, arising from the fancied insight of reason into that which is in truth borrowed from experience, and to which habit has given the appearance of necessity. Against this assertion, destructive to all pure philosophy, he would have been guarded, had he had our problem before his eyes in its universality. For he would then have perceived that, according to his own argument, there likewise could not be any pure mathematical science, which assuredly cannot exist without synthetical propositions a priori—an absurdity from which his good understanding must have saved him.

In the solution of the above problem is at the same time comprehended the possibility of the use of pure reason in the foundation and construction of all sciences which contain theoretical knowledge a priori of objects, that is to say, the answer to the following questions:

How is pure mathematical science possible?

How is pure natural science possible?

Respecting these sciences, as they do certainly exist, it may with propriety be asked, how they are possible?—for that they must be possible is shown by the fact of their really existing.\* But as to metaphysics, the miserable progress it has hitherto made, and the fact that of no one system yet brought forward, far as regards its true aim, can it be said that this science really exists, leaves any one at liberty to doubt with reason the very possibility of its existence.

[\*Footnote: As to the existence of pure natural science, or physics, perhaps many may still express doubts. But we have only to look at the different propositions which are commonly treated of at the commencement of proper (empirical) physical science—those, for example, relating to the permanence of the same quantity of matter, the vis inertiae, the equality of action and reaction, etc.—to be soon convinced that they form a science of pure physics (physica pura, or rationalis), which well deserves to be separately exposed as a special science, in its whole extent, whether that be great or confined.]

Yet, in a certain sense, this kind of knowledge must unquestionably be looked upon as given; in other words, metaphysics must be considered as really existing, if not as a science, nevertheless as a natural disposition of the human mind (metaphysica naturalis). For human reason, without any instigations imputable to the mere vanity of great knowledge, unceasingly progresses, urged on by its own feeling of need, towards such questions as cannot be answered by any empirical application of reason, or principles derived therefrom; and so there has ever really existed in every man some system of metaphysics. It will always exist, so soon as reason awakes to the exercise of its power of speculation. And now the question arises: “How is metaphysics, as a natural disposition, possible?” In other words, how, from the nature of universal human reason, do those questions arise which pure reason proposes to itself, and which it is impelled by its own feeling of need to answer as well as it can?

But as in all the attempts hitherto made to answer the questions which reason is prompted by its very nature to propose to itself, for example, whether the world had a beginning, or has existed from eternity, it has always met with unavoidable contradictions, we must not rest satisfied with the mere natural disposition of the mind to metaphysics, that is, with the existence of the faculty of pure reason, whence, indeed, some sort of metaphysical system always arises; but it must be possible to arrive at certainty in regard to the question whether we know or do not know the things of which metaphysics treats. We must be able to arrive at a decision on the subjects of its questions, or on the ability or inability of reason to form any judgement respecting them; and therefore either to extend with confidence the bounds of our pure reason, or to set strictly defined and safe limits to its action. This last question, which arises out of the above universal problem, would properly run thus: “How is metaphysics possible as a science?”

Thus, the critique of reason leads at last, naturally and necessarily, to science; and, on the other hand, the dogmatical use of reason without criticism leads to groundless assertions, against which others equally specious can always be set, thus ending unavoidably in scepticism.

Besides, this science cannot be of great and formidable prolixity, because it has not to do with objects of reason, the variety of which is inexhaustible, but merely with Reason herself and her problems; problems which arise out of her own bosom, and are not proposed to her by the nature of outward things, but by her own nature. And when once Reason has previously become able completely to understand her own power in regard to objects which she meets with in experience, it will be easy to determine securely the extent and limits of her attempted application to objects beyond the confines of experience.

We may and must, therefore, regard the attempts hitherto made to establish metaphysical science dogmatically as non-existent. For what of analysis, that is, mere dissection of conceptions, is contained in one or other, is not the aim of, but only a preparation for metaphysics proper, which has for its object the extension, by means of synthesis, of our a priori knowledge. And for this purpose, mere analysis is of course useless, because it only shows what is contained in these conceptions, but not how we arrive, a priori, at them; and this it is her duty to show, in order to be able afterwards to determine their valid use in regard to all objects of experience, to all knowledge in general. But little self-denial, indeed, is needed to give up these pretensions, seeing the undeniable,

and in the dogmatic mode of procedure, inevitable contradictions of Reason with herself, have long since ruined the reputation of every system of metaphysics that has appeared up to this time. It will require more firmness to remain undeterred by difficulty from within, and opposition from without, from endeavouring, by a method quite opposed to all those hitherto followed, to further the growth and fruitfulness of a science indispensable to human reason—a science from which every branch it has borne may be cut away, but whose roots remain indestructible.

#### VII. Idea and Division of a Particular Science, under the Name of a Critique of Pure Reason.

From all that has been said, there results the idea of a particular science, which may be called the Critique of Pure Reason. For reason is the faculty which furnishes us with the principles of knowledge a priori. Hence, pure reason is the faculty which contains the principles of cognizing anything absolutely a priori. An organon of pure reason would be a compendium of those principles according to which alone all pure cognitions a priori can be obtained. The completely extended application of such an organon would afford us a system of pure reason. As this, however, is demanding a great deal, and it is yet doubtful whether any extension of our knowledge be here possible, or, if so, in what cases; we can regard a science of the mere criticism of pure reason, its sources and limits, as the propaedeutic to a system of pure reason. Such a science must not be called a doctrine, but only a critique of pure reason; and its use, in regard to speculation, would be only negative, not to enlarge the bounds of, but to purify, our reason, and to shield it against error—which alone is no little gain. I apply the term transcendental to all knowledge which is not so much occupied with objects as with the mode of our cognition of these objects, so far as this mode of cognition is possible a priori. A system of such conceptions would be called transcendental philosophy. But this, again, is still beyond the bounds of our present essay. For as such a science must contain a complete exposition not only of our synthetical a priori, but of our analytical a priori knowledge, it is of too wide a range for our present purpose, because we do not require to carry our analysis any farther than is necessary to understand, in their full extent, the principles of synthesis a priori, with which alone we have to do. This investigation, which we cannot properly call a doctrine, but only a transcendental critique, because it aims not at the enlargement, but at the correction and guidance, of our knowledge, and is to serve as a touchstone of the worth or worthlessness of all knowledge a priori, is the sole object of our present essay. Such a critique is consequently, as far as possible, a preparation for an organon; and if this new organon should be found to fail, at least for a canon of pure reason, according to which the complete system of the philosophy of pure reason, whether it extend or limit the bounds of that reason, might one day be set forth both analytically and synthetically. For that this is possible, nay, that such a system is not of so great extent as to preclude the hope of its ever being completed, is evident. For we have not here to do with the nature of outward objects, which is infinite, but solely with the mind, which judges of the nature of objects, and, again, with the mind only in respect of its cognition a priori. And the object of our investigations, as it is not to be sought without, but, altogether within, ourselves, cannot remain concealed, and in all probability is limited enough to be completely surveyed and fairly estimated, according to its worth or worthlessness. Still less let the reader here expect a critique of books and systems of pure reason; our present object is exclusively a critique of the faculty of pure reason itself. Only when we make this critique our foundation, do we possess a pure touchstone for estimating the philosophical value of ancient and modern writings on this subject; and without this criterion, the incompetent historian or judge decides upon and corrects the groundless assertions of others with his own, which have themselves just as little foundation.

Transcendental philosophy is the idea of a science, for which the Critique of Pure Reason must sketch the whole plan architectonically, that is, from principles, with a full guarantee for the validity and stability of all the parts which enter into the building. It is the system of all the principles of pure reason. If this Critique itself does not assume the title of transcendental philosophy, it is only because, to be a complete system, it ought to contain a full analysis of all human knowledge a priori. Our critique must, indeed, lay before us a complete enumeration of all the radical conceptions which constitute the said pure knowledge. But from the complete analysis of these conceptions themselves, as also from a complete investigation of those derived from them, it abstains with reason; partly because it would be deviating from the end in view to occupy itself with this analysis, since this process is not attended with the difficulty and insecurity to be found in the synthesis, to which our critique is entirely devoted, and partly because it would be inconsistent with the unity of our plan to burden this essay with the vindication of the completeness of such an analysis and deduction, with which, after all, we have at present nothing to do. This completeness of the analysis of these radical conceptions, as well as of the deduction from the conceptions a priori which may be given by the analysis, we can, however, easily attain, provided only that we are in possession of all these radical conceptions, which are to serve as principles of the synthesis, and that in respect of this main purpose nothing is wanting.

To the Critique of Pure Reason, therefore, belongs all that constitutes transcendental philosophy; and it is the complete idea of transcendental philosophy, but still not the science itself; because it only proceeds so far with the analysis as is necessary to the power of judging completely of our synthetical knowledge a priori.

The principal thing we must attend to, in the division of the parts of a science like this, is that no conceptions must enter it which contain aught empirical; in other words, that the knowledge a priori must be completely pure. Hence, although the highest principles and fundamental conceptions of morality are certainly cognitions a priori, yet they do not belong to transcendental philosophy; because, though they certainly do not lay the conceptions of pain, pleasure, desires, inclinations, etc. (which are all of empirical origin), at the foundation of its precepts, yet still into the conception of duty—as an obstacle to be overcome, or as an incitement which should not be made into a motive—these empirical conceptions must necessarily enter, in the construction of a system of pure morality. Transcendental philosophy is consequently a philosophy of the pure and merely speculative reason. For all that is practical, so far as it contains motives, relates to feelings, and these belong to empirical sources of cognition.

If we wish to divide this science from the universal point of view of a science in general, it ought to comprehend, first, a Doctrine of the Elements, and, secondly, a Doctrine of the Method of pure reason. Each of these main divisions will have its subdivisions, the separate reasons for which we cannot here particularize. Only so much seems necessary, by way of introduction of premonition, that there are two sources of human knowledge (which probably spring from a common, but to us unknown root), namely, sense and understanding. By the former, objects are given to us; by the latter, thought. So far as the faculty of sense may contain representations a priori, which form the conditions under which objects are given, in so far it belongs to transcendental philosophy. The transcendental doctrine of sense must form the first part of our science of elements, because the conditions under which alone the objects of human knowledge are given must precede those under which they are thought.

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# CHAPTER 5: METAPHYSICS

## METAPHYSICS: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND TRADITIONAL METAPHYSICAL PROBLEMS (PART 1)

Metaphysician or *Metaphysicist*?

Philosophers who specialize in metaphysics have traditionally been called *metaphysicians* in English (in French they are called a *metaphysicien*, in German a *metaphysiker*). Perhaps most modern anglo-american metaphysicians think problems in metaphysics can be treated as problems in language, potentially solved by conceptual analysis. They are analytical language philosophers. Others are specialists in modal logic, some who claim that modal logic is metaphysics. But language is too flexible, too ambiguous, too full of metaphor, to be a metaphysical diagnostic tool. We must go beyond language games and logical puzzles to the *underlying* information contained in a concept, and to the matter that embodies the *immaterial* concept.

Today's metaphysicians are overwhelmingly *naturalists*. They believe everything can be explained by what they call the "laws of nature." They take those laws to be the laws of classical physics, because few understand modern quantum physics. Even many physicists are baffled by the nonintuitive aspects of quantum mechanics, which have led to dozens of *interpretations* of quantum mechanics.

Even more problematic, today's metaphysicians are *materialists*, even *eliminative* materialists who think there is "*nothing but*" matter. They mistakenly believe that only material objects exist. The exceptions are religious metaphysicians who are still seeking a *God* and immortal souls.

Materialism is the claim that there is nothing in the world beyond the material (including energy), that everything follows "laws of nature," and that these laws are both *causal* and *deterministic*. So "supernatural" appears to imply "immaterial" and the freedom to break the laws of nature. Information philosophy denies the supernatural. But it defends *immaterial* information as that which constitutes the human spirit, or soul, the "ghost in the machine."

And it defends ontological *chance* as the generator of novel *possibilities* that are not determined by the "fixed past," opening the door to metaphysical *free will*.

Historical Background

Metaphysics has signified many things in the history of philosophy, but it has not strayed far from a literal reading of "beyond the physical." The term was invented by the 1st-century BCE head of *Aristotle's* Peripatetic school, Andronicus of Rhodes. Andronicus edited and arranged Aristotle's works, giving the name *Metaphysics* (τα μετα τα φυσικα βιβλια), literally "the books beyond the physics," perhaps the books to be read *after* reading Aristotle's books on nature, which he called the *Physics*. The Greek for nature is *physis*, so metaphysical is also "beyond the natural."

Aristotle never used the term metaphysics. For *Plato*, Aristotle's master, the realm of *abstract* ideas was more "real" than that of physical. i.e., material or *concrete*, objects, because ideas can be more permanent (the Being of Parmenides), whereas material objects are constantly changing (the Becoming of Heraclitus).

In recent centuries then, metaphysical has become "beyond the material." Metaphysics has become the study of immaterial things, like the mind, which is said to "supervene" on the material brain. Metaphysics is a kind of

idealism, in stark contrast to materialism. And metaphysics has failed in proportion to the phenomenal success of [naturalism](#), the idea that the laws of nature alone can completely explain the contents of the universe. For the eliminative materialist and [determinist](#) philosopher, who thinks there is “*nothing but*” matter, metaphysics is dismissed as nonsense.

The books of [Aristotle](#) that Andronicus considered “beyond nature” included Aristotle’s “First Philosophy” — ontology (the science of being), cosmology (the fundamental processes and original causes of physical things), and theology (is a god required as “first cause?”).

Aristotle’s *Physics* describes the four “causes” or “explanations” (*aitia*) of change and movement of objects already existing in the universe (the ideal formal and final causes, vs. the efficient and material causes). Aristotle’s metaphysics can then be seen as explanations for existence itself. What exists? What is it to be? What processes can bring things into (or out of) existence? Is there a cause or explanation for the universe as a whole?

In critical philosophical discourse, metaphysics has perhaps been tarnished by its Latin translation as “supernatural,” with its strong theological implications. But from the beginning, Aristotle’s books on “First Philosophy” considered God among the possible causes of the fundamental things in the universe. Tracing the regress of causes back in time as an infinite chain, Aristotle postulated a first cause or “[uncaused cause](#).” Where every motion needs a prior mover to explain it, he postulated an “unmoved first mover.” These postulates became a major element of theology down to modern times.

Metaphysics is the division of philosophy which includes ontology, or the science of *being*, and cosmology, or the science of the fundamental causes and processes of things. The primary meaning of metaphysics is derived from those discussions by Aristotle which he himself called the First Philosophy or Theology, and which deal with the nature of being as such, with first causes, new beginnings or genesis, and thus with the existence of God.

For medieval philosophers, metaphysics was understood as the science of the supersensible. Albertus Magnus called it science beyond the physical. [Thomas Aquinas](#) narrowed it to the cognition of God. John Duns Scotus disagreed, arguing that only study of the world can yield knowledge of God. Scholastic philosophers mostly returned metaphysics to the study of being in itself, that is, ontology, which again today is the core area of metaphysical arguments. In renaissance Germany, Christian Wolff broadened metaphysics to include psychology, along with ontology, cosmology, and natural or rational theology. In renaissance England, Francis Bacon narrowed metaphysics to the Aristotelian study of formal and final causes, separating it from natural philosophy which he saw as the study of efficient and material causes.

[Descartes](#) made a turn from what exists to [knowledge](#) of what exists. He changed the emphasis from a study of *being* to a study of the conditions of knowledge or *epistemology*. For empiricists in England like [John Locke](#) and [David Hume](#), metaphysics includes the “primary” things beyond psychology and “secondary” sensory experiences. They denied that any knowledge was possible apart from experimental and mathematical reasoning. Hume thought metaphysics was sophistry and illusion.

If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.

(*Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, section XII)

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# METAPHYSICS: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND METAPHYSICAL PROBLEMS (PART 2)

In Germany, Kant's Critiques of Reason claimed a transcendental, non-empirical realm he called *noumenal*, for pure, or *a priori*, reason beyond or behind the phenomena. Kant's phenomenal realm is **deterministic**, matter governed by Newton's laws of motion. Kant's immaterial noumena are in the metaphysical non-empirical realm of the "things themselves" along with **freedom**, **God**, and **immortality**. Kant may have identified ontology not with the things themselves but, influenced by Descartes, what we can think – and reason – about the things themselves. In either case, Kant thought metaphysical knowledge might be impossible for finite minds.

The notion that metaphysics transcends experience and the material world led to nineteenth-century positivists like **August Comte** and **Ernst Mach**, and twentieth-century empiricists like Rudolf Carnap and **Moritz Schlick**, also denying the possibility of metaphysical knowledge. Carnap maintained that metaphysical statements are *meaningless*.

**Naturalism** is the anti-metaphysical claim that there is nothing in the world beyond the material (including energy), that everything follows "laws of nature," and that these laws are both **causal** and **deterministic**. So "supernatural" appears to imply "immaterial" and the freedom to break the laws of nature. Information philosophy denies the supernatural. But it defends *immaterial* information as that which constitutes the human spirit, or soul, the "ghost in the machine." And it defends ontological **chance** as the generator of novel possibilities that are not determined by the "fixed past."

Positivism is the claim that the only valid source of knowledge is sensory experience, reinforced by logic and mathematics. Together these provide the empirical evidence for science. Comtean positivism rejected metaphysics and theology as obsolete earlier phases in the development of knowledge.

Mach's positivism claimed that science consists entirely of "economic summaries" of the facts (the results of experiments). He rejected theories about unobservable things like **Ludwig Boltzmann's** atoms, just a few years before **Albert Einstein** used Boltzmann's work to prove that atoms exist. This "linguistic turn" and naturalizing of epistemology can be traced back to Kant and perhaps even to Descartes.

The *logical* positivism of **Bertrand Russell** and **Ludwig Wittgenstein** claims that all valid knowledge is scientific knowledge, though science is often criticized for "**reducing**" all phenomena to physical or chemical events. The logical positivists may have identified ontology not with the things themselves but what we can say – using concepts and language – about the things themselves.

Logical positivists and the logical empiricists of the Vienna Circle not only asserted that all knowledge is scientific knowledge derived from experience, i.e., from verifiable observations, they also added the logical analysis of language as the principal tool for solving philosophical problems. They divided statements into those that are reducible to simpler statements about experience and those with no empirical basis. These latter they called "metaphysics" and "meaningless." While language is too slippery and ambiguous to serve as a reliable tool for philosophical analysis, quantitative information, which underlies all language use, is such a tool.

Logical positivists and empiricists mistakenly claim that physical theories can be *logically deduced* (or derived) from the results of experiments. A second flaw in all empiricist thinking since Locke et al. is the mistaken idea that all knowledge is derived from experience, written on the blank slate of our minds, etc. In science, this is the flawed idea that all knowledge is ultimately experimental. To paraphrase Kant and **Charles Sanders Peirce**, theories without experiments may be empty, but experiments without theories are blind.

By contrast, the modern *hypothetical-deductive* method of science maintains that theories are not the logical (or **inductive**) consequences of experiments. As **Einstein** put it, after shaking off his early enthusiasm for Mach's positivistic ideas, theories are "**free** inventions of the human mind." Theories begin with hypotheses, mere guesses, "fictions" whose value is shown only when they can be *confirmed* by the results of experiments. Again and again, theories have predicted behaviors in as yet untested physical conditions that have surprised scientists,

often suggesting new experiments that have extended the confirmation of theories, which again surprise us. As pure information, scientific knowledge is far beyond the results of experiments alone.

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Metaphysics has been a search for the preconditions of existence, for the *meaning* of being, for original “first causes” (arche) and final ends (telos), especially for that which is beyond our senses – the “things themselves.” In an epistemological age after *Descartes*, metaphysics came to include the preconditions for *knowledge*, especially knowledge of physical things, somehow independent of our sensible experience, and especially *certain* knowledge – knowledge by abstract *reason* alone.

Although in recent years metaphysics has become something of a catch-all category for unsolved problems in philosophy and physics, ontology has remained its central concern and we will focus on the ontological status of material objects as “information structures” and the existential status of “*immaterial* information” *about* these structures and about information itself, as our basis for *knowledge*. *Immaterial* ideas are as real a part of the physical world and its *causal* structure as is matter, even though they are *ideal* and not *material*.

Beyond synchronic ontology, diachronic cosmology has now traced back the origin and evolution of the material universe to a “Big Bang” some 13.75 billion years ago. But deep metaphysical questions remain. Did time start at the Big Bang? Was there space with nothing in it, before matter came into existence? Could there have been pure information before there was space and time? Did that information include the *possibility* of the universe? Are space and time only universal ideas, continuous immaterial forms, that help us organize and describe the workings of discontinuous and discrete particulate matter and energy?  
How Information Philosophy Solves Some Problems in Metaphysics

The first claim of a metaphysics based on information is that the *physical* universe contains more than just matter (and energy) in motion. The Platonic realm of ideas, Kant’s noumenal realm of “things in themselves” unconstrained by the *deterministic* laws of matter in motion, an *immaterial* mind that gives those ideas *causal* powers, and the *immortal* aspect of those ideas, all these touch on problems traditionally part of metaphysics.

Information philosophy may never answer “ultimate” questions like *Leibniz*’ “Why is there something rather than nothing?,” but it can answer why there appears to be a providential process at work that makes the world comfortable for life in general and man in particular.

For information philosophy, ontology is not about what we can think nor what we can say about the things themselves. Rather, it is about the *immaterial* information content of things, which is intimately connected with the information in the thoughts in our minds and in the concepts and words used to communicate the information that is in the things themselves. The partial isomorphism between the information in the external world of objects and the internal information about those objects in our minds is a quantitative measure of our *knowledge* about the objects.

Thus there is a second claim. Because the external information is *in* the things themselves, information philosophy provides an ontological inventory of what exists in a mind-independent reality that in no way depends on how we came to acquire the knowledge of what exists. Furthermore, complete information in a thing (while probably rarely obtainable) may contain what it is like to be some thing.

A third claim rests on the unqualified existence of *immaterial*, *non-substantial*, *abstract*, *universals*, some of which are *necessary* by logical definition, all of them existing in the Platonic and noumenal realm of pure information. By contrast, substantial concrete particulars are all material (including the pure energy of radiation) and thus *contingent* and *empirical*. The third claim is that, although our knowledge of the information realm has come initially from experience, that is from empirical sources, the information realm itself is non-empirical (though physical) and therefore *non-reducible* to “*causally closed*” matter in motion.

Metaphysics asks about the general nature of all things/beings, and Being itself. Information is such an *essential* property of all things. And it is a quantitative property, much more powerful than linguistic concepts. It gives form to the matter. Matter without form is not distinguishable, comprehensible, blind/invisible. Form without matter is empty – an essence without an existence. Individuation, instantiation of a form in matter, etc.  
Problems in Metaphysics

Many of the problems facing today’s metaphysicians concern the fundamental structure of reality, the underlying material substance and the creative process that gives individual objects their shape and form, their qualities or properties.

Apart from appearances and the sense data of **experiences**, what is the *underlying* reality, what is there “really?” What “**constitutes**” a material object? What is its “principle of **individuation**?” Does a concrete object maintain its **identity** as it moves in **space and time**?

A surprising number of today’s metaphysical questions were first asked over two millennia ago by the ancient Greek philosophers. It is shocking that so little progress has been made toward definitive answers to some of them.

Perhaps it is because metaphysics is a search for **certain** knowledge that is *beyond* the material world, not derivable from experience, and eternally **true** (in any **possible** world). Such knowledge is limited to *immaterial* ideas in logic (“A is A”), mathematics ( $7 + 5 = 12$ ), and some sentences or propositions that are true by (conventional) definition.

Can unchanging eternal ideas and truths provide us any knowledge about the constantly changing material world?

And what is the existential (or ontological) status of these **abstract ideas**? Do numbers exist? If so, is their kind of existence different from that of material objects? Do the past and present exist? Are there *immaterial minds* apart from material brains? How could they interact?

Although many metaphysicians claim to be exploring the fundamental structure of reality, the overwhelming fraction of their writings is about problems in analytic linguistic philosophy, that is to say problems with words. Many questions appear to be verbal quibbles. Others lack meaning or have no obvious truth value, dissolving into paradoxes.

Based on current practice, we can sharpen the definition of a *metaphysician* to be an analytic language philosopher who discusses metaphysical problems.

By contrast, a *metaphysicist* is an **information philosopher** who is familiar with modern physics, chemistry, and biology, as well as the interpretation of quantum physics. The fundamental structure of reality today must confront the mysteries and puzzles of quantum reality.

For example, the **wave function** of a quantum particle is pure **information**. Some **interpretations** of quantum mechanics are fundamentally metaphysical, problems for a metaphysicist.

Note that many metaphysical problems are dichotomies, with either/or debates, suggesting that a common underlying theme is some kind of **dualism**, almost always the dualism between materialism and idealism (pure abstract information).

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## PHYSICALISM

In philosophy, **physicalism** is the **ontological** thesis that “everything is physical”, that there is “nothing over and above” the physical,<sup>[1]</sup> or that everything **supervenes** on the physical.<sup>[2]</sup> Physicalism is a form of ontological **monism**—a “one **substance**” view of the nature of reality as opposed to a “two-substance” (**dualism**) or “many-substance” (**pluralism**) view. Both the definition of “physical” and the meaning of physicalism have been debated.

Physicalism is closely related to **materialism**. Physicalism grew out of materialism with the success of the physical sciences in explaining observed phenomena. The terms are often used interchangeably, although they are sometimes distinguished, for example on the basis of physics describing more than just matter (including energy and physical law). Common arguments against physicalism include both the **philosophical zombie** argument<sup>[3]</sup> and the multiple observers argument,<sup>[4]</sup> that the existence of a physical being may imply zero or more distinct conscious entities.

## Definition of “Physical”

The use of “physical” in physicalism is a philosophical concept and can be distinguished from alternative definitions found in the literature (e.g. Popper defined a physical proposition to be one which can at least in theory be denied by observation<sup>[5]</sup>). A “physical property”, in this context, may be a metaphysical or logical combination of properties which are physical in the ordinary sense. It is common to express the notion of “metaphysical or logical combination of properties” using the notion of **supervenience**: A property *A* is said to supervene on a property *B* if any change in *A* necessarily implies a change in *B*.<sup>[6]</sup> Since any change in a combination of properties must consist of a change in at least one component property, we see that the combination does indeed supervene on the individual properties. The point of this extension is that physicalists usually suppose the existence of various abstract concepts which are non-physical in the ordinary sense of the word; so physicalism cannot be defined in way that denies the existence of these abstractions. Also, physicalism defined in terms of supervenience does not entail that all properties in the actual world are **type identical** to physical properties. It is, therefore, compatible with **multiple realizability**.<sup>[7]</sup>

From the notion of supervenience, we see that, assuming that mental, social, and biological properties supervene on physical properties, it follows that two hypothetical worlds cannot be identical in their physical properties but differ in their mental, social or biological properties.<sup>[2]</sup>

Two common approaches to defining “physicalism” are the theory-based and object-based approaches. The theory-based conception of physicalism proposes that “a property is physical if and only if it either is the sort of property that physical theory tells us about or else is a property which metaphysically (or logically) supervenes on the sort of property that physical theory tells us about”.<sup>[2]</sup> Likewise, the object-based conception claims that “a property is physical if and only if: it either is the sort of property required by a complete account of the intrinsic nature of paradigmatic physical objects and their constituents or else is a property which metaphysically (or logically) supervenes on the sort of property required by a complete account of the intrinsic nature of paradigmatic physical objects and their constituents”.

Physicalists have traditionally opted for a “theory-based” characterization of the physical either in terms of current physics,<sup>[8]</sup> or a future (ideal) physics.<sup>[9]</sup> These two theory-based conceptions of the physical represent both horns of **Hempel’s dilemma**<sup>[10]</sup> (named after the late philosopher of science and logical empiricist **Carl Gustav Hempel**): an argument against theory-based understandings of the physical. Very roughly, Hempel’s dilemma is that if we define the physical by reference to current physics, then physicalism is very likely to be false, as it is very likely (by pessimistic meta-induction<sup>[11]</sup>) that much of current physics is false. But if we instead define the physical in terms of a future (ideal) or completed physics, then physicalism is hopelessly vague or indeterminate.<sup>[12]</sup>

While the force of Hempel’s dilemma against theory-based conceptions of the physical remains contested,<sup>[13]</sup> alternative “non-theory-based” conceptions of the physical have also been proposed. **Frank Jackson** (1998) for example, has argued in favour of the aforementioned “object-based” conception of the physical.<sup>[14]</sup> An objection to this proposal, which Jackson himself noted in 1998, is that if it turns out that **panpsychism** or **panprotopsychism** is true, then such a non-materialist understanding of the physical gives the counterintuitive result that physicalism is, nevertheless, also true since such properties will figure in a complete account of paradigmatic examples of the physical.

David Papineau<sup>[15]</sup> and Barbara Montero<sup>[16]</sup> have advanced and subsequently defended<sup>[17]</sup> a “via negativa” characterization of the physical. The gist of the via negativa strategy is to understand the physical in terms of what it is not: the mental. In other words, the via negativa strategy understands the physical as “the non-mental”. An objection to the via negativa conception of the physical is that (like the object-based conception) it doesn’t have the resources to distinguish **neutral monism** (or panprotopsychism) from physicalism.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Supervenience-based definitions of physicalism

Adopting a supervenience-based account of the physical, the definition of physicalism as “all properties are physical” can be unravelled to:

1) Physicalism is **true** at a possible world  $w$  if and only if any world that is a physical duplicate of  $w$  is also a duplicate of  $w$  *simpliciter*.<sup>[19]</sup>

Applied to the actual world (our world), statement 1 above is the claim that physicalism is true at the actual world if and only if at *every possible world* in which the physical properties and laws of the actual world are instantiated, the non-physical (in the ordinary sense of the word) properties of the actual world are instantiated as well. To borrow a metaphor from [Saul Kripke](#) (1972), the truth of physicalism at the actual world entails that once God has instantiated or “fixed” the physical properties and laws of our world, then God’s work is done; the rest comes “automatically”.

Unfortunately, statement 1 fails to capture even a necessary condition for physicalism to be true at a world  $w$ . To see this, imagine a world in which there are *only* physical properties—if physicalism is true at any world it is true at this one. But one can conceive physical duplicates of such a world that are *not* also duplicates simpliciter of it: worlds that have the same physical properties as our imagined one, but with some additional property or properties. A world might contain “[epiphenomenal ectoplasm](#)”, some additional pure experience that does not interact with the physical components of the world and is not necessitated by them (does not supervene on them).<sup>[20][21]</sup> To handle the epiphenomenal ectoplasm problem, statement 1 can be modified to include a “that’s-all” or “totality” clause<sup>[22]</sup> or be restricted to “positive” properties.<sup>[23]</sup> Adopting the former suggestion here, we can reformulate statement 1 as follows:

2) Physicalism is true at a possible world  $w$  if and only if any world that is a *minimal* physical duplicate of  $w$  is a duplicate of  $w$  *simpliciter*.<sup>[19]</sup>

Applied in the same way, statement 2 is the claim that physicalism is true at a possible world  $w$  if and only if any world that is a physical duplicate of  $w$  (without any further changes), is duplicate of  $w$  without qualification. This allows a world in which there are only physical properties to be counted as one at which physicalism is true, since worlds in which there is some extra stuff are *not* “minimal” physical duplicates of such a world, nor are they minimal physical duplicates of worlds that contain some non-physical properties that are metaphysically necessitated by the physical.<sup>[24]</sup>

But while statement 2 overcomes the problem of worlds at which there is some extra stuff (sometimes referred to as the “epiphenomenal ectoplasm problem”<sup>[25]</sup>) it faces a different challenge: the so-called “blockers problem”.<sup>[26]</sup> Imagine a world where the relation between the physical and non-physical properties at this world (call the world  $w_1$ ) is slightly weaker than metaphysical necessitation, such that a certain kind of non-physical intervener—“a blocker”—could, were it to exist at  $w_1$ , prevent the non-physical properties in  $w_1$  from being instantiated by the instantiation of the physical properties at  $w_1$ . Since statement 2 rules out worlds which are physical duplicates of  $w_1$  that also contain non-physical interveners by virtue of the minimality, or that’s-all clause, statement 2 gives the (allegedly) incorrect result that physicalism is true at  $w_1$ . One response to this problem is to abandon statement 2 in favour of the alternative possibility mentioned earlier in which supervenience-based formulations of physicalism are restricted to what [David Chalmers](#) (1996) calls “positive properties”. A positive property is one that “...if instantiated in a world  $W$ , is also instantiated by the corresponding individual in all worlds that contain  $W$  as a proper part.”<sup>[27]</sup> Following this suggestion, we can then formulate physicalism as follows:

3) Physicalism is true at a possible world  $w$  if and only if any world that is a physical duplicate of  $w$  is a positive duplicate of  $w$ .<sup>[28]</sup>

On the face of it, statement 3 seems able to handle both the epiphenomenal ectoplasm problem and the blockers problem. With regard to the former, statement 3 gives the correct result that a purely physical world is one at which physicalism is true, since worlds in which there is some extra stuff are positive duplicates of a purely physical world. With regard to the latter, statement 3 appears to have the consequence that worlds in which there are blockers are worlds where positive non-physical properties of  $w_1$  will be absent, hence  $w_1$  will not be counted as a world at which physicalism is true.<sup>[29]</sup> [Daniel Stoljar](#) (2010) objects to this response to the blockers problem on the basis that since the non-physical properties of  $w_1$  aren’t instantiated at a world in which there is a blocker, they are not positive properties in Chalmers’ (1996) sense, and so statement 3 will count  $w_1$  as a world at which physicalism is true after all.<sup>[30]</sup>

A further problem for supervenience-based formulations of physicalism is the so-called “necessary beings problem”.<sup>[19]</sup> A necessary being in this context is a non-physical being that exists in all possible worlds (for example what theists refer to as [God](#)). A necessary being is compatible with all the definitions provided, because it is supervenient on everything; yet it is usually taken to contradict the notion that everything is physical. So any supervenience-based formulation of physicalism will at best state a [necessary but not sufficient](#) condition for the truth of physicalism.<sup>[19]</sup>

Additional objections have been raised to the above definitions provided for supervenience physicalism: one could imagine an alternate world that differs only by the presence of a single ammonium molecule (or physical property), and yet based on statement 1, such a world might be completely different in terms of its distribution of mental properties.<sup>[31]</sup> Furthermore, there are differences expressed concerning the modal status of physicalism; whether it is a necessary truth, or is only true in a world which conforms to certain conditions (i.e. those of physicalism).<sup>[2]</sup>

## Realisation physicalism

Closely related to supervenience physicalism, is realisation physicalism, the thesis that every instantiated property is either physical or is realised by a physical property.<sup>[32]</sup>

## Token physicalism

See also: [Anomalous monism](#)

Token physicalism is the proposition that “for every actual particular (object, event or process) x, there is some physical particular y such that x = y”. It is intended to capture the idea of “physical mechanisms”.<sup>[2]</sup> Token physicalism is compatible with [property dualism](#), in which all substances are “physical”, but physical objects may have mental properties as well as physical properties. Token physicalism is not however equivalent to supervenience physicalism. Firstly, token physicalism does not imply supervenience physicalism because the former does not rule out the possibility of non-supervenient properties (provided that they are associated only with physical particulars). Secondly, supervenience physicalism does not imply token physicalism, for the former allows supervenient objects (such as a “nation”, or “soul”) that are not equal to any physical object.

## Reductionism and emergentism

### Reductionism

There are multiple versions of reductionism.<sup>[2]</sup> In the context of physicalism, the reductions referred to are of a “linguistic” nature, allowing discussions of, say, mental phenomena to be translated into discussions of physics. In one formulation, every concept is analysed in terms of a physical concept. One counter-argument to this supposes there may be an additional class of expressions which is non-physical but which increases the expressive power of a theory.<sup>[33]</sup> Another version of reductionism is based on the requirement that one theory (mental or physical) be logically derivable from a second.<sup>[34]</sup>

A common argument against reductive physicalism is [multiple realizability](#), the possibility that a psychological process (say) could be instantiated by many different neurological processes (even non-neurological processes, in the case of machine or alien intelligence).<sup>[31][35]</sup> For in this case, the neurological terms translating a psychological term must be disjunctions over the possible instantiations, and it is argued that no physical law can use these disjunctions as terms.<sup>[35]</sup>

### Emergentism

Main article: [Emergentism](#)

Supervenience physicalism has been seen as a form of emergentism, in which the subject's psychological experience is considered genuinely novel.<sup>[2]</sup> While some forms of emergentism appear either incompatible with physicalism or equivalent to it (e.g. posteriori physicalism),<sup>[36]</sup> others appear to merge both [dualism](#) and supervenience. Such emergentism claims that mental facts and physical facts are metaphysically distinct while maintaining the supervenience of mental properties on the physical. This proposition however contradicts supervenience physicalism, which asserts a denial of dualism.

## Type physicalism

Main article: [Type physicalism](#)

Type physicalism is a form of reductive physicalism which asserts that "for every actually instantiated property F, there is some physical property G such that  $F=G$ ".<sup>[2]</sup> Unlike token physicalism, type physicalism entails supervenience physicalism. It was the original target of the multiple realizability argument.<sup>[37]</sup>

## A priori versus a posteriori physicalism

Physicalists hold that physicalism is true. A natural question for physicalists, then, is whether the truth of physicalism is deducible [a priori](#) from the nature of the physical world (i.e., the inference is justified independently of experience, even though the nature of the physical world can itself only be determined through experience) or can only be deduced [a posteriori](#) (i.e., the justification of the inference itself is dependent upon experience). So-called "a priori physicalists" hold that from knowledge of the [conjunction](#) of all physical truths, a totality or that's-all truth (to rule out non-physical epiphenomena, and enforce the closure of the physical world), and some primitive [indexical](#) truths such as "I am A" and "now is B", the truth of physicalism is knowable a priori.<sup>[38]</sup> Let "P" stand for the conjunction of all physical truths and laws, "T" for a that's-all truth, "I" for the indexical "centering" truths, and "N" for any [presumably non-physical] truth at the actual world. We can then, using the [material conditional](#) " $\rightarrow$ ", represent a priori physicalism as the thesis that  $PTI \rightarrow N$  is knowable a priori.<sup>[38]</sup> An important wrinkle here is that the [concepts](#) in N must be possessed non-deferentially in order for  $PTI \rightarrow N$  to be knowable a priori. The suggestion, then, is that possession of the concepts in the [consequent](#), plus the empirical information in the [antecedent](#) is sufficient for the consequent to be knowable a priori.

An "a posteriori physicalist", on the other hand, will reject the claim that  $PTI \rightarrow N$  is knowable a priori. Rather, they would hold that the inference from PTI to N is justified by metaphysical considerations that in turn can be derived from experience. So the claim then is that "PTI and not N" is metaphysically impossible.

One commonly issued challenge to a priori physicalism and to physicalism in general is the "conceivability argument", or [zombie argument](#).<sup>[39]</sup> At a rough approximation, the conceivability argument runs as follows:

P1) PTI and not Q (where "Q" stands for the conjunction of all truths about consciousness, or some "generic" truth about someone being "phenomenally" conscious [i.e., there is "something it is like"<sup>[40]</sup> to be a person x] ) is conceivable (i.e., it is not knowable a priori that PTI and not Q is false).

P2) If PTI and not Q is conceivable, then PTI and not Q is metaphysically possible.

P3) If PTI and not Q is metaphysically possible then physicalism is false.

C) Physicalism is false.<sup>[41]</sup>

Here proposition P3 is a direct application of the supervenience of consciousness, and hence of any supervenience-based version of physicalism: If PTI and not Q is possible, there is some [possible world](#) where it is true. This world differs from [the relevant indexing on] our world, where PTIQ is true. But the other world is a minimal physical duplicate of our world, because PT is true there. So there is a possible world which is a minimal physical duplicate of our world, but not a full duplicate; this contradicts the definition of physicalism that we saw above.

Since a priori physicalists hold that  $PTI \rightarrow N$  is a priori, they are committed to denying P1) of the conceivability argument. The a priori physicalist, then, must argue that PTI and not Q, on ideal rational reflection, is incoherent or [contradictory](#).<sup>[42]</sup>

A posteriori physicalists, on the other hand, generally accept P1) but deny P2)—the move from “conceivability to metaphysical possibility”. Some a posteriori physicalists think that unlike the possession of most, if not all other [empirical](#) concepts, the possession of consciousness has the special property that the presence of PTI and the absence of consciousness will be conceivable—even though, according to them, it is knowable a posteriori that PTI and not Q is not metaphysically possible. These a posteriori physicalists endorse some version of what Daniel Stoljar (2005) has called “the [phenomenal concept strategy](#)”.<sup>[43]</sup> Roughly speaking, the phenomenal concept strategy is a label for those a posteriori physicalists who attempt to show that it is only the *concept* of consciousness—not the *property*—that is in some way “special” or [sui generis](#).<sup>[44]</sup> Other a posteriori physicalists<sup>[45]</sup> eschew the phenomenal concept strategy, and argue that even ordinary macroscopic truths such as “water covers 60% of the earth’s surface” are not knowable a priori from PTI and a non-deferential grasp of the concepts “water” and “earth” *et cetera*. If this is correct, then we should (arguably) conclude that conceivability does not entail metaphysical possibility, and P2) of the conceivability argument against physicalism is false.<sup>[46]</sup>

## Other Views

### Strawsonian physicalism

[Galen Strawson](#)’s *realistic physicalism* (or “realistic monism”) entails [panpsychism](#) – or at least [micropsychism](#).<sup>[47][48][49]</sup> Strawson argues that “many—perhaps most—of those who call themselves physicalists or materialists [are mistakenly] committed to the thesis that physical stuff is, in itself, in its fundamental nature, something wholly and utterly non-experiential... even when they are prepared to admit with Eddington that physical stuff has, in itself, ‘a nature capable of manifesting itself as mental activity’, i.e. as experience or consciousness”.<sup>[47]</sup> Because experiential phenomena allegedly [cannot be emergent](#) from wholly non-experiential phenomena, philosophers are driven to [substance dualism](#), [property dualism](#), [eliminative materialism](#) and “all other crazy attempts at wholesale mental-to-non-mental reduction”.<sup>[47]</sup>

Real physicalists must accept that at least some ultimates are intrinsically experience-involving. They must at least embrace *micropsychism*. Given that everything concrete is physical, and that everything physical is constituted out of physical ultimates, and that experience is part of concrete reality, it seems the only reasonable position, more than just an ‘inference to the best explanation’... Micropsychism is not yet panpsychism, for as things stand realistic physicalists can conjecture that only some types of ultimates are intrinsically experiential. But they must allow that panpsychism may be true, and the big step has already been taken with micropsychism, the admission that at least some ultimates must be experiential. ‘And were the inmost essence of things laid open to us’ I think that the idea that some but not all physical ultimates are experiential would look like the idea that some but not all physical ultimates are spatio-temporal (on the assumption that spacetime is indeed a fundamental feature of reality). I would bet a lot against there being such radical heterogeneity at the very bottom of things. In fact (to disagree with my earlier self) it is hard to see why this view would not count as a form of dualism... So now I can say that physicalism, i.e. real physicalism, entails panexperientialism or panpsychism. All physical stuff is energy, in one form or another, and all energy, I trow, is an experience-involving phenomenon. This sounded crazy to me for a long time, but I am quite used to it, now that I know that there is no alternative short of ‘substance dualism’... Real physicalism, realistic physicalism, entails panpsychism, and whatever problems are raised by this fact are problems a real physicalist must face.<sup>[47]</sup>

— [Galen Strawson](#), *Consciousness and Its Place in Nature: Does Physicalism Entail Panpsychism?*

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# EMERGENTISM

## Forms of Emergentism

In [philosophy](#), **emergentism** is the belief in [emergence](#), particularly as it involves [consciousness](#) and the [philosophy of mind](#), and as it contrasts (or not) with [reductionism](#). A property of a [system](#) is said to be emergent if it is a new outcome of some other properties of the system and their interaction, while it is itself unexpected and different from them.<sup>[1]</sup> Emergent properties are not identical with, reducible to, or deducible from the other properties. The different ways in which this independence requirement can be satisfied lead to variant types of emergence.

All varieties of emergentism strive to be compatible with [physicalism](#), the theory that the universe is composed exclusively of physical entities, and in particular with the evidence relating changes in the brain with changes in mental functioning. Many forms of emergentism, including proponents of complex adaptive systems, do not hold a material but rather a relational or processural view of the universe. Furthermore, they view [mind–body dualism](#) as a conceptual error insofar as mind and body are merely different types of relationships. As a theory of mind (which it is not always), emergentism differs from [idealism](#), [eliminative materialism](#), [identity theories](#), [neutral monism](#), [panpsychism](#), and [substance dualism](#), whilst being closely associated with [property dualism](#). It is generally not obvious whether an emergent theory of mind embraces [mental causation](#) or must be considered [epiphenomenal](#).

Some varieties of emergentism are not specifically concerned with the [mind-body problem](#), and instead suggest a [hierarchical](#) or layered view of the whole of nature, with the layers arranged in terms of increasing [complexity](#) with each requiring its own [special science](#). Typically [physics](#) ([mathematical physics](#), [particle physics](#), and [classical physics](#)) is basic, with [chemistry](#) built on top of it, then [biology](#), [psychology](#) and [social sciences](#). Reductionists respond that the arrangement of the sciences is a matter of convenience, and that chemistry is derivable from physics (and so forth) *in principle*, an argument which gained force after the establishment of a quantum-mechanical basis for chemistry.<sup>[2]</sup>

Other varieties see [mind](#) or [consciousness](#) as specifically and anomalously requiring emergentist explanation, and therefore constitute a family of positions in the [philosophy of mind](#). [Douglas Hofstadter](#) summarises this view as *“the soul is more than the sum of its parts”*. A number of philosophers have offered the argument that [qualia](#) constitute the [hard problem of consciousness](#), and resist reductive explanation in a way that all other phenomena do not. In contrast, reductionists generally see the task of accounting for the possibly atypical properties of mind and of living things as a matter of showing that, contrary to appearances, such properties are indeed fully accountable in terms of the properties of the basic constituents of nature and therefore in no way genuinely atypical.

Intermediate positions are possible: for instance, some emergentists hold that emergence is neither universal nor restricted to consciousness, but applies to (for instance) living creatures, or [self organising systems](#), or [complex systems](#).

Some philosophers hold that emergent properties causally interact with more fundamental levels, an idea known as [downward causation](#). Others maintain that higher-order properties simply [supervene](#) over lower levels without direct causal interaction.

All the cases so far discussed have been [synchronic](#), i.e. the emergent property exists simultaneously with its basis. Yet another variation operates diachronically. Emergentists of this type believe that *genuinely novel properties* can come into being, without being accountable in terms of the preceding history of the universe. (Contrast with [indeterminism](#) where it is only the *arrangement or configuration* of matter that is unaccountable). These evolution-inspired theories often have a [theological](#) aspect, as in the [process philosophy](#) of [Alfred North Whitehead](#) and [Charles Hartshorne](#).

The concept of emergence has been applied to the theory of literature and art, history, linguistics, cognitive sciences, etc. by the teachings of Jean-Marie Grassin at the University of Limoges (v. esp.: J. Fontanille, B. Westphal, J. Vion-Dury, éd. L'Émergence—Poétique de l'Émergence, en réponse aux travaux de Jean-Marie

Grassin, Bern, Berlin, etc., 2011; and: the article “Emergence” in the International Dictionary of Literary Terms (DITL).

## Relationship to vitalism

A refinement of [vitalism](#) may be recognized in contemporary molecular histology in the proposal that some key organising and structuring features of organisms, perhaps including even life itself, are examples of [emergent processes](#); those in which a complexity arises, out of interacting chemical processes forming interconnected feedback cycles, that cannot fully be described in terms of those processes since the system as a whole has properties that the constituent reactions lack.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

Whether emergent system properties should be grouped with traditional vitalist concepts is a matter of semantic controversy.<sup>[5]</sup> In a light-hearted millennial vein, Kirshner and Michison call research into integrated cell and organismal physiology “molecular vitalism.”<sup>[6]</sup>

According to Emmeche *et al.* (1997):

“On the one hand, many scientists and philosophers regard emergence as having only a pseudo-scientific status. On the other hand, new developments in physics, biology, psychology, and crossdisciplinary fields such as cognitive science, artificial life, and the study of non-linear dynamical systems have focused strongly on the high level ‘collective behaviour’ of complex systems, which is often said to be truly emergent, and the term is increasingly used to characterize such systems.”<sup>[7]</sup>

Emmeche *et al.* (1998) state that “there is a very important difference between the vitalists and the emergentists: the vitalist’s creative forces were relevant only in organic substances, not in inorganic matter. Emergence hence is creation of new properties regardless of the substance involved.” “The assumption of an extra-physical vitalis (vital force, [entelechy](#), [élan vital](#), etc.), as formulated in most forms (old or new) of vitalism, is usually without any genuine explanatory power. It has served altogether too often as an [intellectual tranquilizer](#) or [verbal sedative](#)—stifling scientific inquiry rather than encouraging it to proceed in new directions.”<sup>[8]</sup>

## Examples

The first emergentist theorists used the example of water having a new property when hydrogen, H, and oxygen, O, combine to form H<sub>2</sub>O (water). In this example there emerge such new properties as liquidity under standard conditions. (Analogous hydrides of the oxygen family, such as hydrogen sulfide, are gases). However, a better and more recent example of an emergent phenomenon, one provided by physicist [Erwin Schrödinger](#), is found in the case of families of molecules known as [isomers](#), which are made up of precisely the same atoms, differently arranged, which nevertheless have different physical properties. Similarly, [enantiomers](#) are molecules made up of precisely the same atoms but in mirror image arrangement: they exist in “right-handed” and “left-handed” forms which have different properties when interacting with other molecules.

Biologists [Ursula Goodenough](#) and [Terrence Deacon](#) in their 2006 essay *The Sacred Emergence of Nature* have assembled a range of examples of physical and biological emergent properties that provide the evidential basis for [emergentism](#) as a philosophy that comports with a modern scientific understanding of how complexity arises in the natural world, and as a philosophy that supports [religious naturalism](#). A longer compilation of emergent forms in nature is the 2004 book by biologist [Harold J. Morowitz](#): *The Emergence of Everything*.

In the game of [Go](#), the rules stipulate various constraints on the placement and removal of playing pieces. As a consequence of this, an “emergent” pattern is that groups of pieces with [two eyes](#) are “alive” and can never be removed. This is a vital part of the game, without which it cannot be played or understood; but is not part of the rules. Similarly, in [John Conway’s Game of Life](#), some patterns of cells have striking properties — such as the ability to move or reproduce — which are not explicitly coded into the rules.

Although examples of higher level properties which are not *identical* to lower order properties are easy to find, examples where they are not *reducible to* or *predicable from* their bases are more controversial.

# History

## John Stuart Mill

[John Stuart Mill](#) outlined his version of emergentism in *System of Logic* (1843). Mill argued that the properties of some physical systems, such as those in which [dynamic forces](#) combine to produce simple motions, are subject to a law of nature he called the “[Composition of Causes](#)“. According to Mill, emergent properties are not subject to this law, but instead amount to more than the sums of the properties of their parts.

Mill believed that various [chemical reactions](#) (poorly understood in his time) could provide examples of emergent properties, although some critics believe that modern [physical chemistry](#) has shown that these reactions can be given satisfactory [reductionist](#) explanations. For instance, it has been claimed<sup>[[by whom?](#)]</sup> that the whole of chemistry is, in principle, contained in the [Schrödinger equation](#).<sup>[[9](#)]</sup><sup>[[need quotation to verify](#)]</sup>

## C. D. Broad

British philosopher [C. D. Broad](#) defended a realistic [epistemology](#) in *The Mind and its Place in Nature* (1925) arguing that [emergent materialism](#) is the most likely solution to the mind-body problem.

Broad defined emergence as follows:

Put in abstract terms the emergent theory asserts that there are certain wholes, composed (say) of constituents A, B, and C in a relation R to each other; that all wholes composed of constituents of the same kind as A, B, and C in relations of the same kind as R have certain characteristic properties; that A, B, and C are capable of occurring in other kinds of complex where the relation is not of the same kind as R; and that the characteristic properties of the whole R(A, B, C) cannot, even in theory, be deduced from the most complete knowledge of the properties of A, B, and C in isolation or in other wholes which are not of the form R(A, B, C).

This definition amounted to the claim that mental properties would count as emergent if and only if [philosophical zombies](#) were metaphysically possible<sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup>. Many philosophers take this position to be inconsistent with some formulations of [psychophysical supervenience](#).

## C. Lloyd Morgan and Samuel Alexander

[Samuel Alexander](#)'s views on emergentism, argued in *Space, Time, and Deity* (1920), were inspired in part by the ideas in psychologist [C. Lloyd Morgan](#)'s *Emergent Evolution*. Alexander believed that emergence was fundamentally inexplicable, and that emergentism was simply a “brute empirical fact”:

“The higher quality emerges from the lower level of existence and has its roots therein, but it emerges therefrom, and it does not belong to that level, but constitutes its possessor a new order of existent with its special laws of behaviour. The existence of emergent qualities thus described is something to be noted, as some would say, under the compulsion of brute empirical fact, or, as I should prefer to say in less harsh terms, to be accepted with the “natural piety” of the investigator. It admits no explanation.” ([Space, Time, and Deity](#))

Despite the causal and explanatory gap between the phenomena on different levels, Alexander held that emergent qualities were *not* [epiphenomenal](#). His view can perhaps best be described as a form of [nonreductive physicalism](#) (NRP) or [supervenience](#) theory.

## Ludwig von Bertalanffy

[Ludwig von Bertalanffy](#) founded [General System Theory](#) (GST), which is a more contemporary approach to emergentism. A popularization of many of the elements of GST may be found in *The Web of Life* by [Fritjof Capra](#).



## Verifiability and Meaning

British philosopher [A. J. Ayer](#) presented many of the central doctrines of the positivist movement in his 1936 book, *Language, Truth, and Logic*. Ayer's polemical writing tried to show how the [principle of verification](#) could be used as a tool for the elimination of nonsense of every sort. In Ayer's formulation, the principle itself is a simple test:

*We say that a sentence is factually significant to any given person, if and only if, [she or] he knows how to verify the proposition which it purports to express—that is, if [she or] he knows what observations would lead [her or] him, under certain conditions, to accept the proposition as being true, or reject it as being false.*

Like the [pragmatic theory](#) put forward by [Peirce](#), verificationism proposes that assertions are meaningful only when their content meets a (minimal) condition about the ways in which we would go about determining their truth. Moreover, like [Hume's](#) distinction between [matters of fact and relations of ideas](#), the principle leaves no room for anything other than verifiable [empirical](#) observations of the natural world and the meaningless but useful [tautologies](#) of logic and mathematics. Thus, much of Ayer's book was negative, emphasizing the consequences of a strict application of the positivist program to human pretensions at transcendental knowledge. Traditional [metaphysics](#), with its abstract speculation about the supposed nature of reality, cannot be grounded on scientific observation, and is therefore devoid of significance. For the same reason, traditional religious claims are meaningless since it is impossible to state any observable circumstances under which we could be sure—one way or the other—about their truth. Even much of traditional [epistemology](#) is likely to fail the test; only the psychological study of observable human behavior regarding beliefs will remain. Mathematics and natural science are secure, but little else remains.

Although Ayer, [Hempel](#), and other positivists spent a great deal of energy on technical refinements of the principle of verification, its basic content continued to guide the direction of the positivist movement. The major point is that much of what we try to say is meaningless blather.

## Logical Construction of the World

On a more positive note, the positivists supposed that what remains—consistent logical and mathematical reasoning, together with cautious observation of nature—comprises a great deal of worthwhile human knowledge. [Rudolf Carnap's](#) *Der logische Aufbau der Welt (The Logical Structure of the World)* (1929) outlined the world-view that is likely to result from a thorough application of the positivist program. The logical rigor of articles like "Testability and Meaning" (1936-37) illustrates both the power and the limitations of this procedure.

Carnap begins with an account of the methods and procedures by means of which we employ sensory observations to verify (or at least to confirm) the truth of scientific hypotheses about the operation of the physical universe. Using the formal methods of mathematical logic, then, the goal is to construct a strictly scientific language that perspicuously represents the structure of the world as a whole. The details are highly technical, of course, but it is only with the detailed treatment that the difficulties of the procedure become evident. The fundamental problem is that empirical generalizations are themselves incapable of direct support within such a system.

This was a crucial part of the insight of [Karl Popper](#), another Viennese philosopher of science. Popper proposed abandonment of the quest for verification, noting that the key feature of scientific hypotheses is precisely their [falsifiability](#) rather than their confirmation. We best know what we mean when we carefully state the conditions under which we would be forced to give up what we have supposed.

## Ethical Emotivism

The central tenets of [logical positivism](#) clearly have serious consequences when applied to moral philosophy. Attributions of [value](#) are not easily verifiable, so moral judgments may be neither true nor false, but as meaningless as those of metaphysics. Among the original members of the [Vienna Circle](#), only [Moritz Schlick](#) devoted any attention to ethics at all, and he regarded it as the [descriptive](#) task of cataloging the ways in which members of a society express their feelings about human behavior of various sorts.

It was the American philosopher [C.L. Stevenson](#) who worked out the full implications of postivistic theories for expressions of moral praise or blame. The most vital issue to be considered is the [meta-ethical](#) question of what

moral terms mean. Although Moore had correctly noted that good cannot be defined simply in terms of the approval of human beings, Stevenson made the even more radical suggestion that moral judgments have no factual content at all. Analysis of moral language should focus instead on its unique function as a guide to human behavior, what Stevenson called the “magnetism” of moral terms.

In “The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms” (1937) Stevenson argued that we must distinguish clearly between the descriptive or cognitive content of a term and its non-descriptive or **emotive** meaning. At a purely literal descriptive level, statements about moral value are indeed unverifiable and therefore meaningless, but considered as appeals to human emotions, they may have powerful dynamic effects. Saying “Murder is wrong,” may have no factual significance, but it does succinctly convey a host of expressive suggestions, including (at least) “I don’t like murder,” “You shouldn’t like murder,” and “We should disapprove of murderers.” Stevenson’s **ethical emotivism**, further developed in *Ethics and Language* (1944), quickly became an influential twentieth-century **noncognitivist** theory about the meaning of moral language.

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## SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

**Subjective idealism**, or **empirical idealism**, is the **monistic** metaphysical doctrine that only minds and mental contents exist. It **entails** and is generally identified or associated with **immaterialism**, the doctrine that material things do not exist. Subjective idealism rejects **dualism**, **neutral monism**, and **materialism**; indeed, it is the contrary of **eliminative materialism**, the doctrine that only material things, and no mental things, exist.

### Overview

Subjective idealism is a fusion of **phenomenalism** or empiricism, which confers special status upon the immediately perceived, with **idealism**, which confers special status upon the mental. Idealism denies the knowability or existence of the non-mental, while phenomenalism serves to restrict the mental to the empirical. Subjective idealism thus identifies its mental reality with the world of ordinary experience, rather than appealing to the unitary world-spirit of **pantheism** or **absolute idealism**. This form of idealism is “subjective” not because it denies that there is an objective reality, but because it asserts that this reality is completely dependent upon the minds of the subjects that perceive it.

The earliest thinkers identifiable as subjective idealists were certain members of the **Yogācāra** school of Indian Buddhism, who reduced the world of experience to a stream of subjective perceptions. Subjective idealism made its mark in Europe in the 18th-century writings of **George Berkeley**, who argued that the idea of mind-independent reality is incoherent, concluding that the world consists of the minds of humans and of God. Subsequent writers have continuously grappled with Berkeley’s **skeptical** arguments. **Immanuel Kant** responded by rejecting Berkeley’s immaterialism and replacing it with **transcendental idealism**, which views the mind-independent world as existent but incognizable **in itself**. Since Kant, true immaterialism has remained a rarity, but is survived by partly overlapping movements such as phenomenalism, subjectivism, and **perspectivism**.

### History

Thinkers such as **Plato**, **Plotinus** and **Augustine of Hippo** anticipated idealism’s antimaterialism with their views of the inferior or derivative reality of matter. However, these **Platonists** did not make Berkeley’s turn toward subjectivity. Indeed, Plato rationalistically condemned sense-experience, whereas subjective idealism presupposed **empiricism** and the irreducible reality of **sense data**. A more subjectivist methodology could be found in the **Pyrrhonists’** emphasis on the world of appearance, but their skepticism precluded the drawing of any **ontological** conclusions from the epistemic primacy of phenomena.

The first mature articulations of idealism arise in **Yogacarin** thinkers such as the 7th-century epistemologist **Dharmakīrti**, who identified ultimate reality with sense-perception. The most famous proponent of subjective

idealism in the Western world was the 18th-century [Irish](#) philosopher [George Berkeley](#), although Berkeley's term for his theory was *immaterialism*. From the point of view of subjective idealism, the material world does not exist, and the phenomenal world is dependent on humans. Hence the fundamental idea of this philosophical system (as represented by Berkeley or [Mach](#)) is that things are complexes of ideas or sensations, and only subjects and objects of perceptions exist. Berkeley summarized his theory with the motto "*esse est percipi*" ("To be is to be perceived"), but went on to elaborate it with God as the source of [consensus reality](#) and other particulars.

According to Berkeley, an object has real being as long as it is perceived by a mind. God, being omniscient perceives everything perceivable, thus all real beings exist in the mind of God. However, it is also evident that each of us has free will and understanding upon self-reflection, and our senses and ideas suggest that other people also possess these qualities as well. According to Berkeley there is no material universe, in fact he has absolutely no idea what that could possibly mean. To theorize about a universe that is composed of insensible matter is not a sensible thing to do. This matters because there is absolutely no positive account for a material universe, only speculation about things that are by fiat outside of our minds.

Berkeley's assessment of immaterialism was criticized by [Samuel Johnson](#), as recorded by [James Boswell](#). Responding to the theory, Dr. Johnson exclaimed "I refute it *thus!*" while kicking a rock with "mighty force". This episode is alluded to by Stephen Dedalus in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, chapter three. Reflecting on the "ineluctable modality of the visible", Dedalus conjures the image of Johnson's refutation and carries it forth in conjunction with Aristotle's expositions on the nature of the senses as described in [Sense and Sensibilia](#). Aristotle held that while visual perception suffered a compromised authenticity because it passed through the diaphanous liquid of the inner eye before being observed, sound and the experience of hearing were not thus similarly diluted. Dedalus experiments with the concept in the development of his aesthetic ideal.

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## GEORGE BERKELEY AND IMMATERIALISM

### Restoring Common Sense

Irish philosopher [George Berkeley](#) believed that Locke's *Essay* did not carry the principles of [empiricism](#) far enough. While still an undergraduate, this future bishop of the Anglican church worked out his trenchant criticism of Locke and proposed a simple but startling alternative.

Philosophers like [Descartes](#) and [Locke](#) tried to forestall problems of [perceptual illusion](#) by distinguishing between [material objects](#) and the ideas by means of which we perceive them.

- (perceiver—ideas—material objects)

But the [representationalist](#) approach can provide no reliable account of the connection between ideas and the objects they are supposed to represent. The results of this failure, Berkeley believed, are bound to be [skepticism](#) and [atheism](#).

There is, however, an obvious alternative. Common sense dictates that there are only two crucial elements involved in perception: the perceiver and what is perceived. All we need to do, Berkeley argued, is eliminate the absurd, philosophically-conceived third element in the picture: that is, we must acknowledge that there are no material objects. For Berkeley, only the ideas we directly perceive are real.

- (perceiver—ideas)

[Immaterialism](#) is the only way to secure common sense, science, and religion against the perils of skepticism.

## No Abstract Ideas

Developing the basis for an empiricist immaterialism requires unlearning significant portions of what Locke taught us. *Berkeley* devoted the lengthy “Introduction” of his *Principles of Human Knowledge* to a detailed refutation of what he supposed to be one of Locke’s most harmful mistakes, the belief that [general terms signify abstract ideas](#).

As Berkeley correctly noticed, our experience is always of concrete particulars. When I contemplate the idea of “triangle,” the image that comes to mind is that of some determinate shape; having the abstract image of a three-sided figure that is neither equilateral nor isosceles nor scalene is simply impossible. (*Principles: Introduction 10*) It is unnecessary, too: for purposes of geometrical reasoning, any particular image can be used as a representative for all. (It is not at all clear that even Locke would have disagreed with this position.)

But the consequence of Berkeley’s criticism is a theory of meaning entirely different from Locke’s. General terms (or words of any sort) need not signify ideas of their own, on Berkeley’s view. Instead, they acquire meaning by a process of association with particular experiences, which are in turn associated with each other. But of course mere association (as Locke himself had noted with respect to ideas) is not a reliable guide to reality.

## Sensible Objects

As the self-proclaimed defender of common sense, *Berkeley* held that what we perceive really is as we perceive it to be. But what we perceive are just sensible objects, collections of sensible qualities, which are themselves nothing other than ideas in the minds of their perceivers. In the *Dialogues* Berkeley used Lockean arguments about the unreliability of secondary qualities in support of his own, more radical view.

Take heat, for example: does it exist independently of our perception of it? When exposed to great heat I feel a pain that everyone acknowledges to be in me, not in the fire, Berkeley argued, so the warmth I feel when exposed to lesser heat must surely be the same. What is more, if dip both of my hands into a bowl of tepid water after chilling one and warming the other, the water will feel both warm and cold at the same time. Clearly, then, heat as I perceive it is nothing other than an idea in my mind.

Similar arguments and experiments establish that other sensible qualities—colors that vary with changes in ambient light, tastes and smells that change perceptibly when I have a cold, and sounds that depend for their quality on the position of my ears and conditions in the air—are, like heat, nothing but ideas in my mind. But the same considerations apply to [primary qualities](#) as well, Berkeley pointed out, since my perception of shape and size depend upon the position of my eyes, my experience of solidity depends upon my sense of touch, and my idea of motion is always relative to my own situation. Locke was correct in his view of secondary qualities but mistaken about primary qualities: all sensible qualities are just ideas.

But sensible objects are nothing more than collections of sensible qualities, so they are merely complex ideas in the minds of those who perceive them. For such ideas, Berkeley held, to be just is to be perceived (in Latin, *esse est percipi*). There is no need to refer to the supposition of anything existing outside our minds, which could never be shown to resemble our ideas, since “nothing can be like an idea but an idea.” Hence, there are no material objects.

## Material Substance is Inconceivable

Locke’s reference to an “unknown substratum” in which the features of material substances inhere is a pointless assumption, according to *Berkeley*. Since it is the very nature of sensible objects to be perceived, on his view, it would be absurd to suppose that their reality depends in any way upon an imperceptible core. This gives rise to a perfectly general argument against even the possibility of material substance.

Putting aside all of the forgoing lines of argument, Berkeley declared, the whole issue can be allowed to rest on a single question: is it possible to conceive of a sensible object existing independently of any perceiver? The challenge seems easy enough at first. All I have to do is think of something so remote—a tree in the middle of the forest, perhaps—that no one presently has it in mind. But if I conceive of this thing, then it is present in my mind as I think of it, so it is not truly independent of all perception.

According to Berkeley (and such later idealists as [Fichte](#) and [Bradley](#)) this argument shows irrefutably that the very concept of material substance as a sensible object existing independently of any perception is incoherent. No wonder the representationalist philosophy leads to skepticism: it introduces as a necessary element in our knowledge of the natural world a concept that is literally inconceivable!

## Spirits

Although he maintained that there can be no material substances, [Berkeley](#) did not reject the notion of [substance](#) altogether. The most crucial feature of substance is activity, he supposed, and in our experience the most obvious example activity is that of perceiving itself. So thinking substances do exist, and for these spirits (or souls or minds) to be is just to perceive (in Latin, *esse est percipere*).

Like [Descartes](#) and [Leibniz](#), Berkeley held that each spirit is a simple, undivided, active being whose sole function is to think—that is, to have ideas such as those of sensible objects. Although each spirit is directly aware of its own existence and nature, it cannot be perceived. Since ideas are always of sensible qualities or objects for Berkeley, we have no ideas (but only notions) of spirits. This is a complete enumeration of what is real: active thinking substances and their passive ideas.

Strange though Berkeley's immaterialism may seem, it offers many clear advantages. It is a genuinely empiricist philosophy, since it begins with what we actually experience and claims to account for everything without making extravagant suppositions about unknowable entities. Next, we will consider how well this doctrine provides for common sense, science, and religion.

## Common Sense

Is [Berkeley's](#) immaterialism a reasonable view? He claimed to defend common sense against skeptical challenges, yet he maintained that sensible objects exist only in the minds of those who perceive them. Surely common sense includes the belief that ordinary things continue to exist when I am not perceiving them. Although all of my visual ideas disappear and reappear every time I blink my eyes, I do not suppose that the everything I see pops out of existence and then back in. While a strict [phenomenalist](#) might point out that there is no practical consequence even if it does, Berkeley disagreed.

The existence of what I see does not depend exclusively on my seeing it. Berkeley's central claim is that sensible objects cannot exist without being perceived, but he did not suppose that I am the only perceiver. So long as some sentient being, some thinking substance or spirit, has in mind the sensible qualities or objects at issue, they do truly exist. Thus, even when I close my eyes, the tree I now see will continue to exist, provided that someone else is seeing it.

This difference, Berkeley held, precisely marks the distinction between [real and imaginary](#) things. What I merely imagine exists in my mind alone and continues to exist only so long as I think of it. But what is real exists in many minds, so it can continue to exist whether I perceive it or not. (That's why, unsure of the reality of what I seem to see, I may ask someone else, "Did you see that?") The [existence](#) of sensible objects requires that they be perceived, but it is not dependent exclusively on my perception of them.

In fact, the persistence and regularity of the sensible objects that constitute the natural world is independent of all human perception, according to Berkeley. Even when none of us is perceiving this tree, god is. The mind of god serves as a permanent repository of the sensible objects that we perceive at some times and not at others. (Although Berkeley took great pains to deny it, this view of the divine role in perception is very similar to [Malebranche's](#) notion of "seeing all things in god.")

So Berkeley's philosophy can claim to defend common sense. It emphasizes that bodies or sensible objects really are just the ideas we have of them, yet can also explain their apparent independence of our perception. All he rejects is the mysterious philosophical notion of the [material object](#) as an extended substance capable of existing independently of any perception. That supposition, he argued, is both unnecessary and untenable.

## Science without Matter

Even if we accept it as common sense, is [Berkeley's](#) immaterialism compatible with modern science? Certainly [Galileo's](#) astronomy, [Newtonian](#) mechanics, and the chemistry of [Boyle](#) all took for granted the existence and operation of physical objects. But Berkeley maintained that natural science, if properly conceived, could proceed and even thrive without assuming that bodies are material substances existing outside the mind.

Astronomy and optics seem to suppose that what we see exists at some distance from us. But Berkeley argued in his *New Theory of Vision* that our apparent perception of distance itself is a mental invention, easily explained in terms of the content of visual ideas, without any reference to existing material objects. In fact, Berkeley held, our visual and tactile perceptions are entirely independent. What we see and what we touch have nothing to do with each other; we have merely learned by experience to associate each with the other, just as we have learned to associate the appearance, the taste, and the smell of an apple. There is no reason to suppose that all of these qualities inhere in a common material substratum.

It follows that [Locke](#) was mistaken in supposing that our ideas of primary qualities have a special status because they arise from more than one of our senses. Although the [corpuscularian](#) hypothesis has yielded interesting results so far, Berkeley believed that science will soon enough outgrow it, learning to rely more directly on what we perceive for its hypotheses about what new experiences we rightly anticipate.

As we've already seen, Berkeley accounted for the persistence of bodies in terms of god's continuing perception of them. The causal regularities we observe in the natural world rely upon the same source. God's mind is an orderly one, and the apparent structures of space, time, and causality are nothing more than our awareness of the divine provision for our welfare. Natural science has plenty to do even in the absence of material objects, then: it is nothing less than a systematic exploration of the mind of god. (Here Berkeley came very close to the philosophy of [Malebranche](#).)

More significantly for us, he also correctly anticipated much of the physical science of the twentieth century. Like Berkeley, we believe that the solidity of bodies is merely apparent, that a proper cosmology depends upon our capacity to conceive it, and that the role of science is to gather and correlate the independent observations of human perceivers. It is not surprising that physicists like [Mach](#) expressed an appreciation for the thought of Berkeley.

## Religion

The affinity between immaterialism and traditional religion is somewhat easier to understand. [Materialism](#) leads to [atheism](#) no less than to [skepticism](#), [Berkeley](#) believed, since its belief that bodies exist outside the mind encourages the notion that the physical realm may always have existed independently of any spiritual influence. Immaterialism, by contrast, restores god to a role of central importance, not only as the chief among active thinking substances but also as the source of all sensible objects.

[God's existence](#) is made evident by everyday instances of perception, according to Berkeley. Since sensible objects are mind-dependent yet exhibit a persistence and regularity that transcends our perception of them, it follows that there must be a master-perceiver, god, in whose mind they always are. Thus, in the *Dialogues*, Philonous extols the beauty and majesty of the natural world, attributing them to the power and elegance of the divine mind. This leads to the traditional conception of god as deserving of worship because of the benevolent creation of all that we observe.

All in all, Berkeley developed a philosophical system worthy of no little respect. Immaterialism rests on the simple premise that there are no physical objects. Berkeley defended this notion with many clever arguments and worked out its implications consistently. Although counter-intuitive, immaterialism is difficult to refute.

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# GEORGE BERKELEY: FIRST DIALOGUE BETWEEN HYLAS AND PHILONOUS

PHILONOUS. Good morrow, Hylas: I did not expect to find you abroad so early.

HYLAS. It is indeed something unusual; but my thoughts were so taken up with a subject I was discoursing of last night, that finding I could not sleep, I resolved to rise and take a turn in the garden.

PHIL. It happened well, to let you see what innocent and agreeable pleasures you lose every morning. Can there be a pleasanter time of the day, or a more delightful season of the year? That purple sky, those wild but sweet notes of birds, the fragrant bloom upon the trees and flowers, the gentle influence of the rising sun, these and a thousand nameless beauties of nature inspire the soul with secret transports; its faculties too being at this time fresh and lively, are fit for those meditations, which the solitude of a garden and tranquillity of the morning naturally dispose us to. But I am afraid I interrupt your thoughts: for you seemed very intent on something.

HYL. It is true, I was, and shall be obliged to you if you will permit me to go on in the same vein; not that I would by any means deprive myself of your company, for my thoughts always flow more easily in conversation with a friend, than when I am alone: but my request is, that you would suffer me to impart my reflexions to you.

PHIL. With all my heart, it is what I should have requested myself if you had not prevented me.

HYL. I was considering the odd fate of those men who have in all ages, through an affectation of being distinguished from the vulgar, or some unaccountable turn of thought, pretended either to believe nothing at all, or to believe the most extravagant things in the world. This however might be borne, if their paradoxes and scepticism did not draw after them some consequences of general disadvantage to mankind. But the mischief lieth here; that when men of less leisure see them who are supposed to have spent their whole time in the pursuits of knowledge professing an entire ignorance of all things, or advancing such notions as are repugnant to plain and commonly received principles, they will be tempted to entertain suspicions concerning the most important truths, which they had hitherto held sacred and unquestionable.

PHIL. I entirely agree with you, as to the ill tendency of the affected doubts of some philosophers, and fantastical conceits of others. I am even so far gone of late in this way of thinking, that I have quitted several of the sublime notions I had got in their schools for vulgar opinions. And I give it you on my word; since this revolt from metaphysical notions to the plain dictates of nature and common sense, I find my understanding strangely enlightened, so that I can now easily comprehend a great many things which before were all mystery and riddle.

HYL. I am glad to find there was nothing in the accounts I heard of you.

PHIL. Pray, what were those?

HYL. You were represented, in last night's conversation, as one who maintained the most extravagant opinion that ever entered into the mind of man, to wit, that there is no such thing as MATERIAL SUBSTANCE in the world.

PHIL. That there is no such thing as what PHILOSOPHERS CALL MATERIAL SUBSTANCE, I am seriously persuaded: but, if I were made to see anything absurd or sceptical in this, I should then have the same reason to renounce this that I imagine I have now to reject the contrary opinion.

HYL. What I can anything be more fantastical, more repugnant to Common Sense, or a more manifest piece of Scepticism, than to believe there is no such thing as MATTER?

PHIL. Softly, good Hylas. What if it should prove that you, who hold there is, are, by virtue of that opinion, a greater sceptic, and maintain more paradoxes and repugnances to Common Sense, than I who believe no such thing?

HYL. You may as soon persuade me, the part is greater than the whole, as that, in order to avoid absurdity and Scepticism, I should ever be obliged to give up my opinion in this point.

PHIL. Well then, are you content to admit that opinion for true, which upon examination shall appear most agreeable to Common Sense, and remote from Scepticism?

HYL. With all my heart. Since you are for raising disputes about the plainest things in nature, I am content for once to hear what you have to say.

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, what do you mean by a SCEPTIC?

HYL. I mean what all men mean—one that doubts of everything.

PHIL. He then who entertains no doubts concerning some particular point, with regard to that point cannot be thought a sceptic.

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. Whether doth doubting consist in embracing the affirmative or negative side of a question?

HYL. In neither; for whoever understands English cannot but know that DOUBTING signifies a suspense between both.

PHIL. He then that denies any point, can no more be said to doubt of it, than he who affirmeth it with the same degree of assurance.

HYL. True.

PHIL. And, consequently, for such his denial is no more to be esteemed a sceptic than the other.

HYL. I acknowledge it.

PHIL. How cometh it to pass then, Hylas, that you pronounce me A SCEPTIC, because I deny what you affirm, to wit, the existence of Matter? Since, for aught you can tell, I am as peremptory in my denial, as you in your affirmation.

HYL. Hold, Philonous, I have been a little out in my definition; but every false step a man makes in discourse is not to be insisted on. I said indeed that a SCEPTIC was one who doubted of everything; but I should have added, or who denies the reality and truth of things.

PHIL. What things? Do you mean the principles and theorems of sciences? But these you know are universal intellectual notions, and consequently independent of Matter. The denial therefore of this doth not imply the denying them.

HYL. I grant it. But are there no other things? What think you of distrusting the senses, of denying the real existence of sensible things, or pretending to know nothing of them. Is not this sufficient to denominate a man a SCEPTIC?

PHIL. Shall we therefore examine which of us it is that denies the reality of sensible things, or professes the greatest ignorance of them; since, if I take you rightly, he is to be esteemed the greatest SCEPTIC?

HYL. That is what I desire.

PHIL. What mean you by Sensible Things?

HYL. Those things which are perceived by the senses. Can you imagine that I mean anything else?

PHIL. Pardon me, Hylas, if I am desirous clearly to apprehend your notions, since this may much shorten our inquiry. Suffer me then to ask you this farther question. Are those things only perceived by the senses which are perceived immediately? Or, may those things properly be said to be SENSIBLE which are perceived mediately, or not without the intervention of others?

HYL. I do not sufficiently understand you.

PHIL. In reading a book, what I immediately perceive are the letters; but mediately, or by means of these, are suggested to my mind the notions of God, virtue, truth, &c. Now, that the letters are truly sensible things, or perceived by sense, there is no doubt: but I would know whether you take the things suggested by them to be so too.

HYL. No, certainly: it were absurd to think GOD or VIRTUE sensible things; though they may be signified and suggested to the mind by sensible marks, with which they have an arbitrary connexion.

PHIL. It seems then, that by SENSIBLE THINGS you mean those only which can be perceived IMMEDIATELY by sense?

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Doth it not follow from this, that though I see one part of the sky red, and another blue, and that my reason doth thence evidently conclude there must be some cause of that diversity of colours, yet that cause cannot be said to be a sensible thing, or perceived by the sense of seeing?

HYL. It doth.

PHIL. In like manner, though I hear variety of sounds, yet I cannot be said to hear the causes of those sounds?

HYL. You cannot.

PHIL. And when by my touch I perceive a thing to be hot and heavy, I cannot say, with any truth or propriety, that I feel the cause of its heat or weight?

HYL. To prevent any more questions of this kind, I tell you once for all, that by SENSIBLE THINGS I mean those only which are perceived by sense; and that in truth the senses perceive nothing which they do not perceive IMMEDIATELY: for they make no inferences. The deducing therefore of causes or occasions from effects and appearances, which alone are perceived by sense, entirely relates to reason.

PHIL. This point then is agreed between us—That SENSIBLE THINGS ARE THOSE ONLY WHICH ARE IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED BY SENSE. You will farther inform me, whether we immediately perceive by sight anything beside light, and colours, and figures; or by hearing, anything but sounds; by the palate, anything beside tastes; by the smell, beside odours; or by the touch, more than tangible qualities.

HYL. We do not.

PHIL. It seems, therefore, that if you take away all sensible qualities, there remains nothing sensible?

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. Sensible things therefore are nothing else but so many sensible qualities, or combinations of sensible qualities?

HYL. Nothing else.

PHIL. HEAT then is a sensible thing?

HYL. Certainly.

PHIL. Doth the REALITY of sensible things consist in being perceived? or, is it something distinct from their being perceived, and that bears no relation to the mind?

HYL. To EXIST is one thing, and to be PERCEIVED is another.

PHIL. I speak with regard to sensible things only. And of these I ask, whether by their real existence you mean a subsistence exterior to the mind, and distinct from their being perceived?

HYL. I mean a real absolute being, distinct from, and without any relation to, their being perceived.

PHIL. Heat therefore, if it be allowed a real being, must exist without the mind?

HYL. It must.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, is this real existence equally compatible to all degrees of heat, which we perceive; or is there any reason why we should attribute it to some, and deny it to others? And if there be, pray let me know that reason.

HYL. Whatever degree of heat we perceive by sense, we may be sure the same exists in the object that occasions it.

PHIL. What! the greatest as well as the least?

HYL. I tell you, the reason is plainly the same in respect of both. They are both perceived by sense; nay, the greater degree of heat is more sensibly perceived; and consequently, if there is any difference, we are more certain of its real existence than we can be of the reality of a lesser degree.

PHIL. But is not the most vehement and intense degree of heat a very great pain?

HYL. No one can deny it.

PHIL. And is any unperceiving thing capable of pain or pleasure?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. Is your material substance a senseless being, or a being endowed with sense and perception?

HYL. It is senseless without doubt.

PHIL. It cannot therefore be the subject of pain?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. Nor consequently of the greatest heat perceived by sense, since you acknowledge this to be no small pain?

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. What shall we say then of your external object; is it a material Substance, or no?

HYL. It is a material substance with the sensible qualities inhering in it.

PHIL. How then can a great heat exist in it, since you own it cannot in a material substance? I desire you would clear this point.

HYL. Hold, Philonous, I fear I was out in yielding intense heat to be a pain. It should seem rather, that pain is something distinct from heat, and the consequence or effect of it.

PHIL. Upon putting your hand near the fire, do you perceive one simple uniform sensation, or two distinct sensations?

HYL. But one simple sensation.

PHIL. Is not the heat immediately perceived?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And the pain?

HYL. True.

PHIL. Seeing therefore they are both immediately perceived at the same time, and the fire affects you only with one simple or uncompounded idea, it follows that this same simple idea is both the intense heat immediately perceived, and the pain; and, consequently, that the intense heat immediately perceived is nothing distinct from a particular sort of pain.

HYL. It seems so.

PHIL. Again, try in your thoughts, Hylas, if you can conceive a vehement sensation to be without pain or pleasure.

HYL. I cannot.

PHIL. Or can you frame to yourself an idea of sensible pain or pleasure in general, abstracted from every particular idea of heat, cold, tastes, smells? &c.

HYL. I do not find that I can.

PHIL. Doth it not therefore follow, that sensible pain is nothing distinct from those sensations or ideas, in an intense degree?

HYL. It is undeniable; and, to speak the truth, I begin to suspect a very great heat cannot exist but in a mind perceiving it.

PHIL. What! are you then in that sceptical state of suspense, between affirming and denying?

HYL. I think I may be positive in the point. A very violent and painful heat cannot exist without the mind.

PHIL. It hath not therefore according to you, any REAL being?

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. Is it therefore certain, that there is no body in nature really hot?

HYL. I have not denied there is any real heat in bodies. I only say, there is no such thing as an intense real heat.

PHIL. But, did you not say before that all degrees of heat were equally real; or, if there was any difference, that the greater were more undoubtedly real than the lesser?

HYL. True: but it was because I did not then consider the ground there is for distinguishing between them, which I now plainly see. And it is this: because intense heat is nothing else but a particular kind of painful sensation; and pain cannot exist but in a perceiving being; it follows that no intense heat can really exist in an unperceiving corporeal substance. But this is no reason why we should deny heat in an inferior degree to exist in such a substance.

PHIL. But how shall we be able to discern those degrees of heat which exist only in the mind from those which exist without it?

HYL. That is no difficult matter. You know the least pain cannot exist unperceived; whatever, therefore, degree of heat is a pain exists only in the mind. But, as for all other degrees of heat, nothing obliges us to think the same of them.

PHIL. I think you granted before that no unperceiving being was capable of pleasure, any more than of pain.

HYL. I did.

PHIL. And is not warmth, or a more gentle degree of heat than what causes uneasiness, a pleasure?

HYL. What then?

PHIL. Consequently, it cannot exist without the mind in an unperceiving substance, or body.

HYL. So it seems.

PHIL. Since, therefore, as well those degrees of heat that are not painful, as those that are, can exist only in a thinking substance; may we not conclude that external bodies are absolutely incapable of any degree of heat whatsoever?

HYL. On second thoughts, I do not think it so evident that warmth is a pleasure as that a great degree of heat is a pain.

PHIL. / do not pretend that warmth is as great a pleasure as heat is a pain. But, if you grant it to be even a small pleasure, it serves to make good my conclusion.

HYL. I could rather call it an INDOLENCE. It seems to be nothing more than a privation of both pain and pleasure. And that such a quality or state as this may agree to an unthinking substance, I hope you will not deny.

PHIL. If you are resolved to maintain that warmth, or a gentle degree of heat, is no pleasure, I know not how to convince you otherwise than by appealing to your own sense. But what think you of cold?

HYL. The same that I do of heat. An intense degree of cold is a pain; for to feel a very great cold, is to perceive a great uneasiness: it cannot therefore exist without the mind; but a lesser degree of cold may, as well as a lesser degree of heat.

PHIL. Those bodies, therefore, upon whose application to our own, we perceive a moderate degree of heat, must be concluded to have a moderate degree of heat or warmth in them; and those, upon whose application we feel a like degree of cold, must be thought to have cold in them.

HYL. They must.

PHIL. Can any doctrine be true that necessarily leads a man into an absurdity?

HYL. Without doubt it cannot.

PHIL. Is it not an absurdity to think that the same thing should be at the same time both cold and warm?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Suppose now one of your hands hot, and the other cold, and that they are both at once put into the same vessel of water, in an intermediate state; will not the water seem cold to one hand, and warm to the other?

HYL. It will.

PHIL. Ought we not therefore, by your principles, to conclude it is really both cold and warm at the same time, that is, according to your own concession, to believe an absurdity?

HYL. I confess it seems so.

PHIL. Consequently, the principles themselves are false, since you have granted that no true principle leads to an absurdity.

HYL. But, after all, can anything be more absurd than to say, THERE IS NO HEAT IN THE FIRE?

PHIL. To make the point still clearer; tell me whether, in two cases exactly alike, we ought not to make the same judgment?

HYL. We ought.

PHIL. When a pin pricks your finger, doth it not rend and divide the fibres of your flesh?

HYL. It doth.

PHIL. And when a coal burns your finger, doth it any more?

HYL. It doth not.

PHIL. Since, therefore, you neither judge the sensation itself occasioned by the pin, nor anything like it to be in the pin; you should not, conformably to what you have now granted, judge the sensation occasioned by the fire, or anything like it, to be in the fire.

HYL. Well, since it must be so, I am content to yield this point, and acknowledge that heat and cold are only sensations existing in our minds. But there still remain qualities enough to secure the reality of external things.

PHIL. But what will you say, Hylas, if it shall appear that the case is the same with regard to all other sensible qualities, and that they can no more be supposed to exist without the mind, than heat and cold?

HYL. Then indeed you will have done something to the purpose; but that is what I despair of seeing proved.

PHIL. Let us examine them in order. What think you of TASTES, do they exist without the mind, or no?

HYL. Can any man in his senses doubt whether sugar is sweet, or wormwood bitter?

PHIL. Inform me, Hylas. Is a sweet taste a particular kind of pleasure or pleasant sensation, or is it not?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And is not bitterness some kind of uneasiness or pain?

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. If therefore sugar and wormwood are unthinking corporeal substances existing without the mind, how can sweetness and bitterness, that is, Pleasure and pain, agree to them?

HYL. Hold, Philonous, I now see what it was delude time. You asked whether heat and cold, sweetness at were not particular sorts of pleasure and pain; to which simply, that they were. Whereas I should have thus distinguished: those qualities, as perceived by us, are pleasures or pain existing in the external objects. We must not therefore conclude absolutely, that there is no heat in the fire, or sweetness in the sugar, but only that heat or sweetness, as perceived by us, are not in the fire or sugar. What say you to this?

PHIL. I say it is nothing to the purpose. Our discourse proceeded altogether concerning sensible things, which you defined to be, THE THINGS WE IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVE BY OUR SENSES. Whatever other qualities, therefore, you speak of as distinct from these, I know nothing of them, neither do they at all belong to the point in dispute. You may, indeed, pretend to have discovered certain qualities which you do not perceive, and assert those insensible qualities exist in fire and sugar. But what use can be made of this to your present purpose, I am at a loss to conceive. Tell me then once more, do you acknowledge that heat and cold, sweetness and bitterness (meaning those qualities which are perceived by the senses), do not exist without the mind?

HYL. I see it is to no purpose to hold out, so I give up the cause as to those mentioned qualities. Though I profess it sounds oddly, to say that sugar is not sweet.

PHIL. But, for your farther satisfaction, take this along with you: that which at other times seems sweet, shall, to a distempered palate, appear bitter. And, nothing can be plainer than that divers persons perceive different tastes in the same food; since that which one man delights in, another abhors. And how could this be, if the taste was something really inherent in the food?

HYL. I acknowledge I know not how.

PHIL. In the next place, ODOURS are to be considered. And, with regard to these, I would fain know whether what hath been said of tastes doth not exactly agree to them? Are they not so many pleasing or displeasing sensations?

HYL. They are.

PHIL. Can you then conceive it possible that they should exist in an unperceiving thing?

HYL. I cannot.

PHIL. Or, can you imagine that filth and ordure affect those brute animals that feed on them out of choice, with the same smells which we perceive in them?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. May we not therefore conclude of smells, as of the other forementioned qualities, that they cannot exist in any but a perceiving substance or mind?

HYL. I think so.

PHIL. Then as to SOUNDS, what must we think of them: are they accidents really inherent in external bodies, or not?

HYL. That they inhere not in the sonorous bodies is plain from hence: because a bell struck in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump sends forth no sound. The air, therefore, must be thought the subject of sound.

PHIL. What reason is there for that, Hylas?

HYL. Because, when any motion is raised in the air, we perceive a sound greater or lesser, according to the air's motion; but without some motion in the air, we never hear any sound at all.

PHIL. And granting that we never hear a sound but when some motion is produced in the air, yet I do not see how you can infer from thence, that the sound itself is in the air.

HYL. It is this very motion in the external air that produces in the mind the sensation of SOUND. For, striking on the drum of the ear, it causeth a vibration, which by the auditory nerves being communicated to the brain, the soul is thereupon affected with the sensation called SOUND.

PHIL. What! is sound then a sensation?

HYL. I tell you, as perceived by us, it is a particular sensation in the mind.

PHIL. And can any sensation exist without the mind?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. How then can sound, being a sensation, exist in the air, if by the AIR you mean a senseless substance existing without the mind?

HYL. You must distinguish, Philonous, between sound as it is perceived by us, and as it is in itself; or (which is the same thing) between the sound we immediately perceive, and that which exists without us. The former, indeed, is a particular kind of sensation, but the latter is merely a vibrative or undulatory motion the air.

PHIL. I thought I had already obviated that distinction, by answer I gave when you were applying it in a like case before. But, to say no more of that, are you sure then that sound is really nothing but motion?

HYL. I am.

PHIL. Whatever therefore agrees to real sound, may with truth be attributed to motion?

HYL. It may.

PHIL. It is then good sense to speak of MOTION as of a thing that is LOUD, SWEET, ACUTE, or GRAVE.

HYL. I see you are resolved not to understand me. Is it not evident those accidents or modes belong only to sensible sound, or SOUND in the common acceptation of the word, but not to sound in the real and philosophic sense; which, as I just now told you, is nothing but a certain motion of the air?

PHIL. It seems then there are two sorts of sound—the one vulgar, or that which is heard, the other philosophical and real?

HYL. Even so.

PHIL. And the latter consists in motion?

HYL. I told you so before.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, to which of the senses, think you, the idea of motion belongs? to the hearing?

HYL. No, certainly; but to the sight and touch.

PHIL. It should follow then, that, according to you, real sounds may possibly be SEEN OR FELT, but never HEARD.

HYL. Look you, Philonous, you may, if you please, make a jest of my opinion, but that will not alter the truth of things. I own, indeed, the inferences you draw me into sound something oddly; but common language, you know, is framed by, and for the use of the vulgar: we must not therefore wonder if expressions adapted to exact philosophic notions seem uncouth and out of the way.

PHIL. Is it come to that? I assure you, I imagine myself to have gained no small point, since you make so light of departing from common phrases and opinions; it being a main part of our inquiry, to examine whose notions are widest of the common road, and most repugnant to the general sense of the world. But, can you think it no more than a philosophical paradox, to say that REAL SOUNDS ARE NEVER HEARD, and that the idea of them is obtained by some other sense? And is there nothing in this contrary to nature and the truth of things?

HYL. To deal ingenuously, I do not like it. And, after the concessions already made, I had as well grant that sounds too have no real being without the mind.

PHIL. And I hope you will make no difficulty to acknowledge the same of COLOURS.

HYL. Pardon me: the case of colours is very different. Can anything be plainer than that we see them on the objects?

PHIL. The objects you speak of are, I suppose, corporeal Substances existing without the mind?

HYL. They are.

PHIL. And have true and real colours inhering in them?

HYL. Each visible object hath that colour which we see in it.

PHIL. How! is there anything visible but what we perceive by sight?

HYL. There is not.

PHIL. And, do we perceive anything by sense which we do not perceive immediately?

HYL. How often must I be obliged to repeat the same thing? I tell you, we do not.

PHIL. Have patience, good Hylas; and tell me once more, whether there is anything immediately perceived by the senses, except sensible qualities. I know you asserted there was not; but I would now be informed, whether you still persist in the same opinion.

HYL. I do.

PHIL. Pray, is your corporeal substance either a sensible quality, or made up of sensible qualities?

HYL. What a question that is! who ever thought it was?

PHIL. My reason for asking was, because in saying, EACH VISIBLE OBJECT HATH THAT COLOUR WHICH WE SEE IN IT, you make visible objects to be corporeal substances; which implies either that corporeal substances are sensible qualities, or else that there is something besides sensible qualities perceived by sight: but, as this point was formerly agreed between us, and is still maintained by you, it is a clear consequence, that your CORPOREAL SUBSTANCE is nothing distinct from SENSIBLE QUALITIES.

HYL. You may draw as many absurd consequences as you please, and endeavour to perplex the plainest things; but you shall never persuade me out of my senses. I clearly understand my own meaning.

PHIL. I wish you would make me understand it too. But, since you are unwilling to have your notion of corporeal substance examined, I shall urge that point no farther. Only be pleased to let me know, whether the same colours which we see exist in external bodies, or some other.

HYL. The very same.

PHIL. What! are then the beautiful red and purple we see on yonder clouds really in them? Or do you imagine they have in themselves any other form than that of a dark mist or vapour?

HYL. I must own, Philonous, those colours are not really in the clouds as they seem to be at this distance. They are only apparent colours.

PHIL. APPARENT call you them? how shall we distinguish these apparent colours from real?

HYL. Very easily. Those are to be thought apparent which, appearing only at a distance, vanish upon a nearer approach.

PHIL. And those, I suppose, are to be thought real which are discovered by the most near and exact survey.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Is the nearest and exactest survey made by the help of a microscope, or by the naked eye?

HYL. By a microscope, doubtless.

PHIL. But a microscope often discovers colours in an object different from those perceived by the unassisted sight. And, in case we had microscopes magnifying to any assigned degree, it is certain that no object whatsoever, viewed through them, would appear in the same colour which it exhibits to the naked eye.

HYL. And what will you conclude from all this? You cannot argue that there are really and naturally no colours on objects: because by artificial managements they may be altered, or made to vanish.

PHIL. I think it may evidently be concluded from your own concessions, that all the colours we see with our naked eyes are only apparent as those on the clouds, since they vanish upon a more close and accurate inspection which is afforded us by a microscope. Then' as to what you say by way of prevention: I ask you whether the real and natural state of an object is better discovered by a very sharp and piercing sight, or by one which is less sharp?

HYL. By the former without doubt.

PHIL. Is it not plain from DIOPTRICS that microscopes make the sight more penetrating, and represent objects as they would appear to the eye in case it were naturally endowed with a most exquisite sharpness?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Consequently the microscopical representation is to be thought that which best sets forth the real nature of the thing, or what it is in itself. The colours, therefore, by it perceived are more genuine and real than those perceived otherwise.

HYL. I confess there is something in what you say.

PHIL. Besides, it is not only possible but manifest, that there actually are animals whose eyes are by nature framed to perceive those things which by reason of their minuteness escape our sight. What think you of those inconceivably small animals perceived by glasses? must we suppose they are all stark blind? Or, in case they see, can it be imagined their sight hath not the same use in preserving their bodies from injuries, which appears in that of all other animals? And if it hath, is it not evident they must see particles less than their own bodies; which will present them with a far different view in each object from that which strikes our senses? Even our own eyes do not always represent objects to us after the same manner. In the jaundice every one knows that all things seem yellow. Is it not therefore highly probable those animals in whose eyes we discern a very different texture from that of ours, and whose bodies abound with different humours, do not see the same colours in every object that we do? From all which, should it not seem to follow that all colours are equally apparent, and that none of those which we perceive are really inherent in any outward object?

HYL. It should.

PHIL. The point will be past all doubt, if you consider that, in case colours were real properties or affections inherent in external bodies, they could admit of no alteration without some change wrought in the very bodies themselves: but, is it not evident from what hath been said that, upon the use of microscopes, upon a change happening in the burnouts of the eye, or a variation of distance, without any manner of real alteration in the thing itself, the colours of any object are either changed, or totally disappear? Nay, all other circumstances remaining the same, change but the situation of some objects, and they shall present different colours to the eye. The same

thing happens upon viewing an object in various degrees of light. And what is more known than that the same bodies appear differently coloured by candle-light from what they do in the open day? Add to these the experiment of a prism which, separating the heterogeneous rays of light, alters the colour of any object, and will cause the whitest to appear of a deep blue or red to the naked eye. And now tell me whether you are still of opinion that every body hath its true real colour inhering in it; and, if you think it hath, I would fain know farther from you, what certain distance and position of the object, what peculiar texture and formation of the eye, what degree or kind of light is necessary for ascertaining that true colour, and distinguishing it from apparent ones.

HYL. I own myself entirely satisfied, that they are all equally apparent, and that there is no such thing as colour really inhering in external bodies, but that it is altogether in the light. And what confirms me in this opinion is, that in proportion to the light colours are still more or less vivid; and if there be no light, then are there no colours perceived. Besides, allowing there are colours on external objects, yet, how is it possible for us to perceive them? For no external body affects the mind, unless it acts first on our organs of sense. But the only action of bodies is motion; and motion cannot be communicated otherwise than by impulse. A distant object therefore cannot act on the eye; nor consequently make itself or its properties perceivable to the soul. Whence it plainly follows that it is immediately some contiguous substance, which, operating on the eye, occasions a perception of colours: and such is light.

PHIL. How is light then a substance?

HYL. . I tell you, Philonous, external light is nothing but a thin fluid substance, whose minute particles being agitated with a brisk motion, and in various manners reflected from the different surfaces of outward objects to the eyes, communicate different motions to the optic nerves; which, being propagated to the brain, cause therein various impressions; and these are attended with the sensations of red, blue, yellow, &c.

PHIL. It seems then the light doth no more than shake the optic nerves.

HYL. Nothing else.

PHIL. And consequent to each particular motion of the nerves, the mind is affected with a sensation, which is some particular colour.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. And these sensations have no existence without the mind.

HYL. They have not.

PHIL. How then do you affirm that colours are in the light; since by LIGHT you understand a corporeal substance external to the mind?

HYL. Light and colours, as immediately perceived by us, I grant cannot exist without the mind. But in themselves they are only the motions and configurations of certain insensible particles of matter.

PHIL. Colours then, in the vulgar sense, or taken for the immediate objects of sight, cannot agree to any but a perceiving substance.

HYL. That is what I say.

PHIL. Well then, since you give up the point as to those sensible qualities which are alone thought colours by all mankind beside, you may hold what you please with regard to those invisible ones of the philosophers. It is not my business to dispute about THEM; only I would advise you to bethink yourself, whether, considering the inquiry we are upon, it be prudent for you to affirm—THE RED AND BLUE WHICH WE SEE ARE NOT REAL COLOURS, BUT CERTAIN UNKNOWN MOTIONS AND FIGURES WHICH NO MAN EVER DID OR CAN SEE ARE TRULY SO. Are not these shocking notions, and are not they subject to as many ridiculous inferences, as those you were obliged to renounce before in the case of sounds?

HYL. I frankly own, Philonous, that it is in vain to longer. Colours, sounds, tastes, in a word all those termed SECONDARY QUALITIES, have certainly no existence without the mind. But by this acknowledgment I must not be supposed to derogate, the reality of Matter, or external objects; seeing it is no more than several philosophers maintain, who nevertheless are the farthest imaginable from denying Matter. For the clearer understanding of this, you must know sensible qualities are by philosophers divided into PRIMARY and SECONDARY. The former are

Extension, Figure, Solidity, Gravity, Motion, and Rest; and these they hold exist really in bodies. The latter are those above enumerated; or, briefly, ALL SENSIBLE QUALITIES BESIDE THE PRIMARY; which they assert are only so many sensations or ideas existing nowhere but in the mind. But all this, I doubt not, you are apprised of. For my part, I have been a long time sensible there was such an opinion current among philosophers, but was never thoroughly convinced of its truth until now.

PHIL. You are still then of opinion that EXTENSION and FIGURES are inherent in external unthinking substances?

HYL. I am.

PHIL. But what if the same arguments which are brought against Secondary Qualities will hold good against these also?

HYL. Why then I shall be obliged to think, they too exist only in the mind.

PHIL. Is it your opinion the very figure and extension which you perceive by sense exist in the outward object or material substance? HYL. It is.

PHIL. Have all other animals as good grounds to think the same of the figure and extension which they see and feel?

HYL. Without doubt, if they have any thought at all.

PHIL. Answer me, Hylas. Think you the senses were bestowed upon all animals for their preservation and well-being in life? or were they given to men alone for this end?

HYL. I make no question but they have the same use in all other animals.

PHIL. If so, is it not necessary they should be enabled by them to perceive their own limbs, and those bodies which are capable of harming them?

HYL. Certainly.

PHIL. A mite therefore must be supposed to see his own foot, and things equal or even less than it, as bodies of some considerable dimension; though at the same time they appear to you scarce discernible, or at best as so many visible points?

HYL. I cannot deny it.

PHIL. And to creatures less than the mite they will seem yet larger?

HYL. They will.

PHIL. Insomuch that what you can hardly discern will to another extremely minute animal appear as some huge mountain?

HYL. All this I grant.

PHIL. Can one and the same thing be at the same time in itself of different dimensions?

HYL. That were absurd to imagine.

PHIL. But, from what you have laid down it follows that both the extension by you perceived, and that perceived by the mite itself, as likewise all those perceived by lesser animals, are each of them the true extension of the mite's foot; that is to say, by your own principles you are led into an absurdity.

HYL. There seems to be some difficulty in the point.

PHIL. Again, have you not acknowledged that no real inherent property of any object can be changed without some change in the thing itself?

HYL. I have.

PHIL. But, as we approach to or recede from an object, the visible extension varies, being at one distance ten or a hundred times greater than another. Doth it not therefore follow from hence likewise that it is not really inherent in the object?

HYL. I own I am at a loss what to think.

PHIL. Your judgment will soon be determined, if you will venture to think as freely concerning this quality as you have done concerning the rest. Was it not admitted as a good argument, that neither heat nor cold was in the water, because it seemed warm to one hand and cold to the other?

HYL. It was.

PHIL. Is it not the very same reasoning to conclude, there is no extension or figure in an object, because to one eye it shall seem little, smooth, and round, when at the same time it appears to the other, great, uneven, and regular?

HYL. The very same. But does this latter fact ever happen?

PHIL. You may at any time make the experiment, by looking with one eye bare, and with the other through a microscope.

HYL. I know not how to maintain it; and yet I am loath to give up EXTENSION, I see so many odd consequences following upon such a concession.

PHIL. Odd, say you? After the concessions already made, I hope you will stick at nothing for its oddness. But, on the other hand, should it not seem very odd, if the general reasoning which includes all other sensible qualities did not also include extension? If it be allowed that no idea, nor anything like an idea, can exist in an unperceiving substance, then surely it follows that no figure, or mode of extension, which we can either perceive, or imagine, or have any idea of, can be really inherent in Matter; not to mention the peculiar difficulty there must be in conceiving a material substance, prior to and distinct from extension to be the SUBSTRATUM of extension. Be the sensible quality what it will—figure, or sound, or colour, it seems alike impossible it should subsist in that which doth not perceive it.

HYL. I give up the point for the present, reserving still a right to retract my opinion, in case I shall hereafter discover any false step in my progress to it.

PHIL. That is a right you cannot be denied. Figures and extension being despatched, we proceed next to MOTION. Can a real motion in any external body be at the same time very swift and very slow?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. Is not the motion of a body swift in a reciprocal proportion to the time it takes up in describing any given space? Thus a body that describes a mile in an hour moves three times faster than it would in case it described only a mile in three hours.

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. And is not time measured by the succession of ideas in our minds?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And is it not possible ideas should succeed one another twice as fast in your mind as they do in mine, or in that of some spirit of another kind?

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. Consequently the same body may to another seem to perform its motion over any space in half the time that it doth to you. And the same reasoning will hold as to any other proportion: that is to say, according to your principles (since the motions perceived are both really in the object) it is possible one and the same body shall be really moved the same way at once, both very swift and very slow. How is this consistent either with common sense, or with what you just now granted?

HYL. I have nothing to say to it.

PHIL. Then as for SOLIDITY; either you do not mean any sensible quality by that word, and so it is beside our inquiry: or if you do, it must be either hardness or resistance. But both the one and the other are plainly relative to our senses: it being evident that what seems hard to one animal may appear soft to another, who hath greater force and firmness of limbs. Nor is it less plain that the resistance I feel is not in the body.

HYL. I own the very SENSATION of resistance, which is all you immediately perceive, is not in the body; but the CAUSE of that sensation is.

PHIL. But the causes of our sensations are not things immediately perceived, and therefore are not sensible. This point I thought had been already determined.

HYL. I own it was; but you will pardon me if I seem a little embarrassed: I know not how to quit my old notions.

PHIL. To help you out, do but consider that if EXTENSION be once acknowledged to have no existence without the mind, the same must necessarily be granted of motion, solidity, and gravity; since they all evidently suppose extension. It is therefore superfluous to inquire particularly concerning each of them. In denying extension, you have denied them all to have any real existence.

HYL. I wonder, Philonous, if what you say be true, why those philosophers who deny the Secondary Qualities any real existence should yet attribute it to the Primary. If there is no difference between them, how can this be accounted for?

PHIL. It is not my business to account for every opinion of the philosophers. But, among other reasons which may be assigned for this, it seems probable that pleasure and pain being rather annexed to the former than the latter may be one. Heat and cold, tastes and smells, have something more vividly pleasing or disagreeable than the ideas of extension, figure, and motion affect us with. And, it being too visibly absurd to hold that pain or pleasure can be in an unperceiving substance, men are more easily weaned from believing the external existence of the Secondary than the Primary Qualities. You will be satisfied there is something in this, if you recollect the difference you made between an intense and more moderate degree of heat; allowing the one a real existence, while you denied it to the other. But, after all, there is no rational ground for that distinction; for, surely an indifferent sensation is as truly a SENSATION as one more pleasing or painful; and consequently should not any more than they be supposed to exist in an unthinking subject.

HYL. It is just come into my head, Philonous, that I have somewhere heard of a distinction between absolute and sensible extension. Now, though it be acknowledged that GREAT and SMALL, consisting merely in the relation which other extended beings have to the parts of our own bodies, do not really inhere in the substances themselves; yet nothing obliges us to hold the same with regard to ABSOLUTE EXTENSION, which is something abstracted from GREAT and SMALL, from this or that particular magnitude or figure. So likewise as to motion; SWIFT and SLOW are altogether relative to the succession of ideas in our own minds. But, it doth not follow, because those modifications of motion exist not without the mind, that therefore absolute motion abstracted from them doth not.

PHIL. Pray what is it that distinguishes one motion, or one part of extension, from another? Is it not something sensible, as some degree of swiftness or slowness, some certain magnitude or figure peculiar to each?

HYL. I think so.

PHIL. These qualities, therefore, stripped of all sensible properties, are without all specific and numerical differences, as the schools call them.

HYL. They are.

PHIL. That is to say, they are extension in general, and motion in general.

HYL. Let it be so.

PHIL. But it is a universally received maxim that EVERYTHING WHICH EXISTS IS PARTICULAR. How then can motion in general, or extension in general, exist in any corporeal substance?

HYL. I will take time to solve your difficulty.

PHIL. But I think the point may be speedily decided. Without doubt you can tell whether you are able to frame this or that idea. Now I am content to put our dispute on this issue. If you can frame in your thoughts a distinct ABSTRACT IDEA of motion or extension, divested of all those sensible modes, as swift and slow, great and small, round and square, and the like, which are acknowledged to exist only in the mind, I will then yield the point you contend for. But if you cannot, it will be unreasonable on your side to insist any longer upon what you have no notion of.

HYL. To confess ingenuously, I cannot.

PHIL. Can you even separate the ideas of extension and motion from the ideas of all those qualities which they who make the distinction term SECONDARY?

HYL. What! is it not an easy matter to consider extension and motion by themselves, abstracted from all other sensible qualities? Pray how do the mathematicians treat of them?

PHIL. I acknowledge, Hylas, it is not difficult to form general propositions and reasonings about those qualities, without mentioning any other; and, in this sense, to consider or treat of them abstractedly. But, how doth it follow that, because I can pronounce the word MOTION by itself, I can form the idea of it in my mind exclusive of body? or, because theorems may be made of extension and figures, without any mention of GREAT or SMALL, or any other sensible mode or quality, that therefore it is possible such an abstract idea of extension, without any particular size or figure, or sensible quality, should be distinctly formed, and apprehended by the mind? Mathematicians treat of quantity, without regarding what other sensible qualities it is attended with, as being altogether indifferent to their demonstrations. But, when laying aside the words, they contemplate the bare ideas, I believe you will find, they are not the pure abstracted ideas of extension.

HYL. But what say you to PURE INTELLECT? May not abstracted ideas be framed by that faculty?

PHIL. Since I cannot frame abstract ideas at all, it is plain I cannot frame them by the help of PURE INTELLECT; whatsoever faculty you understand by those words. Besides, not to inquire into the nature of pure intellect and its spiritual objects, as VIRTUE, REASON, GOD, or the like, thus much seems manifest—that sensible things are only to be perceived by sense, or represented by the imagination. Figures, therefore, and extension, being originally perceived by sense, do not belong to pure intellect: but, for your farther satisfaction, try if you can frame the idea of any figure, abstracted from all particularities of size, or even from other sensible qualities.

HYL. Let me think a little—I do not find that I can.

PHIL. And can you think it possible that should really exist in nature which implies a repugnancy in its conception?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. Since therefore it is impossible even for the mind to disunite the ideas of extension and motion from all other sensible qualities, doth it not follow, that where the one exist there necessarily the other exist likewise?

HYL. It should seem so.

PHIL. Consequently, the very same arguments which you admitted as conclusive against the Secondary Qualities are, without any farther application of force, against the Primary too. Besides, if you will trust your senses, is it not plain all sensible qualities coexist, or to them appear as being in the same place? Do they ever represent a motion, or figure, as being divested of all other visible and tangible qualities?

HYL. You need say no more on this head. I am free to own, if there be no secret error or oversight in our proceedings hitherto, that all sensible qualities are alike to be denied existence without the mind. But, my fear is that I have been too liberal in my former concessions, or overlooked some fallacy or other. In short, I did not take time to think.

PHIL. For that matter, Hylas, you may take what time you please in reviewing the progress of our inquiry. You are at liberty to recover any slips you might have made, or offer whatever you have omitted which makes for your first opinion.

HYL. One great oversight I take to be this—that I did not sufficiently distinguish the OBJECT from the SENSATION. Now, though this latter may not exist without the mind, yet it will not thence follow that the former cannot.

PHIL. What object do you mean? the object of the senses?

HYL. The same.

PHIL. It is then immediately perceived?

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Make me to understand the difference between what is immediately perceived and a sensation.

HYL. The sensation I take to be an act of the mind perceiving; besides which, there is something perceived; and this I call the OBJECT. For example, there is red and yellow on that tulip. But then the act of perceiving those colours is in me only, and not in the tulip.

PHIL. What tulip do you speak of? Is it that which you see?

HYL. The same.

PHIL. And what do you see beside colour, figure, and extension?

HYL. Nothing.

PHIL. What you would say then is that the red and yellow are coexistent with the extension; is it not?

HYL. That is not all; I would say they have a real existence without the mind, in some unthinking substance.

PHIL. That the colours are really in the tulip which I see is manifest. Neither can it be denied that this tulip may exist independent of your mind or mine; but, that any immediate object of the senses,—that is, any idea, or combination of ideas—should exist in an unthinking substance, or exterior to ALL minds, is in itself an evident contradiction. Nor can I imagine how this follows from what you said just now, to wit, that the red and yellow were on the tulip you SAW, since you do not pretend to SEE that unthinking substance.

HYL. You have an artful way, Philonous, of diverting our inquiry from the subject.

PHIL. I see you have no mind to be pressed that way. To return then to your distinction between SENSATION and OBJECT; if I take you right, you distinguish in every perception two things, the one an action of the mind, the other not.

HYL. True.

PHIL. And this action cannot exist in, or belong to, any unthinking thing; but, whatever beside is implied in a perception may?

HYL. That is my meaning.

PHIL. So that if there was a perception without any act of the mind, it were possible such a perception should exist in an unthinking substance?

HYL. I grant it. But it is impossible there should be such a perception.

PHIL. When is the mind said to be active?

HYL. When it produces, puts an end to, or changes, anything.

PHIL. Can the mind produce, discontinue, or change anything, but by an act of the will?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. The mind therefore is to be accounted ACTIVE in its perceptions so far forth as VOLITION is included in them?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. In plucking this flower I am active; because I do it by the motion of my hand, which was consequent upon my volition; so likewise in applying it to my nose. But is either of these smelling?

HYL. NO.

PHIL. I act too in drawing the air through my nose; because my breathing so rather than otherwise is the effect of my volition. But neither can this be called SMELLING: for, if it were, I should smell every time I breathed in that manner?

HYL. True.

PHIL. Smelling then is somewhat consequent to all this?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. But I do not find my will concerned any farther. Whatever more there is—as that I perceive such a particular smell, or any smell at all—this is independent of my will, and therein I am altogether passive. Do you find it otherwise with you, Hylas?

HYL. No, the very same.

PHIL. Then, as to seeing, is it not in your power to open your eyes, or keep them shut; to turn them this or that way?

HYL. Without doubt.

PHIL. But, doth it in like manner depend on YOUR will that in looking on this flower you perceive WHITE rather than any other colour? Or, directing your open eyes towards yonder part of the heaven, can you avoid seeing the sun? Or is light or darkness the effect of your volition?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. You are then in these respects altogether passive? HYL. I am.

PHIL. Tell me now, whether SEEING consists in perceiving light and colours, or in opening and turning the eyes?

HYL. Without doubt, in the former.

PHIL. Since therefore you are in the very perception of light and colours altogether passive, what is become of that action you were speaking of as an ingredient in every sensation? And, doth it not follow from your own concessions, that the perception of light and colours, including no action in it, may exist in an unperceiving substance? And is not this a plain contradiction?

HYL. I know not what to think of it.

PHIL. Besides, since you distinguish the ACTIVE and PASSIVE in every perception, you must do it in that of pain. But how is it possible that pain, be it as little active as you please, should exist in an unperceiving substance? In short, do but consider the point, and then confess ingenuously, whether light and colours, tastes, sounds, &c. are not all equally passions or sensations in the soul. You may indeed call them EXTERNAL OBJECTS, and give them in words what subsistence you please. But, examine your own thoughts, and then tell me whether it be not as I say?

HYL. I acknowledge, Philonous, that, upon a fair observation of what passes in my mind, I can discover nothing else but that I am a thinking being, affected with variety of sensations; neither is it possible to conceive how a sensation should exist in an unperceiving substance. But then, on the other hand, when I look on sensible things in a different view, considering them as so many modes and qualities, I find it necessary to suppose a MATERIAL SUBSTRATUM, without which they cannot be conceived to exist.

PHIL. MATERIAL SUBSTRATUM call you it? Pray, by which of your senses came you acquainted with that being?

HYL. It is not itself sensible; its modes and qualities only being perceived by the senses.

PHIL. I presume then it was by reflexion and reason you obtained the idea of it?

HYL. I do not pretend to any proper positive IDEA of it. However, I conclude it exists, because qualities cannot be conceived to exist without a support.

PHIL. It seems then you have only a relative NOTION of it, or that you conceive it not otherwise than by conceiving the relation it bears to sensible qualities?

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Be pleased therefore to let me know wherein that relation consists.

HYL. Is it not sufficiently expressed in the term SUBSTRATUM, or SUBSTANCE?

PHIL. If so, the word SUBSTRATUM should import that it is spread under the sensible qualities or accidents?

HYL. True.

PHIL. And consequently under extension?

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. It is therefore somewhat in its own nature entirely distinct from extension?

HYL. I tell you, extension is only a mode, and Matter is something that supports modes. And is it not evident the thing supported is different from the thing supporting?

PHIL. So that something distinct from, and exclusive of, extension is supposed to be the SUBSTRATUM of extension?

HYL. Just so.

PHIL. Answer me, Hylas. Can a thing be spread without extension? or is not the idea of extension necessarily included in SPREADING?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Whatsoever therefore you suppose spread under anything must have in itself an extension distinct from the extension of that thing under which it is spread?

HYL. It must.

PHIL. Consequently, every corporeal substance, being the SUBSTRATUM of extension, must have in itself another extension, by which it is qualified to be a SUBSTRATUM: and so on to infinity. And I ask whether this be not absurd in itself, and repugnant to what you granted just now, to wit, that the SUBSTRATUM was something distinct from and exclusive of extension?

HYL. Aye but, Philonous, you take me wrong. I do not mean that Matter is SPREAD in a gross literal sense under extension. The word SUBSTRATUM is used only to express in general the same thing with SUBSTANCE.

PHIL. Well then, let us examine the relation implied in the term SUBSTANCE. Is it not that it stands under accidents?

HYL. The very same.

PHIL. But, that one thing may stand under or support another, must it not be extended?

HYL. It must.

PHIL. Is not therefore this supposition liable to the same absurdity with the former?

HYL. You still take things in a strict literal sense. That is not fair, Philonous.

PHIL. I am not for imposing any sense on your words: you are at liberty to explain them as you please. Only, I beseech you, make me understand something by them. You tell me Matter supports or stands under accidents. How! is it as your legs support your body?

HYL. No; that is the literal sense.

PHIL. Pray let me know any sense, literal or not literal, that you understand it in.—How long must I wait for an answer, Hylas?

HYL. I declare I know not what to say. I once thought I understood well enough what was meant by Matter's supporting accidents. But now, the more I think on it the less can I comprehend it: in short I find that I know nothing of it.

PHIL. It seems then you have no idea at all, neither relative nor positive, of Matter; you know neither what it is in itself, nor what relation it bears to accidents?

HYL. I acknowledge it.

PHIL. And yet you asserted that you could not conceive how qualities or accidents should really exist, without conceiving at the same time a material support of them?

HYL. I did.

PHIL. That is to say, when you conceive the real existence of qualities, you do withal conceive Something which you cannot conceive?

HYL. It was wrong, I own. But still I fear there is some fallacy or other. Pray what think you of this? It is just come into my head that the ground of all our mistake lies in your treating of each quality by itself. Now, I grant that each quality cannot singly subsist without the mind. Colour cannot without extension, neither can figure without some other sensible quality. But, as the several qualities united or blended together form entire sensible things, nothing hinders why such things may not be supposed to exist without the mind.

PHIL. Either, Hylas, you are jesting, or have a very bad memory. Though indeed we went through all the qualities by name one after another, yet my arguments or rather your concessions, nowhere tended to prove that the Secondary Qualities did not subsist each alone by itself; but, that they were not AT ALL without the mind. Indeed, in treating of figure and motion we concluded they could not exist without the mind, because it was impossible even in thought to separate them from all secondary qualities, so as to conceive them existing by themselves. But then this was not the only argument made use of upon that occasion. But (to pass by all that hath been hitherto said, and reckon it for nothing, if you will have it so) I am content to put the whole upon this issue. If you can conceive it possible for any mixture or combination of qualities, or any sensible object whatever, to exist without the mind, then I will grant it actually to be so.

HYL. If it comes to that the point will soon be decided. What more easy than to conceive a tree or house existing by itself, independent of, and unperceived by, any mind whatsoever? I do at this present time conceive them existing after that manner.

PHIL. How say you, Hylas, can you see a thing which is at the same time unseen?

HYL. No, that were a contradiction.

PHIL. Is it not as great a contradiction to talk of CONCEIVING a thing which is UNCONCEIVED?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. The tree or house therefore which you think of is conceived by you?

HYL. How should it be otherwise?

PHIL. And what is conceived is surely in the mind?

HYL. Without question, that which is conceived is in the mind.

PHIL. How then came you to say, you conceived a house or tree existing independent and out of all minds whatsoever?

HYL. That was I own an oversight; but stay, let me consider what led me into it. — It is a pleasant mistake enough. As I was thinking of a tree in a solitary place, where no one was present to see it, methought that was to conceive a tree as existing unperceived or unthought of; not considering that I myself conceived it all the while. But now I plainly see that all I can do is to frame ideas in my own mind. I may indeed conceive in my own thoughts the idea of a tree, or a house, or a mountain, but that is all. And this is far from proving that I can conceive them EXISTING OUT OF THE MINDS OF ALL SPIRITS.

PHIL. You acknowledge then that you cannot possibly conceive how any one corporeal sensible thing should exist otherwise than in the mind?

HYL. I do.

PHIL. And yet you will earnestly contend for the truth of that which you cannot so much as conceive?

HYL. I profess I know not what to think; but still there are some scruples remain with me. Is it not certain I SEE THINGS at a distance? Do we not perceive the stars and moon, for example, to be a great way off? Is not this, I say, manifest to the senses?

PHIL. Do you not in a dream too perceive those or the like objects?

HYL. I do.

PHIL. And have they not then the same appearance of being distant?

HYL. They have.

PHIL. But you do not thence conclude the apparitions in a dream to be without the mind?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. You ought not therefore to conclude that sensible objects are without the mind, from their appearance, or manner wherein they are perceived.

HYL. I acknowledge it. But doth not my sense deceive me in those cases?

PHIL. By no means. The idea or thing which you immediately perceive, neither sense nor reason informs you that it actually exists without the mind. By sense you only know that you are affected with such certain sensations of light and colours, &c. And these you will not say are without the mind.

HYL. True: but, beside all that, do you not think the sight suggests something of OUTNESS OR DISTANCE?

PHIL. Upon approaching a distant object, do the visible size and figure change perpetually, or do they appear the same at all distances?

HYL. They are in a continual change.

PHIL. Sight therefore doth not suggest, or any way inform you, that the visible object you immediately perceive exists at a distance, or will be perceived when you advance farther onward; there being a continued series of visible objects succeeding each other during the whole time of your approach.

HYL. It doth not; but still I know, upon seeing an object, what object I shall perceive after having passed over a certain distance: no matter whether it be exactly the same or no: there is still something of distance suggested in the case.

PHIL. Good Hylas, do but reflect a little on the point, and then tell me whether there be any more in it than this: from the ideas you actually perceive by sight, you have by experience learned to collect what other ideas you will (according to the standing order of nature) be affected with, after such a certain succession of time and motion.

HYL. Upon the whole, I take it to be nothing else.

PHIL. Now, is it not plain that if we suppose a man born blind was on a sudden made to see, he could at first have no experience of what may be SUGGESTED by sight?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. He would not then, according to you, have any notion of distance annexed to the things he saw; but would take them for a new set of sensations, existing only in his mind?

HYL. It is undeniable.

PHIL. But, to make it still more plain: is not DISTANCE a line turned endwise to the eye?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And can a line so situated be perceived by sight?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. Doth it not therefore follow that distance is not properly and immediately perceived by sight?

HYL. It should seem so.

PHIL. Again, is it your opinion that colours are at a distance?

HYL. It must be acknowledged they are only in the mind.

PHIL. But do not colours appear to the eye as coexisting in the same place with extension and figures?

HYL. They do.

PHIL. How can you then conclude from sight that figures exist without, when you acknowledge colours do not; the sensible appearance being the very same with regard to both?

HYL. I know not what to answer.

PHIL. But, allowing that distance was truly and immediately perceived by the mind, yet it would not thence follow it existed out of the mind. For, whatever is immediately perceived is an idea: and can any idea exist out of the mind?

HYL. To suppose that were absurd: but, inform me, Philonous, can we perceive or know nothing beside our ideas?

PHIL. As for the rational deducing of causes from effects, that is beside our inquiry. And, by the senses you can best tell whether you perceive anything which is not immediately perceived. And I ask you, whether the things immediately perceived are other than your own sensations or ideas? You have indeed more than once, in the course of this conversation, declared yourself on those points; but you seem, by this last question, to have departed from what you then thought.

HYL. To speak the truth, Philonous, I think there are two kinds of objects:—the one perceived immediately, which are likewise called IDEAS; the other are real things or external objects, perceived by the mediation of ideas, which are their images and representations. Now, I own ideas do not exist without the mind; but the latter sort of objects do. I am sorry I did not think of this distinction sooner; it would probably have cut short your discourse.

PHIL. Are those external objects perceived by sense or by some other faculty?

HYL. They are perceived by sense.

PHIL. How! Is there any thing perceived by sense which is not immediately perceived?

HYL. Yes, Philonous, in some sort there is. For example, when I look on a picture or statue of Julius Caesar, I may be said after a manner to perceive him (though not immediately) by my senses.

PHIL. It seems then you will have our ideas, which alone are immediately perceived, to be pictures of external things: and that these also are perceived by sense, inasmuch as they have a conformity or resemblance to our ideas?

HYL. That is my meaning.

PHIL. And, in the same way that Julius Caesar, in himself invisible, is nevertheless perceived by sight; real things, in themselves imperceptible, are perceived by sense.

HYL. In the very same.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, when you behold the picture of Julius Caesar, do you see with your eyes any more than some colours and figures, with a certain symmetry and composition of the whole?

HYL. Nothing else.

PHIL. And would not a man who had never known anything of Julius Caesar see as much?

HYL. He would.

PHIL. Consequently he hath his sight, and the use of it, in as perfect a degree as you?

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. Whence comes it then that your thoughts are directed to the Roman emperor, and his are not? This cannot proceed from the sensations or ideas of sense by you then perceived; since you acknowledge you have no advantage over him in that respect. It should seem therefore to proceed from reason and memory: should it not?

HYL. It should.

PHIL. Consequently, it will not follow from that instance that anything is perceived by sense which is not, immediately perceived. Though I grant we may, in one acceptation, be said to perceive sensible things mediately by sense: that is, when, from a frequently perceived connexion, the immediate perception of ideas by one sense SUGGESTS to the mind others, perhaps belonging to another sense, which are wont to be connected with them. For instance, when I hear a coach drive along the streets, immediately I perceive only the sound; but, from the experience I have had that such a sound is connected with a coach, I am said to hear the coach. It is nevertheless evident that, in truth and strictness, nothing can be HEARD BUT SOUND; and the coach is not then properly perceived by sense, but suggested from experience. So likewise when we are said to see a red-hot bar of iron; the solidity and heat of the iron are not the objects of sight, but suggested to the imagination by the colour and figure which are properly perceived by that sense. In short, those things alone are actually and strictly perceived by any sense, which would have been perceived in case that same sense had then been first conferred on us. As for other things, it is plain they are only suggested to the mind by experience, grounded on former perceptions. But, to return to your comparison of Caesar's picture, it is plain, if you keep to that, you must hold the real things, or archetypes of our ideas, are not perceived by sense, but by some internal faculty of the soul, as reason or memory. I would therefore fain know what arguments you can draw from reason for the existence of what you call REAL THINGS OR MATERIAL OBJECTS. Or, whether you remember to have seen them formerly as they are in themselves; or, if you have heard or read of any one that did.

HYL. I see, Philonous, you are disposed to raillery; but that will never convince me.

PHIL. My aim is only to learn from you the way to come at the knowledge of MATERIAL BEINGS. Whatever we perceive is perceived immediately or mediately: by sense, or by reason and reflexion. But, as you have excluded sense, pray shew me what reason you have to believe their existence; or what MEDIUM you can possibly make use of to prove it, either to mine or your own understanding.

HYL. To deal ingenuously, Philonous, now I consider the point, I do not find I can give you any good reason for it. But, thus much seems pretty plain, that it is at least possible such things may really exist. And, as long as there is no absurdity in supposing them, I am resolved to believe as I did, till you bring good reasons to the contrary.

PHIL. What! Is it come to this, that you only BELIEVE the existence of material objects, and that your belief is founded barely on the possibility of its being true? Then you will have me bring reasons against it: though another would think it reasonable the proof should lie on him who holds the affirmative. And, after all, this very point which

you are now resolved to maintain, without any reason, is in effect what you have more than once during this discourse seen good reason to give up. But, to pass over all this; if I understand you rightly, you say our ideas do not exist without the mind, but that they are copies, images, or representations, of certain originals that do?

HYL. You take me right.

PHIL. They are then like external things?

HYL. They are.

PHIL. Have those things a stable and permanent nature, independent of our senses; or are they in a perpetual change, upon our producing any motions in our bodies—suspending, exerting, or altering, our faculties or organs of sense?

HYL. Real things, it is plain, have a fixed and real nature, which remains the same notwithstanding any change in our senses, or in the posture and motion of our bodies; which indeed may affect the ideas in our minds, but it were absurd to think they had the same effect on things existing without the mind.

PHIL. How then is it possible that things perpetually fleeting and variable as our ideas should be copies or images of anything fixed and constant? Or, in other words, since all sensible qualities, as size, figure, colour, &c., that is, our ideas, are continually changing, upon every alteration in the distance, medium, or instruments of sensation; how can any determinate material objects be properly represented or painted forth by several distinct things, each of which is so different from and unlike the rest? Or, if you say it resembles some one only of our ideas, how shall we be able to distinguish the true copy from all the false ones?

HYL. I profess, Philonous, I am at a loss. I know not what to say to this.

PHIL. But neither is this all. Which are material objects in themselves—perceptible or imperceptible?

HYL. Properly and immediately nothing can be perceived but ideas. All material things, therefore, are in themselves insensible, and to be perceived only by our ideas.

PHIL. Ideas then are sensible, and their archetypes or originals insensible?

HYL. Right.

PHIL. But how can that which is sensible be like that which is insensible? Can a real thing, in itself INVISIBLE, be like a COLOUR; or a real thing, which is not AUDIBLE, be like a SOUND? In a word, can anything be like a sensation or idea, but another sensation or idea?

HYL. I must own, I think not.

PHIL. Is it possible there should be any doubt on the point? Do you not perfectly know your own ideas?

HYL. I know them perfectly; since what I do not perceive or know can be no part of my idea.

PHIL. Consider, therefore, and examine them, and then tell me if there be anything in them which can exist without the mind: or if you can conceive anything like them existing without the mind.

HYL. Upon inquiry, I find it is impossible for me to conceive or understand how anything but an idea can be like an idea. And it is most evident that NO IDEA CAN EXIST WITHOUT THE MIND.

PHIL. You are therefore, by your principles, forced to deny the REALITY of sensible things; since you made it to consist in an absolute existence exterior to the mind. That is to say, you are a downright sceptic. So I have gained my point, which was to shew your principles led to Scepticism.

HYL. For the present I am, if not entirely convinced, at least silenced.

PHIL. I would fain know what more you would require in order to a perfect conviction. Have you not had the liberty of explaining yourself all manner of ways? Were any little slips in discourse laid hold and insisted on? Or were you not allowed to retract or reinforce anything you had offered, as best served your purpose? Hath not everything you could say been heard and examined with all the fairness imaginable? In a word have you not in every point been convinced out of your own mouth? And, if you can at present discover any flaw in any of your former

concessions, or think of any remaining subterfuge, any new distinction, colour, or comment whatsoever, why do you not produce it?

HYL. A little patience, Philonous. I am at present so amazed to see myself ensnared, and as it were imprisoned in the labyrinths you have drawn me into, that on the sudden it cannot be expected I should find my way out. You must give me time to look about me and recollect myself.

PHIL. Hark; is not this the college bell?

HYL. It rings for prayers.

PHIL. We will go in then, if you please, and meet here again tomorrow morning. In the meantime, you may employ your thoughts on this morning's discourse, and try if you can find any fallacy in it, or invent any new means to extricate yourself.

HYL. Agreed.

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## GEORGE BERKELEY: SECOND DIALOGUE BETWEEN HYLAS AND PHILONOUS

HYL. I beg your pardon, Philonous, for not meeting you sooner. All this morning my head was so filled with our late conversation that I had not leisure to think of the time of the day, or indeed of anything else.

PHILONOUS. I am glad you were so intent upon it, in hopes if there were any mistakes in your concessions, or fallacies in my reasonings from them, you will now discover them to me.

HYL. I assure you I have done nothing ever since I saw you but search after mistakes and fallacies, and, with that view, have minutely examined the whole series of yesterday's discourse: but all in vain, for the notions it led me into, upon review, appear still more clear and evident; and, the more I consider them, the more irresistibly do they force my assent.

PHIL. And is not this, think you, a sign that they are genuine, that they proceed from nature, and are conformable to right reason? Truth and beauty are in this alike, that the strictest survey sets them both off to advantage; while the false lustre of error and disguise cannot endure being reviewed, or too nearly inspected.

HYL. I own there is a great deal in what you say. Nor can any one be more entirely satisfied of the truth of those odd consequences, so long as I have in view the reasonings that lead to them. But, when these are out of my thoughts, there seems, on the other hand, something so satisfactory, so natural and intelligible, in the modern way of explaining things that, I profess, I know not how to reject it.

PHIL. I know not what way you mean.

HYL. I mean the way of accounting for our sensations or ideas.

PHIL. How is that?

HYL. It is supposed the soul makes her residence in some part of the brain, from which the nerves take their rise, and are thence extended to all parts of the body; and that outward objects, by the different impressions they make on the organs of sense, communicate certain vibrative motions to the nerves; and these being filled with spirits propagate them to the brain or seat of the soul, which, according to the various impressions or traces thereby made in the brain, is variously affected with ideas.

PHIL. And call you this an explication of the manner whereby we are affected with ideas?

HYL. Why not, Philonous? Have you anything to object against it?

PHIL. I would first know whether I rightly understand your hypothesis. You make certain traces in the brain to be the causes or occasions of our ideas. Pray tell me whether by the BRAIN you mean any sensible thing.

HYL. What else think you I could mean?

PHIL. Sensible things are all immediately perceivable; and those things which are immediately perceivable are ideas; and these exist only in the mind. Thus much you have, if I mistake not, long since agreed to.

HYL. I do not deny it.

PHIL. The brain therefore you speak of, being a sensible thing, exists only in the mind. Now, I would fain know whether you think it reasonable to suppose that one idea or thing existing in the mind occasions all other ideas. And, if you think so, pray how do you account for the origin of that primary idea or brain itself?

HYL. I do not explain the origin of our ideas by that brain which is perceivable to sense—this being itself only a combination of sensible ideas—but by another which I imagine.

PHIL. But are not things imagined as truly IN THE MIND as things perceived?

HYL. I must confess they are.

PHIL. It comes, therefore, to the same thing; and you have been all this while accounting for ideas by certain motions or impressions of the brain; that is, by some alterations in an idea, whether sensible or imaginable it matters not.

HYL. I begin to suspect my hypothesis.

PHIL. Besides spirits, all that we know or conceive are our own ideas. When, therefore, you say all ideas are occasioned by impressions in the brain, do you conceive this brain or no? If you do, then you talk of ideas imprinted in an idea causing that same idea, which is absurd. If you do not conceive it, you talk unintelligibly, instead of forming a reasonable hypothesis.

HYL. I now clearly see it was a mere dream. There is nothing in it.

PHIL. You need not be much concerned at it; for after all, this way of explaining things, as you called it, could never have satisfied any reasonable man. What connexion is there between a motion in the nerves, and the sensations of sound or colour in the mind? Or how is it possible these should be the effect of that?

HYL. But I could never think it had so little in it as now it seems to have.

PHIL. Well then, are you at length satisfied that no sensible things have a real existence; and that you are in truth an arrant sceptic?

HYL. It is too plain to be denied.

PHIL. Look! are not the fields covered with a delightful verdure? Is there not something in the woods and groves, in the rivers and clear springs, that soothes, that delights, that transports the soul? At the prospect of the wide and deep ocean, or some huge mountain whose top is lost in the clouds, or of an old gloomy forest, are not our minds filled with a pleasing horror? Even in rocks and deserts is there not an agreeable wildness? How sincere a pleasure is it to behold the natural beauties of the earth! To preserve and renew our relish for them, is not the veil of night alternately drawn over her face, and doth she not change her dress with the seasons? How aptly are the elements disposed! What variety and use in the meanest productions of nature! What delicacy, what beauty, what contrivance, in animal and vegetable bodies! How exquisitely are all things suited, as well to their particular ends, as to constitute opposite parts of the whole! And, while they mutually aid and support, do they not also set off and illustrate each other? Raise now your thoughts from this ball of earth to all those glorious luminaries that adorn the high arch of heaven. The motion and situation of the planets, are they not admirable for use and order? Were those (miscalled ERRATIC) globes once known to stray, in their repeated journeys through the pathless void? Do they not measure areas round the sun ever proportioned to the times? So fixed, so immutable are the laws by

which the unseen Author of nature actuates the universe. How vivid and radiant is the lustre of the fixed stars! How magnificent and rich that negligent profusion with which they appear to be scattered throughout the whole azure vault! Yet, if you take the telescope, it brings into your sight a new host of stars that escape the naked eye. Here they seem contiguous and minute, but to a nearer view immense orbs of light at various distances, far sunk in the abyss of space. Now you must call imagination to your aid. The feeble narrow sense cannot descry innumerable worlds revolving round the central fires; and in those worlds the energy of an all-perfect Mind displayed in endless forms. But, neither sense nor imagination are big enough to comprehend the boundless extent, with all its glittering furniture. Though the labouring mind exert and strain each power to its utmost reach, there still stands out ungrasped a surplusage immeasurable. Yet all the vast bodies that compose this mighty frame, how distant and remote soever, are by some secret mechanism, some Divine art and force, linked in a mutual dependence and intercourse with each other; even with this earth, which was almost slipt from my thoughts and lost in the crowd of worlds. Is not the whole system immense, beautiful, glorious beyond expression and beyond thought! What treatment, then, do those philosophers deserve, who would deprive these noble and delightful scenes of all REALITY? How should those Principles be entertained that lead us to think all the visible beauty of the creation a false imaginary glare? To be plain, can you expect this Scepticism of yours will not be thought extravagantly absurd by all men of sense?

HYL. Other men may think as they please; but for your part you have nothing to reproach me with. My comfort is, you are as much a sceptic as I am.

PHIL. There, Hylas, I must beg leave to differ from you.

HYL. What! Have you all along agreed to the premises, and do you now deny the conclusion, and leave me to maintain those paradoxes by myself which you led me into? This surely is not fair.

PHIL. I deny that I agreed with you in those notions that led to Scepticism. You indeed said the REALITY of sensible things consisted in AN ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE OUT OF THE MINDS OF SPIRITS, or distinct from their being perceived. And pursuant to this notion of reality, YOU are obliged to deny sensible things any real existence: that is, according to your own definition, you profess yourself a sceptic. But I neither said nor thought the reality of sensible things was to be defined after that manner. To me it is evident for the reasons you allow of, that sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit. Whence I conclude, not that they have no real existence, but that, seeing they depend not on my thought, and have all existence distinct from being perceived by me, THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER MIND WHEREIN THEY EXIST. As sure, therefore, as the sensible world really exists, so sure is there an infinite omnipresent Spirit who contains and supports it.

HYL. What! This is no more than I and all Christians hold; nay, and all others too who believe there is a God, and that He knows and comprehends all things.

PHIL. Aye, but here lies the difference. Men commonly believe that all things are known or perceived by God, because they believe the being of a God; whereas I, on the other side, immediately and necessarily conclude the being of a God, because all sensible things must be perceived by Him.

HYL. But, so long as we all believe the same thing, what matter is it how we come by that belief?

PHIL. But neither do we agree in the same opinion. For philosophers, though they acknowledge all corporeal beings to be perceived by God, yet they attribute to them an absolute subsistence distinct from their being perceived by any mind whatever; which I do not. Besides, is there no difference between saying, THERE IS A GOD, THEREFORE HE PERCEIVES ALL THINGS; and saying, SENSIBLE THINGS DO REALLY EXIST; AND, IF THEY REALLY EXIST, THEY ARE NECESSARILY PERCEIVED BY AN INFINITE MIND: THEREFORE THERE IS AN INFINITE MIND OR GOD? This furnishes you with a direct and immediate demonstration, from a most evident principle, of the BEING OF A GOD. Divines and philosophers had proved beyond all controversy, from the beauty and usefulness of the several parts of the creation, that it was the workmanship of God. But that—setting aside all help of astronomy and natural philosophy, all contemplation of the contrivance, order, and adjustment of things—an infinite Mind should be necessarily inferred from the bare EXISTENCE OF THE SENSIBLE WORLD, is an advantage to them only who have made this easy reflexion: that the sensible world is that which we perceive by our several senses; and that nothing is perceived by the senses beside ideas; and that no idea or archetype of an idea can exist otherwise than in a mind. You may now, without any laborious search into the sciences, without any subtlety of reason, or tedious length of discourse, oppose and baffle the most strenuous advocate for Atheism. Those miserable refuges, whether in an eternal succession of unthinking causes and effects, or in a fortuitous concourse of atoms; those wild imaginations of Vanini, Hobbes, and Spinoza: in a word, the whole system of Atheism, is it not entirely overthrown, by this single reflexion on the repugnancy

included in supposing the whole, or any part, even the most rude and shapeless, of the visible world, to exist without a mind? Let any one of those abettors of impiety but look into his own thoughts, and there try if he can conceive how so much as a rock, a desert, a chaos, or confused jumble of atoms; how anything at all, either sensible or imaginable, can exist independent of a Mind, and he need go no farther to be convinced of his folly. Can anything be fairer than to put a dispute on such an issue, and leave it to a man himself to see if he can conceive, even in thought, what he holds to be true in fact, and from a notional to allow it a real existence?

HYL. It cannot be denied there is something highly serviceable to religion in what you advance. But do you not think it looks very like a notion entertained by some eminent moderns, of SEEING ALL THINGS IN GOD?

PHIL. I would gladly know that opinion: pray explain it to me.

HYL. They conceive that the soul, being immaterial, is incapable of being united with material things, so as to perceive them in themselves; but that she perceives them by her union with the substance of God, which, being spiritual, is therefore purely intelligible, or capable of being the immediate object of a spirit's thought. Besides the Divine essence contains in it perfections correspondent to each created being; and which are, for that reason, proper to exhibit or represent them to the mind.

PHIL. I do not understand how our ideas, which are things altogether passive and inert, can be the essence, or any part (or like any part) of the essence or substance of God, who is an impassive, indivisible, pure, active being. Many more difficulties and objections there are which occur at first view against this hypothesis; but I shall only add that it is liable to all the absurdities of the common hypothesis, in making a created world exist otherwise than in the mind of a Spirit. Besides all which it hath this peculiar to itself; that it makes that material world serve to no purpose. And, if it pass for a good argument against other hypotheses in the sciences, that they suppose Nature, or the Divine wisdom, to make something in vain, or do that by tedious roundabout methods which might have been performed in a much more easy and compendious way, what shall we think of that hypothesis which supposes the whole world made in vain?

HYL. But what say you? Are not you too of opinion that we see all things in God? If I mistake not, what you advance comes near it.

PHIL. Few men think; yet all have opinions. Hence men's opinions are superficial and confused. It is nothing strange that tenets which in themselves are ever so different, should nevertheless be confounded with each other, by those who do not consider them attentively. I shall not therefore be surprised if some men imagine that I run into the enthusiasm of Malebranche; though in truth I am very remote from it. He builds on the most abstract general ideas, which I entirely disclaim. He asserts an absolute external world, which I deny. He maintains that we are deceived by our senses, and, know not the real natures or the true forms and figures of extended beings; of all which I hold the direct contrary. So that upon the whole there are no Principles more fundamentally opposite than his and mine. It must be owned that I entirely agree with what the holy Scripture saith, "That in God we live and move and have our being." But that we see things in His essence, after the manner above set forth, I am far from believing. Take here in brief my meaning:—It is evident that the things I perceive are my own ideas, and that no idea can exist unless it be in a mind: nor is it less plain that these ideas or things by me perceived, either themselves or their archetypes, exist independently of my mind, since I know myself not to be their author, it being out of my power to determine at pleasure what particular ideas I shall be affected with upon opening my eyes or ears: they must therefore exist in some other Mind, whose Will it is they should be exhibited to me. The things, I say, immediately perceived are ideas or sensations, call them which you will. But how can any idea or sensation exist in, or be produced by, anything but a mind or spirit? This indeed is inconceivable. And to assert that which is inconceivable is to talk nonsense: is it not?

HYL. Without doubt.

PHIL. But, on the other hand, it is very conceivable that they should exist in and be produced by a spirit; since this is no more than I daily experience in myself, inasmuch as I perceive numberless ideas; and, by an act of my will, can form a great variety of them, and raise them up in my imagination: though, it must be confessed, these creatures of the fancy are not altogether so distinct, so strong, vivid, and permanent, as those perceived by my senses—which latter are called RED THINGS. From all which I conclude, THERE IS A MIND WHICH AFFECTS ME EVERY MOMENT WITH ALL THE SENSIBLE IMPRESSIONS I PERCEIVE. AND, from the variety, order, and manner of these, I conclude THE AUTHOR OF THEM TO BE WISE, POWERFUL, AND GOOD, BEYOND COMPREHENSION. MARK it well; I do not say, I see things by perceiving that which represents them in the intelligible Substance of God. This I do not understand; but I say, the things by me perceived are known by the understanding, and produced by the will of an infinite Spirit. And is not all this most plain and evident? Is there any

more in it than what a little observation in our own minds, and that which passeth in them, not only enables us to conceive, but also obliges us to acknowledge.

HYL. I think I understand you very clearly; and own the proof you give of a Deity seems no less evident than it is surprising. But, allowing that God is the supreme and universal Cause of all things, yet, may there not be still a Third Nature besides Spirits and Ideas? May we not admit a subordinate and limited cause of our ideas? In a word, may there not for all that be MATTER?

PHIL. How often must I inculcate the same thing? You allow the things immediately perceived by sense to exist nowhere without the mind; but there is nothing perceived by sense which is not perceived immediately: therefore there is nothing sensible that exists without the mind. The Matter, therefore, which you still insist on is something intelligible, I suppose; something that may be discovered by reason, and not by sense.

HYL. You are in the right.

PHIL. Pray let me know what reasoning your belief of Matter is grounded on; and what this Matter is, in your present sense of it.

HYL. I find myself affected with various ideas, whereof I know I am not the cause; neither are they the cause of themselves, or of one another, or capable of subsisting by themselves, as being altogether inactive, fleeting, dependent beings. They have therefore SOME cause distinct from me and them: of which I pretend to know no more than that it is THE CAUSE OF MY IDEAS. And this thing, whatever it be, I call Matter.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, hath every one a liberty to change the current proper signification attached to a common name in any language? For example, suppose a traveller should tell you that in a certain country men pass unhurt through the fire; and, upon explaining himself, you found he meant by the word fire that which others call WATER. Or, if he should assert that there are trees that walk upon two legs, meaning men by the term TREES. Would you think this reasonable?

HYL. No; I should think it very absurd. Common custom is the standard of propriety in language. And for any man to affect speaking improperly is to pervert the use of speech, and can never serve to a better purpose than to protract and multiply disputes, where there is no difference in opinion.

PHIL. And doth not MATTER, in the common current acceptance of the word, signify an extended, solid, moveable, unthinking, inactive Substance?

HYL. It doth.

PHIL. And, hath it not been made evident that no SUCH substance can possibly exist? And, though it should be allowed to exist, yet how can that which is INACTIVE be a CAUSE; or that which is UNTHINKING be a CAUSE OF THOUGHT? You may, indeed, if you please, annex to the word MATTER a contrary meaning to what is vulgarly received; and tell me you understand by it, an unextended, thinking, active being, which is the cause of our ideas. But what else is this than to play with words, and run into that very fault you just now condemned with so much reason? I do by no means find fault with your reasoning, in that you collect a cause from the PHENOMENA: BUT I deny that THE cause deducible by reason can properly be termed Matter.

HYL. There is indeed something in what you say. But I am afraid you do not thoroughly comprehend my meaning. I would by no means be thought to deny that God, or an infinite Spirit, is the Supreme Cause of all things. All I contend for is, that, subordinate to the Supreme Agent, there is a cause of a limited and inferior nature, which CONCURS in the production of our ideas, not by any act of will, or spiritual efficiency, but by that kind of action which belongs to Matter, viz. MOTION.

PHIL. I find you are at every turn relapsing into your old exploded conceit, of a moveable, and consequently an extended, substance, existing without the mind. What! Have you already forgotten you were convinced; or are you willing I should repeat what has been said on that head? In truth this is not fair dealing in you, still to suppose the being of that which you have so often acknowledged to have no being. But, not to insist farther on what has been so largely handled, I ask whether all your ideas are not perfectly passive and inert, including nothing of action in them.

HYL. They are.

PHIL. And are sensible qualities anything else but ideas?

HYL. How often have I acknowledged that they are not.

PHIL. But is not MOTION a sensible quality?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Consequently it is no action?

HYL. I agree with you. And indeed it is very plain that when I stir my finger, it remains passive; but my will which produced the motion is active.

PHIL. Now, I desire to know, in the first place, whether, motion being allowed to be no action, you can conceive any action besides volition: and, in the second place, whether to say something and conceive nothing be not to talk nonsense: and, lastly, whether, having considered the premises, you do not perceive that to suppose any efficient or active Cause of our ideas, other than SPIRIT, is highly absurd and unreasonable?

HYL. I give up the point entirely. But, though Matter may not be a cause, yet what hinders its being an INSTRUMENT, subservient to the supreme Agent in the production of our ideas?

PHIL. An instrument say you; pray what may be the figure, springs, wheels, and motions, of that instrument?

HYL. Those I pretend to determine nothing of, both the substance and its qualities being entirely unknown to me.

PHIL. What? You are then of opinion it is made up of unknown parts, that it hath unknown motions, and an unknown shape?

HYL. I do not believe that it hath any figure or motion at all, being already convinced, that no sensible qualities can exist in an unperceiving substance.

PHIL. But what notion is it possible to frame of an instrument void of all sensible qualities, even extension itself?

HYL. I do not pretend to have any notion of it.

PHIL. And what reason have you to think this unknown, this inconceivable Somewhat doth exist? Is it that you imagine God cannot act as well without it; or that you find by experience the use of some such thing, when you form ideas in your own mind?

HYL. You are always teasing me for reasons of my belief. Pray what reasons have you not to believe it?

PHIL. It is to me a sufficient reason not to believe the existence of anything, if I see no reason for believing it. But, not to insist on reasons for believing, you will not so much as let me know WHAT IT IS you would have me believe; since you say you have no manner of notion of it. After all, let me entreat you to consider whether it be like a philosopher, or even like a man of common sense, to pretend to believe you know not what and you know not why.

HYL. Hold, Philonous. When I tell you Matter is an INSTRUMENT, I do not mean altogether nothing. It is true I know not the particular kind of instrument; but, however, I have some notion of INSTRUMENT IN GENERAL, which I apply to it.

PHIL. But what if it should prove that there is something, even in the most general notion of INSTRUMENT, as taken in a distinct sense from CAUSE, which makes the use of it inconsistent with the Divine attributes?

HYL. Make that appear and I shall give up the point.

PHIL. What mean you by the general nature or notion of INSTRUMENT?

HYL. That which is common to all particular instruments composeth the general notion.

PHIL. Is it not common to all instruments, that they are applied to the doing those things only which cannot be performed by the mere act of our wills? Thus, for instance, I never use an instrument to move my finger, because it is done by a volition. But I should use one if I were to remove part of a rock, or tear up a tree by the roots. Are you of the same mind? Or, can you shew any example where an instrument is made use of in producing an effect IMMEDIATELY depending on the will of the agent?

HYL. I own I cannot.

PHIL. How therefore can you suppose that an All-perfect Spirit, on whose Will all things have an absolute and immediate dependence, should need an instrument in his operations, or, not needing it, make use of it? Thus it seems to me that you are obliged to own the use of a lifeless inactive instrument to be incompatible with the infinite perfection of God; that is, by your own confession, to give up the point.

HYL. It doth not readily occur what I can answer you.

PHIL. But, methinks you should be ready to own the truth, when it has been fairly proved to you. We indeed, who are beings of finite powers, are forced to make use of instruments. And the use of an instrument sheweth the agent to be limited by rules of another's prescription, and that he cannot obtain his end but in such a way, and by such conditions. Whence it seems a clear consequence, that the supreme unlimited agent useth no tool or instrument at all. The will of an Omnipotent Spirit is no sooner exerted than executed, without the application of means; which, if they are employed by inferior agents, it is not upon account of any real efficacy that is in them, or necessary aptitude to produce any effect, but merely in compliance with the laws of nature, or those conditions prescribed to them by the First Cause, who is Himself above all limitation or prescription whatsoever.

HYL. I will no longer maintain that Matter is an instrument. However, I would not be understood to give up its existence neither; since, notwithstanding what hath been said, it may still be an OCCASION.

PHIL. How many shapes is your Matter to take? Or, how often must it be proved not to exist, before you are content to part with it? But, to say no more of this (though by all the laws of disputation I may justly blame you for so frequently changing the signification of the principal term)—I would fain know what you mean by affirming that matter is an occasion, having already denied it to be a cause. And, when you have shewn in what sense you understand OCCASION, pray, in the next place, be pleased to shew me what reason induceth you to believe there is such an occasion of our ideas?

HYL. As to the first point: by OCCASION I mean an inactive unthinking being, at the presence whereof God excites ideas in our minds.

PHIL. And what may be the nature of that inactive unthinking being?

HYL. I know nothing of its nature.

PHIL. Proceed then to the second point, and assign some reason why we should allow an existence to this inactive, unthinking, unknown thing.

HYL. When we see ideas produced in our minds, after an orderly and constant manner, it is natural to think they have some fixed and regular occasions, at the presence of which they are excited.

PHIL. You acknowledge then God alone to be the cause of our ideas, and that He causes them at the presence of those occasions.

HYL. That is my opinion.

PHIL. Those things which you say are present to God, without doubt He perceives.

HYL. Certainly; otherwise they could not be to Him an occasion of acting.

PHIL. Not to insist now on your making sense of this hypothesis, or answering all the puzzling questions and difficulties it is liable to: I only ask whether the order and regularity observable in the series of our ideas, or the course of nature, be not sufficiently accounted for by the wisdom and power of God; and whether it doth not derogate from those attributes, to suppose He is influenced, directed, or put in mind, when and what He is to act, by an unthinking substance? And, lastly, whether, in case I granted all you contend for, it would make anything to your purpose; it not being easy to conceive how the external or absolute existence of an unthinking substance, distinct from its being perceived, can be inferred from my allowing that there are certain things perceived by the mind of God, which are to Him the occasion of producing ideas in us?

HYL. I am perfectly at a loss what to think, this notion of OCCASION seeming now altogether as groundless as the rest.

PHIL. Do you not at length perceive that in all these different acceptations of MATTER, you have been only supposing you know not what, for no manner of reason, and to no kind of use?

HYL. I freely own myself less fond of my notions since they have been so accurately examined. But still, methinks, I have some confused perception that there is such a thing as MATTER.

PHIL. Either you perceive the being of Matter immediately or mediately. If immediately, pray inform me by which of the senses you perceive it. If mediately, let me know by what reasoning it is inferred from those things which you perceive immediately. So much for the perception. Then for the Matter itself, I ask whether it is object, SUBSTRATUM, cause, instrument, or occasion? You have already pleaded for each of these, shifting your notions, and making Matter to appear sometimes in one shape, then in another. And what you have offered hath been disapproved and rejected by yourself. If you have anything new to advance I would gladly bear it.

HYL. I think I have already offered all I had to say on those heads. I am at a loss what more to urge.

PHIL. And yet you are loath to part with your old prejudice. But, to make you quit it more easily, I desire that, beside what has been hitherto suggested, you will farther consider whether, upon supposition that Matter exists, you can possibly conceive how you should be affected by it. Or, supposing it did not exist, whether it be not evident you might for all that be affected with the same ideas you now are, and consequently have the very same reasons to believe its existence that you now can have.

HYL. I acknowledge it is possible we might perceive all things just as we do now, though there was no Matter in the world; neither can I conceive, if there be Matter, how it should produce any idea in our minds. And, I do farther grant you have entirely satisfied me that it is impossible there should be such a thing as matter in any of the foregoing acceptations. But still I cannot help supposing that there is MATTER in some sense or other. WHAT THAT IS I do not indeed pretend to determine.

PHIL. I do not expect you should define exactly the nature of that unknown being. Only be pleased to tell me whether it is a Substance; and if so, whether you can suppose a Substance without accidents; or, in case you suppose it to have accidents or qualities, I desire you will let me know what those qualities are, at least what is meant by Matter's supporting them?

HYL. We have already argued on those points. I have no more to say to them. But, to prevent any farther questions, let me tell you I at present understand by MATTER neither substance nor accident, thinking nor extended being, neither cause, instrument, nor occasion, but Something entirely unknown, distinct from all these.

PHIL. It seems then you include in your present notion of Matter nothing but the general abstract idea of ENTITY.

HYL. Nothing else; save only that I super-add to this general idea the negation of all those particular things, qualities, or ideas, that I perceive, imagine, or in anywise apprehend.

PHIL. Pray where do you suppose this unknown Matter to exist?

HYL. Oh Philonous! now you think you have entangled me; for, if I say it exists in place, then you will infer that it exists in the mind, since it is agreed that place or extension exists only in the mind. But I am not ashamed to own my ignorance. I know not where it exists; only I am sure it exists not in place. There is a negative answer for you. And you must expect no other to all the questions you put for the future about Matter.

PHIL. Since you will not tell me where it exists, be pleased to inform me after what manner you suppose it to exist, or what you mean by its EXISTENCE?

HYL. It neither thinks nor acts, neither perceives nor is perceived.

PHIL. But what is there positive in your abstracted notion of its existence?

HYL. Upon a nice observation, I do not find I have any positive notion or meaning at all. I tell you again, I am not ashamed to own my ignorance. I know not what is meant by its EXISTENCE, or how it exists.

PHIL. Continue, good Hylas, to act the same ingenuous part, and tell me sincerely whether you can frame a distinct idea of Entity in general, prescinded from and exclusive of all thinking and corporeal beings, all particular things whatsoever.

HYL. Hold, let me think a little—I profess, Philonous, I do not find that I can. At first glance, methought I had some dilute and airy notion of Pure Entity in abstract; but, upon closer attention, it hath quite vanished out of sight. The more I think on it, the more am I confirmed in my prudent resolution of giving none but negative answers, and not pretending to the least degree of any positive knowledge or conception of Matter, its WHERE, its HOW, its ENTITY, or anything belonging to it.

PHIL. When, therefore, you speak of the existence of Matter, you have not any notion in your mind?

HYL. None at all.

PHIL. Pray tell me if the case stands not thus—At first, from a belief of material substance, you would have it that the immediate objects existed without the mind; then that they are archetypes; then causes; next instruments; then occasions: lastly SOMETHING IN GENERAL, which being interpreted proves NOTHING. So Matter comes to nothing. What think you, Hylas, is not this a fair summary of your whole proceeding?

HYL. Be that as it will, yet I still insist upon it, that our not being able to conceive a thing is no argument against its existence.

PHIL. That from a cause, effect, operation, sign, or other circumstance, there may reasonably be inferred the existence of a thing not immediately perceived; and that it were absurd for any man to argue against the existence of that thing, from his having no direct and positive notion of it, I freely own. But, where there is nothing of all this; where neither reason nor revelation induces us to believe the existence of a thing; where we have not even a relative notion of it; where an abstraction is made from perceiving and being perceived, from Spirit and idea: lastly, where there is not so much as the most inadequate or faint idea pretended to—I will not indeed thence conclude against the reality of any notion, or existence of anything; but my inference shall be, that you mean nothing at all; that you employ words to no manner of purpose, without any design or signification whatsoever. And I leave it to you to consider how mere jargon should be treated.

HYL. To deal frankly with you, Philonous, your arguments seem in themselves unanswerable; but they have not so great an effect on me as to produce that entire conviction, that hearty acquiescence, which attends demonstration. I find myself relapsing into an obscure surmise of I know not what, MATTER.

PHIL. But, are you not sensible, Hylas, that two things must concur to take away all scruple, and work a plenary assent in the mind? Let a visible object be set in never so clear a light, yet, if there is any imperfection in the sight, or if the eye is not directed towards it, it will not be distinctly seen. And though a demonstration be never so well grounded and fairly proposed, yet, if there is withal a stain of prejudice, or a wrong bias on the understanding, can it be expected on a sudden to perceive clearly, and adhere firmly to the truth? No; there is need of time and pains: the attention must be awakened and detained by a frequent repetition of the same thing placed oft in the same, oft in different lights. I have said it already, and find I must still repeat and inculcate, that it is an unaccountable licence you take, in pretending to maintain you know not what, for you know not what reason, to you know not what purpose. Can this be paralleled in any art or science, any sect or profession of men? Or is there anything so barefacedly groundless and unreasonable to be met with even in the lowest of common conversation? But, perhaps you will still say, Matter may exist; though at the same time you neither know WHAT IS MEANT by MATTER, or by its EXISTENCE. This indeed is surprising, and the more so because it is altogether voluntary and of your own head, you not being led to it by any one reason; for I challenge you to shew me that thing in nature which needs Matter to explain or account for it.

HYL. THE REALITY of things cannot be maintained without supposing the existence of Matter. And is not this, think you, a good reason why I should be earnest in its defence?

PHIL. The reality of things! What things? sensible or intelligible?

HYL. Sensible things.

PHIL. My glove for example?

HYL. That, or any other thing perceived by the senses.

PHIL. But to fix on some particular thing. Is it not a sufficient evidence to me of the existence of this GLOVE, that I see it, and feel it, and wear it? Or, if this will not do, how is it possible I should be assured of the reality of this thing, which I actually see in this place, by supposing that some unknown thing, which I never did or can see, exists after an unknown manner, in an unknown place, or in no place at all? How can the supposed reality of that

which is intangible be a proof that anything tangible really exists? Or, of that which is invisible, that any visible thing, or, in general of anything which is imperceptible, that a perceptible exists? Do but explain this and I shall think nothing too hard for you.

HYL. Upon the whole, I am content to own the existence of matter is highly improbable; but the direct and absolute impossibility of it does not appear to me.

PHIL. But granting Matter to be possible, yet, upon that account merely, it can have no more claim to existence than a golden mountain, or a centaur.

HYL. I acknowledge it; but still you do not deny it is possible; and that which is possible, for aught you know, may actually exist.

PHIL. I deny it to be possible; and have, if I mistake not, evidently proved, from your own concessions, that it is not. In the common sense of the word MATTER, is there any more implied than an extended, solid, figured, moveable substance, existing without the mind? And have not you acknowledged, over and over, that you have seen evident reason for denying the possibility of such a substance?

HYL. True, but that is only one sense of the term MATTER.

PHIL. But is it not the only proper genuine received sense? And, if Matter, in such a sense, be proved impossible, may it not be thought with good grounds absolutely impossible? Else how could anything be proved impossible? Or, indeed, how could there be any proof at all one way or other, to a man who takes the liberty to unsettle and change the common signification of words?

HYL. I thought philosophers might be allowed to speak more accurately than the vulgar, and were not always confined to the common acceptation of a term.

PHIL. But this now mentioned is the common received sense among philosophers themselves. But, not to insist on that, have you not been allowed to take Matter in what sense you pleased? And have you not used this privilege in the utmost extent; sometimes entirely changing, at others leaving out, or putting into the definition of it whatever, for the present, best served your design, contrary to all the known rules of reason and logic? And hath not this shifting, unfair method of yours spun out our dispute to an unnecessary length; Matter having been particularly examined, and by your own confession refuted in each of those senses? And can any more be required to prove the absolute impossibility of a thing, than the proving it impossible in every particular sense that either you or any one else understands it in?

HYL. But I am not so thoroughly satisfied that you have proved the impossibility of Matter, in the last most obscure abstracted and indefinite sense.

PHIL. . When is a thing shewn to be impossible?

HYL. When a repugnancy is demonstrated between the ideas comprehended in its definition.

PHIL. But where there are no ideas, there no repugnancy can be demonstrated between ideas?

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. Now, in that which you call the obscure indefinite sense of the word MATTER, it is plain, by your own confession, there was included no idea at all, no sense except an unknown sense; which is the same thing as none. You are not, therefore, to expect I should prove a repugnancy between ideas, where there are no ideas; or the impossibility of Matter taken in an UNKNOWN sense, that is, no sense at all. My business was only to shew you meant NOTHING; and this you were brought to own. So that, in all your various senses, you have been shewed either to mean nothing at all, or, if anything, an absurdity. And if this be not sufficient to prove the impossibility of a thing, I desire you will let me know what is.

HYL. I acknowledge you have proved that Matter is impossible; nor do I see what more can be said in defence of it. But, at the same time that I give up this, I suspect all my other notions. For surely none could be more seemingly evident than this once was: and yet it now seems as false and absurd as ever it did true before. But I think we have discussed the point sufficiently for the present. The remaining part of the day I would willingly spend in running over in my thoughts the several heads of this morning's conversation, and tomorrow shall be glad to meet you here again about the same time.

PHIL. I will not fail to attend you.

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## GEORGE BERKELEY: THIRD DIALOGUE BETWEEN HYLAS AND PHILONOUS

PHILONOUS. Tell me, Hylas, what are the fruits of yesterday's meditation? Has it confirmed you in the same mind you were in at parting? or have you since seen cause to change your opinion?

HYLAS. Truly my opinion is that all our opinions are alike vain and uncertain. What we approve to-day, we condemn to-morrow. We keep a stir about knowledge, and spend our lives in the pursuit of it, when, alas I we know nothing all the while: nor do I think it possible for us ever to know anything in this life. Our faculties are too narrow and too few. Nature certainly never intended us for speculation.

PHIL. What! Say you we can know nothing, Hylas?

HYL. There is not that single thing in the world whereof we can know the real nature, or what it is in itself.

PHIL. Will you tell me I do not really know what fire or water is?

HYL. You may indeed know that fire appears hot, and water fluid; but this is no more than knowing what sensations are produced in your own mind, upon the application of fire and water to your organs of sense. Their internal constitution, their true and real nature, you are utterly in the dark as to THAT.

PHIL. Do I not know this to be a real stone that I stand on, and that which I see before my eyes to be a real tree?

HYL. KNOW? No, it is impossible you or any man alive should know it. All you know is, that you have such a certain idea or appearance in your own mind. But what is this to the real tree or stone? I tell you that colour, figure, and hardness, which you perceive, are not the real natures of those things, or in the least like them. The same may be said of all other real things, or corporeal substances, which compose the world. They have none of them anything of themselves, like those sensible qualities by us perceived. We should not therefore pretend to affirm or know anything of them, as they are in their own nature.

PHIL. But surely, Hylas, I can distinguish gold, for example, from iron: and how could this be, if I knew not what either truly was?

HYL. Believe me, Philonous, you can only distinguish between your own ideas. That yellowness, that weight, and other sensible qualities, think you they are really in the gold? They are only relative to the senses, and have no absolute existence in nature. And in pretending to distinguish the species of real things, by the appearances in your mind, you may perhaps act as wisely as he that should conclude two men were of a different species, because their clothes were not of the same colour.

PHIL. It seems, then, we are altogether put off with the appearances of things, and those false ones too. The very meat I eat, and the cloth I wear, have nothing in them like what I see and feel.

HYL. Even so.

PHIL. But is it not strange the whole world should be thus imposed on, and so foolish as to believe their senses? And yet I know not how it is, but men eat, and drink, and sleep, and perform all the offices of life, as comfortably and conveniently as if they really knew the things they are conversant about.

HYL. They do so: but you know ordinary practice does not require a nicety of speculative knowledge. Hence the vulgar retain their mistakes, and for all that make a shift to bustle through the affairs of life. But philosophers know better things.

PHIL. You mean, they KNOW that they KNOW NOTHING.

HYL. That is the very top and perfection of human knowledge.

PHIL. But are you all this while in earnest, Hylas; and are you seriously persuaded that you know nothing real in the world? Suppose you are going to write, would you not call for pen, ink, and paper, like another man; and do you not know what it is you call for?

HYL. How often must I tell you, that I know not the real nature of any one thing in the universe? I may indeed upon occasion make use of pen, ink, and paper. But what any one of them is in its own true nature, I declare positively I know not. And the same is true with regard to every other corporeal thing. And, what is more, we are not only ignorant of the true and real nature of things, but even of their existence. It cannot be denied that we perceive such certain appearances or ideas; but it cannot be concluded from thence that bodies really exist. Nay, now I think on it, I must, agreeably to my former concessions, farther declare that it is impossible any REAL corporeal thing should exist in nature.

PHIL. You amaze me. Was ever anything more wild and extravagant than the notions you now maintain: and is it not evident you are led into all these extravagances by the belief of MATERIAL SUBSTANCE? This makes you dream of those unknown natures in everything. It is this occasions your distinguishing between the reality and sensible appearances of things. It is to this you are indebted for being ignorant of what everybody else knows perfectly well. Nor is this all: you are not only ignorant of the true nature of everything, but you know not whether anything really exists, or whether there are any true natures at all; forasmuch as you attribute to your material beings an absolute or external existence, wherein you suppose their reality consists. And, as you are forced in the end to acknowledge such an existence means either a direct repugnancy, or nothing at all, it follows that you are obliged to pull down your own hypothesis of material Substance, and positively to deny the real existence of any part of the universe. And so you are plunged into the deepest and most deplorable scepticism that ever man was. Tell me, Hylas, is it not as I say?

HYL. I agree with you. MATERIAL SUBSTANCE was no more than an hypothesis; and a false and groundless one too. I will no longer spend my breath in defence of it. But whatever hypothesis you advance, or whatsoever scheme of things you introduce in its stead, I doubt not it will appear every whit as false: let me but be allowed to question you upon it. That is, suffer me to serve you in your own kind, and I warrant it shall conduct you through as many perplexities and contradictions, to the very same state of scepticism that I myself am in at present.

PHIL. I assure you, Hylas, I do not pretend to frame any hypothesis at all. I am of a vulgar cast, simple enough to believe my senses, and leave things as I find them. To be plain, it is my opinion that the real things are those very things I see, and feel, and perceive by my senses. These I know; and, finding they answer all the necessities and purposes of life, have no reason to be solicitous about any other unknown beings. A piece of sensible bread, for instance, would stay my stomach better than ten thousand times as much of that insensible, unintelligible, real bread you speak of. It is likewise my opinion that colours and other sensible qualities are on the objects. I cannot for my life help thinking that snow is white, and fire hot. You indeed, who by SNOW and fire mean certain external, unperceived, unperceiving substances, are in the right to deny whiteness or heat to be affections inherent in THEM. But I, who understand by those words the things I see and feel, am obliged to think like other folks. And, as I am no sceptic with regard to the nature of things, so neither am I as to their existence. That a thing should be really perceived by my senses, and at the same time not really exist, is to me a plain contradiction; since I cannot prescind or abstract, even in thought, the existence of a sensible thing from its being perceived. Wood, stones, fire, water, flesh, iron, and the like things, which I name and discourse of, are things that I know. And I should not have known them but that I perceived them by my senses; and things perceived by the senses are immediately perceived; and things immediately perceived are ideas; and ideas cannot exist without the mind; their existence therefore consists in being perceived; when, therefore, they are actually perceived there can be no doubt of their existence. Away then with all that scepticism, all those ridiculous philosophical doubts. What a jest is it for a philosopher to question the existence of sensible things, till he hath it proved to him from the veracity of God; or to pretend our knowledge in this point falls short of intuition or demonstration! I might as well doubt of my own being, as of the being of those things I actually see and feel.

HYL. Not so fast, Philonous: you say you cannot conceive how sensible things should exist without the mind. Do you not?

PHIL. I do.

HYL. Supposing you were annihilated, cannot you conceive it possible that things perceivable by sense may still exist?

PHIL. / can; but then it must be in another mind. When I deny sensible things an existence out of the mind, I do not mean my mind in particular, but all minds. Now, it is plain they have an existence exterior to my mind; since I find them by experience to be independent of it. There is therefore some other Mind wherein they exist, during the intervals between the times of my perceiving them: as likewise they did before my birth, and would do after my supposed annihilation. And, as the same is true with regard to all other finite created spirits, it necessarily follows there is an OMNIPRESENT ETERNAL MIND, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner, and according to such rules, as He Himself hath ordained, and are by us termed the LAWS OF NATURE.

HYL. Answer me, Philonous. Are all our ideas perfectly inert beings? Or have they any agency included in them?

PHIL. They are altogether passive and inert.

HYL. And is not God an agent, a being purely active?

PHIL. I acknowledge it.

HYL. No idea therefore can be like unto, or represent the nature of God?

PHIL. It cannot.

HYL. Since therefore you have no IDEA of the mind of God, how can you conceive it possible that things should exist in His mind? Or, if you can conceive the mind of God, without having an idea of it, why may not I be allowed to conceive the existence of Matter, notwithstanding I have no idea of it?

PHIL. As to your first question: I own I have properly no IDEA, either of God or any other spirit; for these being active, cannot be represented by things perfectly inert, as our ideas are. I do nevertheless know that I, who am a spirit or thinking substance, exist as certainly as I know my ideas exist. Farther, I know what I mean by the terms I AND MYSELF; and I know this immediately or intuitively, though I do not perceive it as I perceive a triangle, a colour, or a sound. The Mind, Spirit, or Soul is that indivisible unextended thing which thinks, acts, and perceives. I say INDIVISIBLE, because unextended; and UNEXTENDED, because extended, figured, moveable things are ideas; and that which perceives ideas, which thinks and wills, is plainly itself no idea, nor like an idea. Ideas are things inactive, and perceived. And Spirits a sort of beings altogether different from them. I do not therefore say my soul is an idea, or like an idea. However, taking the word IDEA in a large sense, my soul may be said to furnish me with an idea, that is, an image or likeness of God—though indeed extremely inadequate. For, all the notion I have of God is obtained by reflecting on my own soul, heightening its powers, and removing its imperfections. I have, therefore, though not an inactive idea, yet in MYSELF some sort of an active thinking image of the Deity. And, though I perceive Him not by sense, yet I have a notion of Him, or know Him by reflexion and reasoning. My own mind and my own ideas I have an immediate knowledge of; and, by the help of these, do mediately apprehend the possibility of the existence of other spirits and ideas. Farther, from my own being, and from the dependency I find in myself and my ideas, I do, by an act of reason, necessarily infer the existence of a God, and of all created things in the mind of God. So much for your first question. For the second: I suppose by this time you can answer it yourself. For you neither perceive Matter objectively, as you do an inactive being or idea; nor know it, as you do yourself, by a reflex act, neither do you mediately apprehend it by similitude of the one or the other; nor yet collect it by reasoning from that which you know immediately. All which makes the case of MATTER widely different from that of the DEITY.

HYL. You say your own soul supplies you with some sort of an idea or image of God. But, at the same time, you acknowledge you have, properly speaking, no IDEA of your own soul. You even affirm that spirits are a sort of beings altogether different from ideas. Consequently that no idea can be like a spirit. We have therefore no idea of any spirit. You admit nevertheless that there is spiritual Substance, although you have no idea of it; while you deny there can be such a thing as material Substance, because you have no notion or idea of it. Is this fair dealing? To act consistently, you must either admit Matter or reject Spirit. What say you to this?

PHIL. / say, in the first place, that I do not deny the existence of material substance, merely because I have no notion of it; but because the notion of it is inconsistent; or, in other words, because it is repugnant that there should be a notion of it. Many things, for aught I know, may exist, whereof neither I nor any other man hath or can

have any idea or notion whatsoever. But then those things must be possible, that is, nothing inconsistent must be included in their definition. I say, secondly, that, although we believe things to exist which we do not perceive, yet we may not believe that any particular thing exists, without some reason for such belief: but I have no reason for believing the existence of Matter. I have no immediate intuition thereof: neither can I immediately from my sensations, ideas, notions, actions, or passions, infer an unthinking, unperceiving, inactive Substance—either by probable deduction, or necessary consequence. Whereas the being of my Self, that is, my own soul, mind, or thinking principle, I evidently know by reflexion. You will forgive me if I repeat the same things in answer to the same objections. In the very notion or definition of MATERIAL SUBSTANCE, there is included a manifest repugnance and inconsistency. But this cannot be said of the notion of Spirit. That ideas should exist in what doth not perceive, or be produced by what doth not act, is repugnant. But, it is no repugnancy to say that a perceiving thing should be the subject of ideas, or an active thing the cause of them. It is granted we have neither an immediate evidence nor a demonstrative knowledge of the existence of other finite spirits; but it will not thence follow that such spirits are on a foot with material substances: if to suppose the one be inconsistent, and it be not inconsistent to suppose the other; if the one can be inferred by no argument, and there is a probability for the other; if we see signs and effects indicating distinct finite agents like ourselves, and see no sign or symptom whatever that leads to a rational belief of Matter. I say, lastly, that I have a notion of Spirit, though I have not, strictly speaking, an idea of it. I do not perceive it as an idea, or by means of an idea, but know it by reflexion.

HYL. Notwithstanding all you have said, to me it seems that, according to your own way of thinking, and in consequence of your own principles, it should follow that YOU are only a system of floating ideas, without any substance to support them. Words are not to be used without a meaning. And, as there is no more meaning in SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCE than in MATERIAL SUBSTANCE, the one is to be exploded as well as the other.

PHIL. How often must I repeat, that I know or am conscious of my own being; and that / MYSELF am not my ideas, but somewhat else, a thinking, active principle that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas. I know that I, one and the same self, perceive both colours and sounds: that a colour cannot perceive a sound, nor a sound a colour: that I am therefore one individual principle, distinct from colour and sound; and, for the same reason, from all other sensible things and inert ideas. But, I am not in like manner conscious either of the existence or essence of Matter. On the contrary, I know that nothing inconsistent can exist, and that the existence of Matter implies an inconsistency. Farther, I know what I mean when I affirm that there is a spiritual substance or support of ideas, that is, that a spirit knows and perceives ideas. But, I do not know what is meant when it is said that an unperceiving substance hath inherent in it and supports either ideas or the archetypes of ideas. There is therefore upon the whole no parity of case between Spirit and Matter.

HYL. I own myself satisfied in this point. But, do you in earnest think the real existence of sensible things consists in their being actually perceived? If so; how comes it that all mankind distinguish between them? Ask the first man you meet, and he shall tell you, TO BE PERCEIVED is one thing, and TO EXIST is another.

PHIL. / am content, Hylas, to appeal to the common sense of the world for the truth of my notion. Ask the gardener why he thinks yonder cherry-tree exists in the garden, and he shall tell you, because he sees and feels it; in a word, because he perceives it by his senses. Ask him why he thinks an orange-tree not to be there, and he shall tell you, because he does not perceive it. What he perceives by sense, that he terms a real, being, and saith it IS OR EXISTS; but, that which is not perceivable, the same, he saith, hath no being.

HYL. Yes, Philonous, I grant the existence of a sensible thing consists in being perceivable, but not in being actually perceived.

PHIL. And what is perceivable but an idea? And can an idea exist without being actually perceived? These are points long since agreed between us.

HYL. But, be your opinion never so true, yet surely you will not deny it is shocking, and contrary to the common sense of men. Ask the fellow whether yonder tree hath an existence out of his mind: what answer think you he would make?

PHIL. The same that I should myself, to wit, that it doth exist out of his mind. But then to a Christian it cannot surely be shocking to say, the real tree, existing without his mind, is truly known and comprehended by (that is EXISTS IN) the infinite mind of God. Probably he may not at first glance be aware of the direct and immediate proof there is of this; inasmuch as the very being of a tree, or any other sensible thing, implies a mind wherein it is. But the point itself he cannot deny. The question between the Materialists and me is not, whether things have a REAL existence out of the mind of this or that person, but whether they have an ABSOLUTE existence, distinct

from being perceived by God, and exterior to all minds. This indeed some heathens and philosophers have affirmed, but whoever entertains notions of the Deity suitable to the Holy Scriptures will be of another opinion.

HYL. But, according to your notions, what difference is there between real things, and chimeras formed by the imagination, or the visions of a dream—since they are all equally in the mind?

PHIL. The ideas formed by the imagination are faint and indistinct; they have, besides, an entire dependence on the will. But the ideas perceived by sense, that is, real things, are more vivid and clear; and, being imprinted on the mind by a spirit distinct from us, have not the like dependence on our will. There is therefore no danger of confounding these with the foregoing: and there is as little of confounding them with the visions of a dream, which are dim, irregular, and confused. And, though they should happen to be never so lively and natural, yet, by their not being connected, and of a piece with the preceding and subsequent transactions of our lives, they might easily be distinguished from realities. In short, by whatever method you distinguish THINGS FROM CHIMERAS on your scheme, the same, it is evident, will hold also upon mine. For, it must be, I presume, by some perceived difference; and I am not for depriving you of any one thing that you perceive.

HYL. But still, Philonous, you hold, there is nothing in the world but spirits and ideas. And this, you must needs acknowledge, sounds very oddly.

PHIL. I own the word IDEA, not being commonly used for THING, sounds something out of the way. My reason for using it was, because a necessary relation to the mind is understood to be implied by that term; and it is now commonly used by philosophers to denote the immediate objects of the understanding. But, however oddly the proposition may sound in words, yet it includes nothing so very strange or shocking in its sense; which in effect amounts to no more than this, to wit, that there are only things perceiving, and things perceived; or that every unthinking being is necessarily, and from the very nature of its existence, perceived by some mind; if not by a finite created mind, yet certainly by the infinite mind of God, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” Is this as strange as to say, the sensible qualities are not on the objects: or that we cannot be sure of the existence of things, or know any thing of their real natures—though we both see and feel them, and perceive them by all our senses?

HYL. And, in consequence of this, must we not think there are no such things as physical or corporeal causes; but that a Spirit is the immediate cause of all the phenomena in nature? Can there be anything more extravagant than this?

PHIL. Yes, it is infinitely more extravagant to say—a thing which is inert operates on the mind, and which is unperceiving is the cause of our perceptions, without any regard either to consistency, or the old known axiom, NOTHING CAN GIVE TO ANOTHER THAT WHICH IT HATH NOT ITSELF. Besides, that which to you, I know not for what reason, seems so extravagant is no more than the Holy Scriptures assert in a hundred places. In them God is represented as the sole and immediate Author of all those effects which some heathens and philosophers are wont to ascribe to Nature, Matter, Fate, or the like unthinking principle. This is so much the constant language of Scripture that it were needless to confirm it by citations.

HYL. You are not aware, Philonous, that in making God the immediate Author of all the motions in nature, you make Him the Author of murder, sacrilege, adultery, and the like heinous sins.

PHIL. In answer to that, I observe, first, that the imputation of guilt is the same, whether a person commits an action with or without an instrument. In case therefore you suppose God to act by the mediation of an instrument or occasion, called MATTER, you as truly make Him the author of sin as I, who think Him the immediate agent in all those operations vulgarly ascribed to Nature. I farther observe that sin or moral turpitude doth not consist in the outward physical action or motion, but in the internal deviation of the will from the laws of reason and religion. This is plain, in that the killing an enemy in a battle, or putting a criminal legally to death, is not thought sinful; though the outward act be the very same with that in the case of murder. Since, therefore, sin doth not consist in the physical action, the making God an immediate cause of all such actions is not making Him the Author of sin. Lastly, I have nowhere said that God is the only agent who produces all the motions in bodies. It is true I have denied there are any other agents besides spirits; but this is very consistent with allowing to thinking rational beings, in the production of motions, the use of limited powers, ultimately indeed derived from God, but immediately under the direction of their own wills, which is sufficient to entitle them to all the guilt of their actions.

HYL. But the denying Matter, Philonous, or corporeal Substance; there is the point. You can never persuade me that this is not repugnant to the universal sense of mankind. Were our dispute to be determined by most voices, I am confident you would give up the point, without gathering the votes.

PHIL. I wish both our opinions were fairly stated and submitted to the judgment of men who had plain common sense, without the prejudices of a learned education. Let me be represented as one who trusts his senses, who thinks he knows the things he sees and feels, and entertains no doubts of their existence; and you fairly set forth with all your doubts, your paradoxes, and your scepticism about you, and I shall willingly acquiesce in the determination of any indifferent person. That there is no substance wherein ideas can exist beside spirit is to me evident. And that the objects immediately perceived are ideas, is on all hands agreed. And that sensible qualities are objects immediately perceived no one can deny. It is therefore evident there can be no SUBSTRATUM of those qualities but spirit; in which they exist, not by way of mode or property, but as a thing perceived in that which perceives it. I deny therefore that there is ANY UNTHINKING-SUBSTRATUM of the objects of sense, and IN THAT ACCEPTATION that there is any material substance. But if by MATERIAL SUBSTANCE is meant only SENSIBLE BODY, THAT which is seen and felt (and the unphilosophical part of the world, I dare say, mean no more)—then I am more certain of matter's existence than you or any other philosopher pretend to be. If there be anything which makes the generality of mankind averse from the notions I espouse, it is a misapprehension that I deny the reality of sensible things. But, as it is you who are guilty of that, and not I, it follows that in truth their aversion is against your notions and not mine. I do therefore assert that I am as certain as of my own being, that there are bodies or corporeal substances (meaning the things I perceive by my senses); and that, granting this, the bulk of mankind will take no thought about, nor think themselves at all concerned in the fate of those unknown natures, and philosophical quiddities, which some men are so fond of.

HYL. What say you to this? Since, according to you, men judge of the reality of things by their senses, how can a man be mistaken in thinking the moon a plain lucid surface, about a foot in diameter; or a square tower, seen at a distance, round; or an oar, with one end in the water, crooked?

PHIL. He is not mistaken with regard to the ideas he actually perceives, but in the inference he makes from his present perceptions. Thus, in the case of the oar, what he immediately perceives by sight is certainly crooked; and so far he is in the right. But if he thence conclude that upon taking the oar out of the water he shall perceive the same crookedness; or that it would affect his touch as crooked things are wont to do: in that he is mistaken. In like manner, if he shall conclude from what he perceives in one station, that, in case he advances towards the moon or tower, he should still be affected with the like ideas, he is mistaken. But his mistake lies not in what he perceives immediately, and at present, (it being a manifest contradiction to suppose he should err in respect of that) but in the wrong judgment he makes concerning the ideas that, from what he apprehends to be connected with those immediately perceived: or, concerning the ideas that, from what he perceives at present, he imagines would be perceived in other circumstances. The case is the same with regard to the Copernican system. We do not here perceive any motion of the earth: but it were erroneous thence to conclude, that, in case we were placed at as great a distance from that as we are now from the other planets, we should not then perceive its motion.

HYL. I understand you; and must needs own you say things plausible enough. But, give me leave to put you in mind of one thing. Pray, Philonous, were you not formerly as positive that Matter existed, as you are now that it does not?

PHIL. I was. But here lies the difference. Before, my positiveness was founded, without examination, upon prejudice; but now, after inquiry, upon evidence.

HYL. After all, it seems our dispute is rather about words than things. We agree in the thing, but differ in the name. That we are affected with ideas FROM WITHOUT is evident; and it is no less evident that there must be (I will not say archetypes, but) Powers without the mind, corresponding to those ideas. And, as these Powers cannot subsist by themselves, there is some subject of them necessarily to be admitted; which I call MATTER, and you call SPIRIT. This is all the difference.

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, is that powerful Being, or subject of powers, extended?

HYL. It hath not extension; but it hath the power to raise in you the idea of extension.

PHIL. It is therefore itself unextended?

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. Is it not also active?

HYL. Without doubt. Otherwise, how could we attribute powers to it?

PHIL. Now let me ask you two questions: FIRST, Whether it be agreeable to the usage either of philosophers or others to give the name MATTER to an unextended active being? And, SECONDLY, Whether it be not ridiculously absurd to misapply names contrary to the common use of language?

HYL. Well then, let it not be called Matter, since you will have it so, but some THIRD NATURE distinct from Matter and Spirit. For what reason is there why you should call it Spirit? Does not the notion of spirit imply that it is thinking, as well as active and unextended?

PHIL. My reason is this: because I have a mind to have some notion of meaning in what I say: but I have no notion of any action distinct from volition, neither can I conceive volition to be anywhere but in a spirit: therefore, when I speak of an active being, I am obliged to mean a Spirit. Beside, what can be plainer than that a thing which hath no ideas in itself cannot impart them to me; and, if it hath ideas, surely it must be a Spirit. To make you comprehend the point still more clearly if it be possible, I assert as well as you that, since we are affected from without, we must allow Powers to be without, in a Being distinct from ourselves. So far we are agreed. But then we differ as to the kind of this powerful Being. I will have it to be Spirit, you Matter, or I know not what (I may add too, you know not what) Third Nature. Thus, I prove it to be Spirit. From the effects I see produced, I conclude there are actions; and, because actions, volitions; and, because there are volitions, there must be a WILL. Again, the things I perceive must have an existence, they or their archetypes, out of MY mind: but, being ideas, neither they nor their archetypes can exist otherwise than in an understanding; there is therefore an UNDERSTANDING. But will and understanding constitute in the strictest sense a mind or spirit. The powerful cause, therefore, of my ideas is in strict propriety of speech a SPIRIT.

HYL. And now I warrant you think you have made the point very clear, little suspecting that what you advance leads directly to a contradiction. Is it not an absurdity to imagine any imperfection in God?

PHIL. Without a doubt.

HYL. To suffer pain is an imperfection?

PHIL. It is.

HYL. Are we not sometimes affected with pain and uneasiness by some other Being?

PHIL. We are.

HYL. And have you not said that Being is a Spirit, and is not that Spirit God?

PHIL. I grant it.

HYL. But you have asserted that whatever ideas we perceive from without are in the mind which affects us. The ideas, therefore, of pain and uneasiness are in God; or, in other words, God suffers pain: that is to say, there is an imperfection in the Divine nature: which, you acknowledged, was absurd. So you are caught in a plain contradiction.

PHIL. That God knows or understands all things, and that He knows, among other things, what pain is, even every sort of painful sensation, and what it is for His creatures to suffer pain, I make no question. But, that God, though He knows and sometimes causes painful sensations in us, can Himself suffer pain, I positively deny. We, who are limited and dependent spirits, are liable to impressions of sense, the effects of an external Agent, which, being produced against our wills, are sometimes painful and uneasy. But God, whom no external being can affect, who perceives nothing by sense as we do; whose will is absolute and independent, causing all things, and liable to be thwarted or resisted by nothing: it is evident, such a Being as this can suffer nothing, nor be affected with any painful sensation, or indeed any sensation at all. We are chained to a body: that is to say, our perceptions are connected with corporeal motions. By the law of our nature, we are affected upon every alteration in the nervous parts of our sensible body; which sensible body, rightly considered, is nothing but a complexion of such qualities or ideas as have no existence distinct from being perceived by a mind. So that this connexion of sensations with corporeal motions means no more than a correspondence in the order of nature, between two sets of ideas, or things immediately perceivable. But God is a Pure Spirit, disengaged from all such sympathy, or natural ties. No corporeal motions are attended with the sensations of pain or pleasure in His mind. To know everything knowable, is certainly a perfection; but to endure, or suffer, or feel anything by sense, is an imperfection. The former, I say, agrees to God, but not the latter. God knows, or hath ideas; but His ideas are not conveyed to Him by sense, as ours are. Your not distinguishing, where there is so manifest a difference, makes you fancy you see an absurdity where there is none.

HYL. But, all this while you have not considered that the quantity of Matter has been demonstrated to be proportioned to the gravity of bodies. And what can withstand demonstration?

PHIL. Let me see how you demonstrate that point.

HYL. I lay it down for a principle, that the moments or quantities of motion in bodies are in a direct compounded reason of the velocities and quantities of Matter contained in them. Hence, where the velocities are equal, it follows the moments are directly as the quantity of Matter in each. But it is found by experience that all bodies (bating the small inequalities, arising from the resistance of the air) descend with an equal velocity; the motion therefore of descending bodies, and consequently their gravity, which is the cause or principle of that motion, is proportional to the quantity of Matter; which was to be demonstrated.

PHIL. You lay it down as a self-evident principle that the quantity of motion in any body is proportional to the velocity and MATTER taken together; and this is made use of to prove a proposition from whence the existence of MATTER is inferred. Pray is not this arguing in a circle?

HYL. In the premise I only mean that the motion is proportional to the velocity, jointly with the extension and solidity.

PHIL. But, allowing this to be true, yet it will not thence follow that gravity is proportional to MATTER, in your philosophic sense of the word; except you take it for granted that unknown SUBSTRATUM, or whatever else you call it, is proportional to those sensible qualities; which to suppose is plainly begging the question. That there is magnitude and solidity, or resistance, perceived by sense, I readily grant; as likewise, that gravity may be proportional to those qualities I will not dispute. But that either these qualities as perceived by us, or the powers producing them, do exist in a MATERIAL SUBSTRATUM; this is what I deny, and you indeed affirm, but, notwithstanding your demonstration, have not yet proved.

HYL. I shall insist no longer on that point. Do you think, however, you shall persuade me that the natural philosophers have been dreaming all this while? Pray what becomes of all their hypotheses and explications of the phenomena, which suppose the existence of Matter?

PHIL. What mean you, Hylas, by the PHENOMENA?

HYL. I mean the appearances which I perceive by my senses.

PHIL. And the appearances perceived by sense, are they not ideas?

HYL. I have told you so a hundred times.

PHIL. Therefore, to explain the phenomena, is, to shew how we come to be affected with ideas, in that manner and order wherein they are imprinted on our senses. Is it not?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Now, if you can prove that any philosopher has explained the production of any one idea in our minds by the help of MATTER, I shall for ever acquiesce, and look on all that hath been said against it as nothing; but, if you cannot, it is vain to urge the explication of phenomena. That a Being endowed with knowledge and will should produce or exhibit ideas is easily understood. But that a Being which is utterly destitute of these faculties should be able to produce ideas, or in any sort to affect an intelligence, this I can never understand. This I say, though we had some positive conception of Matter, though we knew its qualities, and could comprehend its existence, would yet be so far from explaining things, that it is itself the most inexplicable thing in the world. And yet, for all this, it will not follow that philosophers have been doing nothing; for, by observing and reasoning upon the connexion of ideas, they discover the laws and methods of nature, which is a part of knowledge both useful and entertaining.

HYL. After all, can it be supposed God would deceive all mankind? Do you imagine He would have induced the whole world to believe the being of Matter, if there was no such thing?

PHIL. That every epidemical opinion, arising from prejudice, or passion, or thoughtlessness, may be imputed to God, as the Author of it, I believe you will not affirm. Whatsoever opinion we father on Him, it must be either because He has discovered it to us by supernatural revelation; or because it is so evident to our natural faculties, which were framed and given us by God, that it is impossible we should withhold our assent from it. But where is

the revelation? or where is the evidence that extorts the belief of Matter? Nay, how does it appear, that Matter, TAKEN FOR SOMETHING DISTINCT FROM WHAT WE PERCEIVE BY OUR SENSES, is thought to exist by all mankind; or indeed, by any except a few philosophers, who do not know what they would be at? Your question supposes these points are clear; and, when you have cleared them, I shall think myself obliged to give you another answer. In the meantime, let it suffice that I tell you, I do not suppose God has deceived mankind at all.

HYL. But the novelty, Philonous, the novelty! There lies the danger. New notions should always be discountenanced; they unsettle men's minds, and nobody knows where they will end.

PHIL. Why the rejecting a notion that has no foundation, either in sense, or in reason, or in Divine authority, should be thought to unsettle the belief of such opinions as are grounded on all or any of these, I cannot imagine. That innovations in government and religion are dangerous, and ought to be discountenanced, I freely own. But is there the like reason why they should be discouraged in philosophy? The making anything known which was unknown before is an innovation in knowledge: and, if all such innovations had been forbidden, men would have made a notable progress in the arts and sciences. But it is none of my business to plead for novelties and paradoxes. That the qualities we perceive are not on the objects: that we must not believe our senses: that we know nothing of the real nature of things, and can never be assured even of their existence: that real colours and sounds are nothing but certain unknown figures and motions: that motions are in themselves neither swift nor slow: that there are in bodies absolute extensions, without any particular magnitude or figure: that a thing stupid, thoughtless, and inactive, operates on a spirit: that the least particle of a body contains innumerable extended parts:—these are the novelties, these are the strange notions which shock the genuine uncorrupted judgment of all mankind; and being once admitted, embarrass the mind with endless doubts and difficulties. And it is against these and the like innovations I endeavour to vindicate Common Sense. It is true, in doing this, I may perhaps be obliged to use some AMBAGES, and ways of speech not common. But, if my notions are once thoroughly understood, that which is most singular in them will, in effect, be found to amount to no more than this.—that it is absolutely impossible, and a plain contradiction, to suppose any unthinking Being should exist without being perceived by a Mind. And, if this notion be singular, it is a shame it should be so, at this time of day, and in a Christian country.

HYL. As for the difficulties other opinions may be liable to, those are out of the question. It is your business to defend your own opinion. Can anything be plainer than that you are for changing all things into ideas? You, I say, who are not ashamed to charge me WITH SCEPTICISM. This is so plain, there is no denying it.

PHIL. You mistake me. I am not for changing things into ideas, but rather ideas into things; since those immediate objects of perception, which, according to you, are only appearances of things, I take to be the real things themselves.

HYL. Things! You may pretend what you please; but it is certain you leave us nothing but the empty forms of things, the outside only which strikes the senses.

PHIL. What you call the empty forms and outside of things seem to me the very things themselves. Nor are they empty or incomplete, otherwise than upon your supposition—that Matter is an essential part of all corporeal things. We both, therefore, agree in this, that we perceive only sensible forms: but herein we differ—you will have them to be empty appearances, I, real beings. In short, you do not trust your senses, I do.

HYL. You say you believe your senses; and seem to applaud yourself that in this you agree with the vulgar. According to you, therefore, the true nature of a thing is discovered by the senses. If so, whence comes that disagreement? Why is not the same figure, and other sensible qualities, perceived all manner of ways? and why should we use a microscope the better to discover the true nature of a body, if it were discoverable to the naked eye?

PHIL. Strictly speaking, Hylas, we do not see the same object that we feel; neither is the same object perceived by the microscope which was by the naked eye. But, in case every variation was thought sufficient to constitute a new kind of individual, the endless number of confusion of names would render language impracticable. Therefore, to avoid this, as well as other inconveniences which are obvious upon a little thought, men combine together several ideas, apprehended by divers senses, or by the same sense at different times, or in different circumstances, but observed, however, to have some connexion in nature, either with respect to co-existence or succession; all which they refer to one name, and consider as one thing. Hence it follows that when I examine, by my other senses, a thing I have seen, it is not in order to understand better the same object which I had perceived by sight, the object of one sense not being perceived by the other senses. And, when I look through a microscope, it is not that I may perceive more clearly what I perceived already with my bare eyes; the object

perceived by the glass being quite different from the former. But, in both cases, my aim is only to know what ideas are connected together; and the more a man knows of the connexion of ideas, the more he is said to know of the nature of things. What, therefore, if our ideas are variable; what if our senses are not in all circumstances affected with the same appearances. It will not thence follow they are not to be trusted; or that they are inconsistent either with themselves or anything else: except it be with your preconceived notion of (I know not what) one single, unchanged, unperceivable, real Nature, marked by each name. Which prejudice seems to have taken its rise from not rightly understanding the common language of men, speaking of several distinct ideas as united into one thing by the mind. And, indeed, there is cause to suspect several erroneous conceits of the philosophers are owing to the same original: while they began to build their schemes not so much on notions as on words, which were framed by the vulgar, merely for conveniency and dispatch in the common actions of life, without any regard to speculation.

HYL. Methinks I apprehend your meaning.

PHIL. It is your opinion the ideas we perceive by our senses are not real things, but images or copies of them. Our knowledge, therefore, is no farther real than as our ideas are the true REPRESENTATIONS OF THOSE ORIGINALS. But, as these supposed originals are in themselves unknown, it is impossible to know how far our ideas resemble them; or whether they resemble them at all. We cannot, therefore, be sure we have any real knowledge. Farther, as our ideas are perpetually varied, without any change in the supposed real things, it necessarily follows they cannot all be true copies of them: or, if some are and others are not, it is impossible to distinguish the former from the latter. And this plunges us yet deeper in uncertainty. Again, when we consider the point, we cannot conceive how any idea, or anything like an idea, should have an absolute existence out of a mind: nor consequently, according to you, how there should be any real thing in nature. The result of all which is that we are thrown into the most hopeless and abandoned scepticism. Now, give me leave to ask you, First, Whether your referring ideas to certain absolutely existing unperceived substances, as their originals, be not the source of all this scepticism? Secondly, whether you are informed, either by sense or reason, of the existence of those unknown originals? And, in case you are not, whether it be not absurd to suppose them? Thirdly, Whether, upon inquiry, you find there is anything distinctly conceived or meant by the ABSOLUTE OR EXTERNAL EXISTENCE OF UNPERCEIVING SUBSTANCES? Lastly, Whether, the premises considered, it be not the wisest way to follow nature, trust your senses, and, laying aside all anxious thought about unknown natures or substances, admit with the vulgar those for real things which are perceived by the senses?

HYL. For the present, I have no inclination to the answering part. I would much rather see how you can get over what follows. Pray are not the objects perceived by the SENSES of one, likewise perceivable to others present? If there were a hundred more here, they would all see the garden, the trees, and flowers, as I see them. But they are not in the same manner affected with the ideas I frame in my IMAGINATION. Does not this make a difference between the former sort of objects and the latter?

PHIL. I grant it does. Nor have I ever denied a difference between the objects of sense and those of imagination. But what would you infer from thence? You cannot say that sensible objects exist unperceived, because they are perceived by many.

HYL. I own I can make nothing of that objection: but it hath led me into another. Is it not your opinion that by our senses we perceive only the ideas existing in our minds?

PHIL. It is.

HYL. But the SAME idea which is in my mind cannot be in yours, or in any other mind. Doth it not therefore follow, from your principles, that no two can see the same thing? And is not this highly, absurd?

PHIL. If the term SAME be taken in the vulgar acceptation, it is certain (and not at all repugnant to the principles I maintain) that different persons may perceive the same thing; or the same thing or idea exist in different minds. Words are of arbitrary imposition; and, since men are used to apply the word SAME where no distinction or variety is perceived, and I do not pretend to alter their perceptions, it follows that, as men have said before, SEVERAL SAW THE SAME THING, so they may, upon like occasions, still continue to use the same phrase, without any deviation either from propriety of language, or the truth of things. But, if the term SAME be used in the acceptation of philosophers, who pretend to an abstracted notion of identity, then, according to their sundry definitions of this notion (for it is not yet agreed wherein that philosophic identity consists), it may or may not be possible for divers persons to perceive the same thing. But whether philosophers shall think fit to CALL a thing the SAME or no, is, I conceive, of small importance. Let us suppose several men together, all endued with the same faculties, and consequently affected in like sort by their senses, and who had yet never known the use of

language; they would, without question, agree in their perceptions. Though perhaps, when they came to the use of speech, some regarding the uniformness of what was perceived, might call it the SAME thing: others, especially regarding the diversity of persons who perceived, might choose the denomination of DIFFERENT things. But who sees not that all the dispute is about a word? to wit, whether what is perceived by different persons may yet have the term SAME applied to it? Or, suppose a house, whose walls or outward shell remaining unaltered, the chambers are all pulled down, and new ones built in their place; and that you should call this the SAME, and I should say it was not the SAME house.—would we not, for all this, perfectly agree in our thoughts of the house, considered in itself? And would not all the difference consist in a sound? If you should say, We differed in our notions; for that you super-added to your idea of the house the simple abstracted idea of identity, whereas I did not; I would tell you, I know not what you mean by THE ABSTRACTED IDEA OF IDENTITY; and should desire you to look into your own thoughts, and be sure you understood yourself.—Why so silent, Hylas? Are you not yet satisfied men may dispute about identity and diversity, without any real difference in their thoughts and opinions, abstracted from names? Take this farther reflexion with you: that whether Matter be allowed to exist or no, the case is exactly the same as to the point in hand. For the Materialists themselves acknowledge what we immediately perceive by our senses to be our own ideas. Your difficulty, therefore, that no two see the same thing, makes equally against the Materialists and me.

HYL. Ay, Philonous, but they suppose an external archetype, to which referring their several ideas they may truly be said to perceive the same thing.

PHIL. And (not to mention your having discarded those archetypes) so may you suppose an external archetype on my principles;—EXTERNAL, / MEAN, TO YOUR OWN MIND: though indeed it must be' supposed to exist in that Mind which comprehends all things; but then, this serves all the ends of IDENTITY, as well as if it existed out of a mind. And I am sure you yourself will not say it is less intelligible.

HYL. You have indeed clearly satisfied me—either that there is no difficulty at bottom in this point; or, if there be, that it makes equally against both opinions.

PHIL. But that which makes equally against two contradictory opinions can be a proof against neither.

HYL. I acknowledge it. But, after all, Philonous, when I consider the substance of what you advance against SCEPTICISM, it amounts to no more than this: We are sure that we really see, hear, feel; in a word, that we are affected with sensible impressions.

PHIL. And how are WE concerned any farther? I see this cherry, I feel it, I taste it: and I am sure NOTHING cannot be seen, or felt, or tasted: it is therefore real. Take away the sensations of softness, moisture, redness, tartness, and you take away the cherry, since it is not a being distinct from sensations. A cherry, I say, is nothing but a congeries of sensible impressions, or ideas perceived by various senses: which ideas are united into one thing (or have one name given them) by the mind, because they are observed to attend each other. Thus, when the palate is affected with such a particular taste, the sight is affected with a red colour, the touch with roundness, softness, &c. Hence, when I see, and feel, and taste, in such sundry certain manners, I am sure the cherry exists, or is real; its reality being in my opinion nothing abstracted from those sensations. But if by the word CHERRY, you mean an unknown nature, distinct from all those sensible qualities, and by its EXISTENCE something distinct from its being perceived; then, indeed, I own, neither you nor I, nor any one else, can be sure it exists.

HYL. But, what would you say, Philonous, if I should bring the very same reasons against the existence of sensible things IN A MIND, which you have offered against their existing IN A MATERIAL SUBSTRATUM?

PHIL. When I see your reasons, you shall hear what I have to say to them.

HYL. Is the mind extended or unextended?

PHIL. Unextended, without doubt.

HYL. Do you say the things you perceive are in your mind?

PHIL. They are.

HYL. Again, have I not heard you speak of sensible impressions?

PHIL. I believe you may.

HYL. Explain to me now, O Philonous! how it is possible there should be room for all those trees and houses to exist in your mind. Can extended things be contained in that which is unextended? Or, are we to imagine impressions made on a thing void of all solidity? You cannot say objects are in your mind, as books in your study: or that things are imprinted on it, as the figure of a seal upon wax. In what sense, therefore, are we to understand those expressions? Explain me this if you can: and I shall then be able to answer all those queries you formerly put to me about my SUBSTRATUM.

PHIL. Look you, Hylas, when I speak of objects as existing in the mind, or imprinted on the senses, I would not be understood in the gross literal sense; as when bodies are said to exist in a place, or a seal to make an impression upon wax. My meaning is only that the mind comprehends or perceives them; and that it is affected from without, or by some being distinct from itself. This is my explication of your difficulty; and how it can serve to make your tenet of an unperceiving material SUBSTRATUM intelligible, I would fain know.

HYL. Nay, if that be all, I confess I do not see what use can be made of it. But are you not guilty of some abuse of language in this?

PHIL. None at all. It is no more than common custom, which you know is the rule of language, hath authorised: nothing being more usual, than for philosophers to speak of the immediate objects of the understanding as things existing in the mind. 'Nor is there anything in this but what is conformable to the general analogy of language; most part of the mental operations being signified by words borrowed from sensible things; as is plain in the terms COMPREHEND, reflect, DISCOURSE, &C., which, being applied to the mind, must not be taken in their gross, original sense.

HYL. You have, I own, satisfied me in this point. But there still remains one great difficulty, which I know not how you will get over. And, indeed, it is of such importance that if you could solve all others, without being able to find a solution for this, you must never expect to make me a proselyte to your principles.

PHIL. Let me know this mighty difficulty.

HYL. The Scripture account of the creation is what appears to me utterly irreconcilable with your notions. Moses tells us of a creation: a creation of what? of ideas? No, certainly, but of things, of real things, solid corporeal substances. Bring your principles to agree with this, and I shall perhaps agree with you.

PHIL. Moses mentions the sun, moon, and stars, earth and sea, plants and animals. That all these do really exist, and were in the beginning created by God, I make no question. If by IDEAS you mean fictions and fancies of the mind, then these are no ideas. If by IDEAS you mean immediate objects of the understanding, or sensible things, which cannot exist unperceived, or out of a mind, then these things are ideas. But whether you do or do not call them IDEAS, it matters little. The difference is only about a name. And, whether that name be retained or rejected, the sense, the truth, and reality of things continues the same. In common talk, the objects of our senses are not termed IDEAS, but THINGS. Call them so still: provided you do not attribute to them any absolute external existence, and I shall never quarrel with you for a word. The creation, therefore, I allow to have been a creation of things, of REAL things. Neither is this in the least inconsistent with my principles, as is evident from what I have now said; and would have been evident to you without this, if you had not forgotten what had been so often said before. But as for solid corporeal substances, I desire you to show where Moses makes any mention of them; and, if they should be mentioned by him, or any other inspired writer, it would still be incumbent on you to shew those words were not taken in the vulgar acceptation, for things falling under our senses, but in the philosophic acceptation, for Matter, or AN UNKNOWN QUIDDITY, WITH AN ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE. When you have proved these points, then (and not till then) may you bring the authority of Moses into our dispute.

HYL. It is in vain to dispute about a point so clear. I am content to refer it to your own conscience. Are you not satisfied there is some peculiar repugnancy between the Mosaic account of the creation and your notions?

PHIL. If all possible sense which can be put on the first chapter of Genesis may be conceived as consistently with my principles as any other, then it has no peculiar repugnancy with them. But there is no sense you may not as well conceive, believing as I do. Since, besides spirits, all you conceive are ideas; and the existence of these I do not deny. Neither do you pretend they exist without the mind.

HYL. Pray let me see any sense you can understand it in.

PHIL. Why, I imagine that if I had been present at the creation, I should have seen things produced into being—that is become perceptible—in the order prescribed by the sacred historian. I ever before believed the Mosaic account of the creation, and now find no alteration in my manner of believing it. When things are said to

begin or end their existence, we do not mean this with regard to God, but His creatures. All objects are eternally known by God, or, which is the same thing, have an eternal existence in His mind: but when things, before imperceptible to creatures, are, by a decree of God, perceptible to them, then are they said to begin a relative existence, with respect to created minds. Upon reading therefore the Mosaic account of the creation, I understand that the several parts of the world became gradually perceivable to finite spirits, endowed with proper faculties; so that, whoever such were present, they were in truth perceived by them. This is the literal obvious sense suggested to me by the words of the Holy Scripture: in which is included no mention, or no thought, either of SUBSTRATUM, INSTRUMENT, OCCASION, or ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE. And, upon inquiry, I doubt not it will be found that most plain honest men, who believe the creation, never think of those things any more than I. What metaphysical sense you may understand it in, you only can tell.

HYL. But, Philonous, you do not seem to be aware that you allow created things, in the beginning, only a relative, and consequently hypothetical being: that is to say, upon supposition there were MEN to perceive them; without which they have no actuality of absolute existence, wherein creation might terminate. Is it not, therefore, according to you, plainly impossible the creation of any inanimate creatures should precede that of man? And is not this directly contrary to the Mosaic account?

PHIL. In answer to that, I say, first, created beings might begin to exist in the mind of other created intelligences, beside men. You will not therefore be able to prove any contradiction between Moses and my notions, unless you first shew there was no other order of finite created spirits in being, before man. I say farther, in case we conceive the creation, as we should at this time, a parcel of plants or vegetables of all sorts produced, by an invisible Power, in a desert where nobody was present—that this way of explaining or conceiving it is consistent with my principles, since they deprive you of nothing, either sensible or imaginable; that it exactly suits with the common, natural, and undebauched notions of mankind; that it manifests the dependence of all things on God; and consequently hath all the good effect or influence, which it is possible that important article of our faith should have in making men humble, thankful, and resigned to their great Creator. I say, moreover, that, in this naked conception of things, divested of words, there will not be found any notion of what you call the ACTUALITY OF ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE. You may indeed raise a dust with those terms, and so lengthen our dispute to no purpose. But I entreat you calmly to look into your own thoughts, and then tell me if they are not a useless and unintelligible jargon.

HYL. I own I have no very clear notion annexed to them. But what say you to this? Do you not make the existence of sensible things consist in their being in a mind? And were not all things eternally in the mind of God? Did they not therefore exist from all eternity, according to you? And how could that which was eternal be created in time? Can anything be clearer or better connected than this?

PHIL. And are not you too of opinion, that God knew all things from eternity?

HYL. I am.

PHIL. Consequently they always had a being in the Divine intellect.

HYL. This I acknowledge.

PHIL. By your own confession, therefore, nothing is new, or begins to be, in respect of the mind of God. So we are agreed in that point.

HYL. What shall we make then of the creation?

PHIL. May we not understand it to have been entirely in respect of finite spirits; so that things, with regard to us, may properly be said to begin their existence, or be created, when God decreed they should become perceptible to intelligent creatures, in that order and manner which He then established, and we now call the laws of nature? You may call this a RELATIVE, or HYPOTHETICAL EXISTENCE if you please. But, so long as it supplies us with the most natural, obvious, and literal sense of the Mosaic history of the creation; so long as it answers all the religious ends of that great article; in a word, so long as you can assign no other sense or meaning in its stead; why should we reject this? Is it to comply with a ridiculous sceptical humour of making everything nonsense and unintelligible? I am sure you cannot say it is for the glory of God. For, allowing it to be a thing possible and conceivable that the corporeal world should have an absolute existence extrinsical to the mind of God, as well as to the minds of all created spirits; yet how could this set forth either the immensity or omniscience of the Deity, or the necessary and immediate dependence of all things on Him? Nay, would it not rather seem to derogate from those attributes?

HYL. Well, but as to this decree of God's, for making things perceptible, what say you, Philonous? Is it not plain, God did either execute that decree from all eternity, or at some certain time began to will what He had not actually willed before, but only designed to will? If the former, then there could be no creation, or beginning of existence, in finite things. If the latter, then we must acknowledge something new to befall the Deity; which implies a sort of change: and all change argues imperfection.

PHIL. Pray consider what you are doing. Is it not evident this objection concludes equally against a creation in any sense; nay, against every other act of the Deity, discoverable by the light of nature? None of which can WE conceive, otherwise than as performed in time, and having a beginning. God is a Being of transcendent and unlimited perfections: His nature, therefore, is incomprehensible to finite spirits. It is not, therefore, to be expected, that any man, whether Materialist or Immaterialist, should have exactly just notions of the Deity, His attributes, and ways of operation. If then you would infer anything against me, your difficulty must not be drawn from the inadequateness of our conceptions of the Divine nature, which is unavoidable on any scheme; but from the denial of Matter, of which there is not one word, directly or indirectly, in what you have now objected.

HYL. I must acknowledge the difficulties you are concerned to clear are such only as arise from the non-existence of Matter, and are peculiar to that notion. So far you are in the right. But I cannot by any means bring myself to think there is no such peculiar repugnancy between the creation and your opinion; though indeed where to fix it, I do not distinctly know.

PHIL. What would you have? Do I not acknowledge a twofold state of things—the one ectypal or natural, the other archetypal and eternal? The former was created in time; the latter existed from everlasting in the mind of God. Is not this agreeable to the common notions of divines? or, is any more than this necessary in order to conceive the creation? But you suspect some peculiar repugnancy, though you know not where it lies. To take away all possibility of scruple in the case, do but consider this one point. Either you are not able to conceive the Creation on any hypothesis whatsoever; and, if so, there is no ground for dislike or complaint against any particular opinion on that score: or you are able to conceive it; and, if so, why not on my Principles, since thereby nothing conceivable is taken away? You have all along been allowed the full scope of sense, imagination, and reason. Whatever, therefore, you could before apprehend, either immediately or mediately by your senses, or by ratiocination from your senses; whatever you could perceive, imagine, or understand, remains still with you. If, therefore, the notion you have of the creation by other Principles be intelligible, you have it still upon mine; if it be not intelligible, I conceive it to be no notion at all; and so there is no loss of it. And indeed it seems to me very plain that the supposition of Matter, that is a thing perfectly unknown and inconceivable, cannot serve to make us conceive anything. And, I hope it need not be proved to you that if the existence of Matter doth not make the creation conceivable, the creation's being without it inconceivable can be no objection against its non-existence.

HYL. I confess, Philonous, you have almost satisfied me in this point of the creation.

PHIL. I would fain know why you are not quite satisfied. You tell me indeed of a repugnancy between the Mosaic history and Immaterialism: but you know not where it lies. Is this reasonable, Hylas? Can you expect I should solve a difficulty without knowing what it is? But, to pass by all that, would not a man think you were assured there is no repugnancy between the received notions of Materialists and the inspired writings?

HYL. And so I am.

PHIL. Ought the historical part of Scripture to be understood in a plain obvious sense, or in a sense which is metaphysical and out of the way?

HYL. In the plain sense, doubtless.

PHIL. When Moses speaks of herbs, earth, water, &c. as having been created by God; think you not the sensible things commonly signified by those words are suggested to every unphilosophical reader?

HYL. I cannot help thinking so.

PHIL. And are not all ideas, or things perceived by sense, to be denied a real existence by the doctrine of the Materialist?

HYL. This I have already acknowledged.

PHIL. The creation, therefore, according to them, was not the creation of things sensible, which have only a relative being, but of certain unknown natures, which have an absolute being, wherein creation might terminate?

HYL. True.

PHIL. Is it not therefore evident the assertors of Matter destroy the plain obvious sense of Moses, with which their notions are utterly inconsistent; and instead of it obtrude on us I know not what; something equally unintelligible to themselves and me?

HYL. I cannot contradict you.

PHIL. Moses tells us of a creation. A creation of what? of unknown quiddities, of occasions, or SUBSTRATUM? No, certainly; but of things obvious to the senses. You must first reconcile this with your notions, if you expect I should be reconciled to them.

HYL. I see you can assault me with my own weapons.

PHIL. Then as to ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE; was there ever known a more jejune notion than that? Something it is so abstracted and unintelligible that you have frankly owned you could not conceive it, much less explain anything by it. But allowing Matter to exist, and the notion of absolute existence to be clear as light; yet, was this ever known to make the creation more credible? Nay, hath it not furnished the atheists and infidels of all ages with the most plausible arguments against a creation? That a corporeal substance, which hath an absolute existence without the minds of spirits, should be produced out of nothing, by the mere will of a Spirit, hath been looked upon as a thing so contrary to all reason, so impossible and absurd! that not only the most celebrated among the ancients, but even divers modern and Christian philosophers have thought Matter co-eternal with the Deity. Lay these things together, and then judge you whether Materialism disposes men to believe the creation of things.

HYL. I own, Philonous, I think it does not. This of the CREATION is the last objection I can think of; and I must needs own it hath been sufficiently answered as well as the rest. Nothing now remains to be overcome but a sort of unaccountable backwardness that I find in myself towards your notions.

PHIL. When a man is swayed, he knows not why, to one side of the question, can this, think you, be anything else but the effect of prejudice, which never fails to attend old and rooted notions? And indeed in this respect I cannot deny the belief of Matter to have very much the advantage over the contrary opinion, with men of a learned education.

HYL. I confess it seems to be as you say.

PHIL. As a balance, therefore, to this weight of prejudice, let us throw into the scale the great advantages that arise from the belief of Immaterialism, both in regard to religion and human learning. The being of a God, and incorruptibility of the soul, those great articles of religion, are they not proved with the clearest and most immediate evidence? When I say the being of a God, I do not mean an obscure general Cause of things, whereof we have no conception, but God, in the strict and proper sense of the word. A Being whose spirituality, omnipresence, providence, omniscience, infinite power and goodness, are as conspicuous as the existence of sensible things, of which (notwithstanding the fallacious pretences and affected scruples of Sceptics) there is no more reason to doubt than of our own being. — Then, with relation to human sciences. In Natural Philosophy, what intricacies, what obscurities, what contradictions hath the belief of Matter led men into! To say nothing of the numberless disputes about its extent, continuity, homogeneity, gravity, divisibility, &c. — do they not pretend to explain all things by bodies operating on bodies, according to the laws of motion? and yet, are they able to comprehend how one body should move another? Nay, admitting there was no difficulty in reconciling the notion of an inert being with a cause, or in conceiving how an accident might pass from one body to another; yet, by all their strained thoughts and extravagant suppositions, have they been able to reach the MECHANICAL production of any one animal or vegetable body? Can they account, by the laws of motion, for sounds, tastes, smells, or colours; or for the regular course of things? Have they accounted, by physical principles, for the aptitude and contrivance even of the most inconsiderable parts of the universe? But, laying aside Matter and corporeal causes, and admitting only the efficiency of an All-perfect Mind, are not all the effects of nature easy and intelligible? If the PHENOMENA are nothing else but IDEAS; God is a SPIRIT, but Matter an unintelligent, unperceiving being. If they demonstrate an unlimited power in their cause; God is active and omnipotent, but Matter an inert mass. If the order, regularity, and usefulness of them can never be sufficiently admired; God is infinitely wise and provident, but Matter destitute of all contrivance and design. These surely are great advantages in PHYSICS. Not to mention that the apprehension of a distant Deity naturally disposes men to a negligence in their moral actions; which they would be more cautious of, in case they thought Him immediately present, and acting on their minds, without the interposition of Matter, or unthinking second causes. — Then in METAPHYSICS: what difficulties concerning entity in abstract, substantial forms, hylarchic principles, plastic natures, substance

and accident, principle of individuation, possibility of Matter's thinking, origin of ideas, the manner how two independent substances so widely different as SPIRIT AND MATTER, should mutually operate on each other? what difficulties, I say, and endless disquisitions, concerning these and innumerable other the like points, do we escape, by supposing only Spirits and ideas?—Even the MATHEMATICS themselves, if we take away the absolute existence of extended things, become much more clear and easy; the most shocking paradoxes and intricate speculations in those sciences depending on the infinite divisibility of finite extension; which depends on that supposition—But what need is there to insist on the particular sciences? Is not that opposition to all science whatsoever, that frenzy of the ancient and modern Sceptics, built on the same foundation? Or can you produce so much as one argument against the reality of corporeal things, or in behalf of that avowed utter ignorance of their natures, which doth not suppose their reality to consist in an external absolute existence? Upon this supposition, indeed, the objections from the change of colours in a pigeon's neck, or the appearance of the broken oar in the water, must be allowed to have weight. But these and the like objections vanish, if we do not maintain the being of absolute external originals, but place the reality of things in ideas, fleeting indeed, and changeable;—however, not changed at random, but according to the fixed order of nature. For, herein consists that constancy and truth of things which secures all the concerns of life, and distinguishes that which is real from the IRREGULAR VISIONS of the fancy.

HYL. I agree to all you have now said, and must own that nothing can incline me to embrace your opinion more than the advantages I see it is attended with. I am by nature lazy; and this would be a mighty abridgment in knowledge. What doubts, what hypotheses, what labyrinths of amusement, what fields of disputation, what an ocean of false learning, may be avoided by that single notion of IMMATERIALISM!

PHIL. After all, is there anything farther remaining to be done? You may remember you promised to embrace that opinion which upon examination should appear most agreeable to Common Sense and remote from Scepticism. This, by your own confession, is that which denies Matter, or the ABSOLUTE existence of corporeal things. Nor is this all; the same notion has been proved several ways, viewed in different lights, pursued in its consequences, and all objections against it cleared. Can there be a greater evidence of its truth? or is it possible it should have all the marks of a true opinion and yet be false?

HYL. I own myself entirely satisfied for the present in all respects. But, what security can I have that I shall still continue the same full assent to your opinion, and that no unthought-of objection or difficulty will occur hereafter?

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, do you in other cases, when a point is once evidently proved, withhold your consent on account of objections or difficulties it may be liable to? Are the difficulties that attend the doctrine of incommensurable quantities, of the angle of contact, of the asymptotes to curves, or the like, sufficient to make you hold out against mathematical demonstration? Or will you disbelieve the Providence of God, because there may be some particular things which you know not how to reconcile with it? If there are difficulties ATTENDING IMMATERIALISM, there are at the same time direct and evident proofs of it. But for the existence of Matter there is not one proof, and far more numerous and insurmountable objections lie against it. But where are those mighty difficulties you insist on? Alas! you know not where or what they are; something which may possibly occur hereafter. If this be a sufficient pretence for withholding your full assent, you should never yield it to any proposition, how free soever from exceptions, how clearly and solidly soever demonstrated.

HYL. You have satisfied me, Philonous.

PHIL. But, to arm you against all future objections, do but consider: That which bears equally hard on two contradictory opinions can be proof against neither. Whenever, therefore, any difficulty occurs, try if you can find a solution for it on the hypothesis of the MATERIALISTS. Be not deceived by words; but sound your own thoughts. And in case you cannot conceive it easier by the help of MATERIALISM, it is plain it can be no objection against IMMATERIALISM. Had you proceeded all along by this rule, you would probably have spared yourself abundance of trouble in objecting; since of all your difficulties I challenge you to shew one that is explained by Matter: nay, which is not more unintelligible with than without that supposition; and consequently makes rather AGAINST than FOR it. You should consider, in each particular, whether the difficulty arises from the NON-EXISTENCE OF MATTER. If it doth not, you might as well argue from the infinite divisibility of extension against the Divine prescience, as from such a difficulty against IMMATERIALISM. And yet, upon recollection, I believe you will find this to have been often, if not always, the case. You should likewise take heed not to argue on a PETITIO PRINCIPII. One is apt to say—The unknown substances ought to be esteemed real things, rather than the ideas in our minds: and who can tell but the unthinking external substance may concur, as a cause or instrument, in the productions of our ideas? But is not this proceeding on a supposition that there are such external substances? And to suppose this, is it not begging the question? But, above all things, you should beware of imposing on yourself by that vulgar sophism which is called IGNORATIO ELENCHI. You talked often as if you thought I

maintained the non-existence of Sensible Things. Whereas in truth no one can be more thoroughly assured of their existence than I am. And it is you who doubt; I should have said, positively deny it. Everything that is seen, felt, heard, or any way perceived by the senses, is, on the principles I embrace, a real being; but not on yours. Remember, the Matter you contend for is an Unknown Somewhat (if indeed it may be termed SOMEWHAT), which is quite stripped of all sensible qualities, and can neither be perceived by sense, nor apprehended by the mind. Remember I say, that it is not any object which is hard or soft, hot or cold, blue or white, round or square, &c. For all these things I affirm do exist. Though indeed I deny they have an existence distinct from being perceived; or that they exist out of all minds whatsoever. Think on these points; let them be attentively considered and still kept in view. Otherwise you will not comprehend the state of the question; without which your objections will always be wide of the mark, and, instead of mine, may possibly be directed (as more than once they have been) against your own notions.

HYL. I must needs own, Philonous, nothing seems to have kept me from agreeing with you more than this same MISTAKING THE QUESTION. In denying Matter, at first glimpse I am tempted to imagine you deny the things we see and feel: but, upon reflexion, find there is no ground for it. What think you, therefore, of retaining the name MATTER, and applying it to SENSIBLE THINGS? This may be done without any change in your sentiments: and, believe me, it would be a means of reconciling them to some persons who may be more shocked at an innovation in words than in opinion.

PHIL. With all my heart: retain the word MATTER, and apply it to the objects of sense, if you please; provided you do not attribute to them any subsistence distinct from their being perceived. I shall never quarrel with you for an expression. MATTER, or MATERIAL SUBSTANCE, are terms introduced by philosophers; and, as used by them, imply a sort of independency, or a subsistence distinct from being perceived by a mind: but are never used by common people; or, if ever, it is to signify the immediate objects of sense. One would think, therefore, so long as the names of all particular things, with the TERMS SENSIBLE, SUBSTANCE, BODY, STUFF, and the like, are retained, the word MATTER should be never missed in common talk. And in philosophical discourses it seems the best way to leave it quite out: since there is not, perhaps, any one thing that hath more favoured and strengthened the depraved bent of the mind towards Atheism than the use of that general confused term.

HYL. Well but, Philonous, since I am content to give up the notion of an unthinking substance exterior to the mind, I think you ought not to deny me the privilege of using the word MATTER as I please, and annexing it to a collection of sensible qualities subsisting only in the mind. I freely own there is no other substance, in a strict sense, than SPIRIT. But I have been so long accustomed to the term MATTER that I know not how to part with it: to say, there is no MATTER in the world, is still shocking to me. Whereas to say—There is no MATTER, if by that term be meant an unthinking substance existing without the mind; but if by MATTER is meant some sensible thing, whose existence consists in being perceived, then there is MATTER:—THIS distinction gives it quite another turn; and men will come into your notions with small difficulty, when they are proposed in that manner. For, after all, the controversy about MATTER in the strict acceptation of it, lies altogether between you and the philosophers: whose principles, I acknowledge, are not near so natural, or so agreeable to the common sense of mankind, and Holy Scripture, as yours. There is nothing we either desire or shun but as it makes, or is apprehended to make, some part of our happiness or misery. But what hath happiness or misery, joy or grief, pleasure or pain, to do with Absolute Existence; or with unknown entities, ABSTRACTED FROM ALL RELATION TO US? It is evident, things regard us only as they are pleasing or displeasing: and they can please or displease only so far forth as they are perceived. Farther, therefore, we are not concerned; and thus far you leave things as you found them. Yet still there is something new in this doctrine. It is plain, I do not now think with the Philosophers; nor yet altogether with the vulgar. I would know how the case stands in that respect; precisely, what you have added to, or altered in my former notions.

PHIL. I do not pretend to be a setter-up of new notions. My endeavours tend only to unite, and place in a clearer light, that truth which was before shared between the vulgar and the philosophers:—the former being of opinion, that THOSE THINGS THEY IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVE ARE THE REAL THINGS; and the latter, that THE THINGS IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED ARE IDEAS, WHICH EXIST ONLY IN THE MIND. Which two notions put together, do, in effect, constitute the substance of what I advance.

HYL. I have been a long time distrusting my senses: methought I saw things by a dim light and through false glasses. Now the glasses are removed and a new light breaks in upon my understanding. I am clearly convinced that I see things in their native forms, and am no longer in pain about their UNKNOWN NATURES OR ABSOLUTE EXISTENCE. This is the state I find myself in at present; though, indeed, the course that brought me to it I do not yet thoroughly comprehend. You set out upon the same principles that Academics, Cartesians, and the like sects usually do; and for a long time it looked as if you were advancing their philosophical Scepticism: but, in the end, your conclusions are directly opposite to theirs.

PHIL. You see, Hylas, the water of yonder fountain, how it is forced upwards, in a round column, to a certain height; at which it breaks, and falls back into the basin from whence it rose: its ascent, as well as descent, proceeding from the same uniform law or principle of GRAVITATION. just so, the same Principles which, at first view, lead to Scepticism, pursued to a certain point, bring men back to Common Sense.

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## IMMANUEL KANT, EXPERIENCE, AND REALITY

So *Kant* maintained that we are justified in applying the concepts of the understanding to the world as we know it by making *a priori* determinations of the nature of any possible experience. In order to see how this works in greater detail, let's concentrate on the concepts of relation, which govern how we understand the world in time. As applied in the Analogies of Experience, each concept of relation establishes one of the preconditions of experience under one of the modes of time: duration, succession, and simultaneity.

1. **Substance:** The experience of any change requires not only the perception of the altered qualities that constitute the change but also the concept of an underlying substance which persists through this alteration. (E.g., in order to know by experience that the classroom wall has changed in color from blue to yellow, I must not only perceive the different colors—blue then, yellow now—but also suppose that the wall itself has endured from then until now.) Thus, Kant supposed that the philosophical concept of substance (reflected in the scientific assumption of an external world of [material objects](#)) is an *a priori* condition for our experience.

2. **Cause:** What is more, the experience of events requires not only awareness of their intrinsic features but also that they be regarded as occurring one after another, in an invariable regularity determined by the concept of causality. (E.g., in order to experience the flowering of this azalea as an event, I must not only perceive the blossoms as they now appear but must also regard them as merely the present consequence of a succession of prior organic developments.) Thus, Kant responded to Hume's skepticism by maintaining that the concept of cause is one of the synthetic conditions we determine for ourselves prior to all experience.

3. **Community:** Finally, the experience of a world of coexisting things requires not only the experiences of each individually but also the presumption of their mutual interaction. (E.g., in order believe that the Sun, Earth, and Moon coexist in a common solar system, I must not only make some estimate of the mass of each but must also take into account the reciprocity of the gravitational forces between them.) Thus, on Kant's view, the notion of the natural world as a closed system of reciprocal forces is another *a priori* condition for the intelligibility of experience.

Notice again that these features of nature are not generalized from anything we have already experienced; they are regulative principles that we impose in advance on everything we can experience. We are justified in doing so, Kant believed, because only the pure concepts of the understanding can provide the required connections to establish synthetic *a priori* judgments. Unless these concepts are systematically applied to the sensory manifold, the unity of apperception cannot be achieved, and no experience can be made intelligible.

### Phenomena and Noumena

Having seen *Kant's* transcendental deduction of the categories as pure concepts of the understanding applicable *a priori* to every possible experience, we might naturally wish to ask the further question whether these regulative principles are really true. Are there substances? Does every event have a cause? Do all things interact? Given that we must suppose them in order to have any experience, do they obtain in the world itself? To these further questions, Kant firmly refused to offer any answer.

According to Kant, it is vital always to distinguish between the distinct realms of [phenomena and noumena](#). **Phenomena** are the appearances, which constitute the our experience; **noumena** are the (presumed) things themselves, which constitute reality. All of our synthetic *a priori* judgments apply only to the phenomenal realm,

not the noumenal. (It is only at this level, with respect to what we can experience, that we are justified in imposing the structure of our concepts onto the objects of our knowledge.) Since the *thing in itself* (*Ding an sich*) would by definition be entirely independent of our experience of it, we are utterly ignorant of the noumenal realm.

Thus, on Kant's view, the most fundamental laws of nature, like the truths of mathematics, are knowable precisely because they make no effort to describe the world as it really is but rather prescribe the structure of the world as we experience it. By applying the pure forms of sensible intuition and the pure concepts of the understanding, we achieve a systematic view of the phenomenal realm but learn nothing of the noumenal realm. Math and science are certainly true of the phenomena; only metaphysics claims to instruct us about the noumena.

## The Aim of Metaphysics

Although our knowledge of mathematics and natural science yield easily to a *Kantian* analysis, the synthetic *a priori* judgments of metaphysics are much more difficult to explain. Here the forms of intuition and concepts of understanding are useless, since they find application only in the realm of our experience, while metaphysics seeks to transcend experience completely, in order to discover the nature of reality itself as comprehended under pure reason.

Metaphysical speculation properly begins with the same method as the "Aesthetic" and "Analytic," Kant supposed, but it invariably ends up in a "Dialectic." The transcendental arguments we employ in metaphysics need not restrict their determination to the phenomenal realm alone, since their aim is genuine knowledge of the noumena. Synthetic *a priori* judgments in metaphysics must be grounded upon truly transcendental ideas, which are regarded as applicable to things in themselves independently of our experience of them.

## Transcendental Ideas

*Kant's* exposition of the transcendental ideas begins once again from the logical distinction among categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive syllogisms. From this distinction, as we have seen, the understanding derives the concepts of substance, cause, and community, which provide the basis for rules that obtain as natural laws within our experience. Now, from the same distinction, the reason must carry things further in order to derive the transcendental ideas of the complete subject, the complete series of conditions, and the complete complex of what is possible. Thus, the "completion" of metaphysical reasoning requires transcendental ideas of three sorts, but Kant argued that each leads to its characteristic irresolvable difficulty.

The **Psychological Idea** is the concept of the soul as a permanent substance which lives forever. It is entirely natural to reason (as in Descartes's *cogito*) from knowledge that "I think" to my real existence as one and the same thinking thing through all time, but Kant held that our efforts to reach such conclusions are "Paralogisms," with only illusory validity. It is true that thought presupposes the unity of apperception and that every change presupposes an underlying substance, but these rules apply only to the phenomena we experience. Since substantial unity and immortality are supposed to be noumenal features of the soul as a thing in itself, Kant held, legitimate *a priori* judgments can never prove them, and the effort to transcend in this case fails.

The **Cosmological Idea** is the concept of a complete determination of the nature of the world as it must be constituted in itself. In this case, Kant held, the difficulty is not that we can conclude too little but rather that we can prove too much. From the structure of our experience of the world, it is easy to deduce contradictory particular claims about reality: finitude vs. infinity; simplicity vs. complexity; freedom vs. determinism; necessity vs. contingency. These "Antinomies" of Pure Reason can be avoided only when we recognize that one or both of the contradictory proofs in each antinomy holds only for the phenomenal realm. Once again, it is the effort to achieve transcendental knowledge of noumena that necessarily fails.

The **Theological Idea** is the concept of an absolutely perfect and most real being (or god). Again it is natural to move from our recognition of dependence within the phenomenal realm to the notion of a perfectly independent noumenal being, the "Transcendental Ideal." But traditional attempts to prove that god really exists, founded as they are on what we experience, cannot establish the reality of a being necessarily beyond all experience.

The general point of the Transcendental Dialectic should by now be clear: metaphysical speculation about the ultimate nature of reality invariably fails. The synthetic *a priori* judgments which properly serve as regulative principles governing our experience can never be shown to have any force as constitutive of the real nature of the world. Pure reason inevitably reaches for what it cannot grasp.

## The Limits of Reason

Now that we've seen *Kant's* answers to all three parts of the *Prolegomena's* "Main Transcendental Question" and have traced their sources in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, we are in a position to appreciate his careful delineation of what is possible in metaphysical thought and what is not.

What most clearly is not possible is any legitimate synthetic *a priori* judgment about things in themselves. The only thing that justifies the application of regulative principles in mathematics and natural science is their limitation to phenomena. Both sensible intuition and the understanding deal with the conditions under which experience is possible. But the whole point of speculative metaphysics is to transcend experience entirely in order to achieve knowledge of the noumenal realm. Here, only the faculty of reason is relevant, but its most crucial speculative conclusions, its deepest convictions about the self, the world, and god, are all drawn illegitimately.

What is possible—indeed, according to Kant what we are bound by our very nature as rational beings to do—is to think of the noumenal realm as if the speculative principles were true (whether or not they are). By the nature of reason itself, we are required to suppose our own existence as substantial beings, the possibility of our free action in a world of causal regularity, and the existence of god. The absence of any formal justification for these notions makes it impossible for us to claim that we know them to be true, but it can in no way diminish the depth of our belief that they are.

According to Kant, then, the rational human faculties lead us to the very boundaries of what can be known, by clarifying the conditions under which experience of the world as we know it is possible. But beyond those boundaries our faculties are useless. The shape of the boundary itself, as evidenced in the Paralogisms and Antinomies, naturally impels us to postulate that the unknown does indeed have certain features, but these further speculations are inherently unjustifiable.

The only legitimate, "scientific" metaphysics that the future may hold, Kant therefore held, would be a thoroughly critical, non-speculative examination of the bounds of pure reason, a careful description of what we can know accompanied by a clear recognition that our transcendental concepts (however useful they may seem) are entirely unreliable as guides to the nature of reality. It is this task, of course, that Kant himself had pursued in the First *Critique*.

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# IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (INTRODUCTION)

THESE Prolegomena are destined for the use, not of pupils, but of future teachers, and even the latter should not expect that they will be serviceable for the systematic exposition of a ready-made science, but merely for the discovery of the science itself.

There are scholarly men, to whom the history of philosophy (both ancient and modern) is philosophy itself; for these the present Prolegomena are not written. They must wait till those who endeavor to draw from the fountain of reason itself have completed their work; it will then be the historian's turn to inform the world of what has been done. Unfortunately, nothing can be said, which in their opinion has not been said before, and truly the same prophecy applies to all future time; for since the human reason has for many centuries speculated upon innumerable objects in various ways, it is hardly to be expected that we should not be able to discover analogies for every new idea among the old sayings of past ages.

My object is to persuade all those who think Metaphysics worth studying, that it is absolutely necessary to pause a moment, and, neglecting all that has been done, to propose first the preliminary question, 'Whether such a thing as metaphysics be at all possible?'

If it be a science, how comes it that it cannot, like other sciences, obtain universal and permanent recognition? If not, how can it maintain its pretensions, and keep the human mind in suspense with hopes, never ceasing, yet never fulfilled? Whether then we demonstrate our knowledge or our ignorance in this field, we must come once for all to a definite conclusion respecting the nature of this so-called science, which cannot possibly remain on its present footing. It seems almost ridiculous, while every other science is continually advancing, that in this, which pretends to be Wisdom incarnate, for whose oracle every one inquires, we should constantly move round the same spot, without gaining a single step. And so its followers having melted away, we do not find men confident of their ability to shine in other sciences venturing their reputation here, where everybody, however ignorant in other matters, may deliver a final verdict, as in this domain there is as yet no standard weight and measure to distinguish sound knowledge from shallow talk.

After all it is nothing extraordinary in the elaboration of a science, when men begin to wonder how far it has advanced, that the question should at last occur, whether and how such a science is possible? Human reason so delights in constructions, that it has several times built up a tower, and then razed it to examine the nature of the foundation. It is never too late to become wise; but if the change comes late, there is always more difficulty in starting a reform.

The question whether a science be possible, presupposes a doubt as to its actuality. But such a doubt offends the men whose whole possessions consist of this supposed jewel; hence he who raises the doubt must expect opposition from all sides. Some, in the proud consciousness of their possessions, which are ancient, and therefore considered legitimate, will take their metaphysical compendia in their hands, and look down on him with contempt; others, who never see anything except it be identical with what they have seen before, will not understand him, and everything will remain for a time, as if nothing had happened to excite the concern, or the hope, for an impending change.

Nevertheless, I venture to predict that the independent reader of these Prolegomena will not only doubt his previous science, but ultimately be fully persuaded, that it cannot exist unless the demands here stated on which its possibility depends, be satisfied; and, as this has never been done, that there is, as yet, no such thing as Metaphysics. But as it can never cease to be in demand,<sup>5</sup>—since the interests of common sense are intimately interwoven with it, he must confess that a radical reform, or rather a new birth of the science after an original plan, are unavoidable, however men may struggle against it for a while.

Since the Essays of Locke and Leibnitz, or rather since the origin of metaphysics so far as we know its history, nothing has ever happened which was more decisive to its fate than the attack made upon it by David Hume. He threw no light on this species of knowledge, but he certainly struck a spark from which light might have been obtained, had it caught some inflammable substance and had its smouldering fire been carefully nursed and developed.

Hume started from a single but important concept in Metaphysics, viz., that of Cause and Effect (including its derivatives force and action, etc.). He challenges reason, which pretends to have given birth to this idea from herself, to answer him by what right she thinks anything to be so constituted, that if that thing be posited, something else also must necessarily be posited; for this is the meaning of the concept of cause. He demonstrated irrefutably that it was perfectly impossible for reason to think a priori and by means of concepts a combination involving necessity. We cannot at all see why, in consequence of the existence of one thing, another must necessarily exist, or how the concept of such a combination can arise a priori. Hence he inferred, that reason was altogether deluded with reference to this concept, which she erroneously considered as one of her children, whereas in reality it was nothing but a bastard of imagination, impregnated by experience, which subsumed certain representations under the Law of Association, and mistook the subjective necessity of habit for an objective necessity arising from insight. Hence he inferred that reason had no power to think such combinations, even generally, because her concepts would then be purely fictitious, and all her pretended a priori cognitions nothing but common experiences marked with a false stamp. In plain language there is not, and cannot be, any such thing as metaphysics at all.<sup>6</sup>

However hasty and mistaken Hume's conclusion may appear, it was at least founded upon investigation, and this investigation deserved the concentrated attention of the brighter spirits of his day as well as determined efforts on their part to discover, if possible, a happier solution of the problem in the sense proposed by him, all of which would have speedily resulted in a complete reform of the science.

But Hume suffered the usual misfortune of metaphysicians, of not being understood. It is positively painful to see how utterly his opponents, Reid, Oswald, Beattie, and lastly Priestley, missed the point of the problem; for while

they were ever taking for granted that which he doubted, and demonstrating with zeal and often with impudence that which he never thought of doubting, they so misconstrued his valuable suggestion that everything remained in its old condition, as if nothing had happened.

The question was not whether the concept of cause was right, useful, and even indispensable for our knowledge of nature, for this Hume had never doubted; but whether that concept could be thought by reason a priori, and consequently whether it possessed an inner truth, independent of all experience, implying a wider application than merely to the objects of experience. This was Hume's problem. It was a question concerning the origin, not concerning the indispensable need of the concept. Were the former decided, the conditions of the use and the sphere of its valid application would have been determined as a matter of course.

But to satisfy the conditions of the problem, the opponents of the great thinker should have penetrated very deeply into the nature of reason, so far as it is concerned with pure thinking,—a task which did not suit them. They found a more convenient method of being defiant without any insight, viz., the appeal to common sense. It is indeed a great gift of God, to possess right, or (as they now call it) plain common sense. But this common sense must be shown practically, by well-considered and reasonable thoughts and words, not by appealing to it as an oracle, when no rational justification can be advanced. To appeal to common sense, when insight and science fail, and no sooner—this is one of the subtle discoveries of modern times, by means of which the most superficial ranter can safely enter the lists with the most thorough thinker, and hold his own. But as long as a particle of insight remains, no one would think of having recourse to this subterfuge. For what is it but an appeal to the opinion of the multitude, of whose applause the philosopher is ashamed, while the popular charlatan glories and confides in it? I should think that Hume might fairly have laid as much claim to common sense as Beattie, and in addition to a critical reason (such as the latter did not possess), which keeps common sense in check and prevents it from speculating, or, if speculations are under discussion, restrains the desire to decide because it cannot satisfy itself concerning its own arguments. By this means alone can common sense remain sound. Chisels and hammers may suffice to work a piece of wood, but for steel-engraving we require an engraver's needle. Thus common sense and speculative understanding are each serviceable in their own way, the former in judgments which apply immediately to experience, the latter when we judge universally from mere concepts, as in metaphysics, where sound common sense, so called in spite of the inapplicability of the word, has no right to judge at all.

I openly confess, the suggestion of David Hume was the very thing, which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber, and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy quite a new direction. I was far from following him in the conclusions at which he arrived by regarding, not the whole of his problem, but a part, which by itself can give us no information. If we start from a well-founded, but undeveloped, thought, which another has bequeathed to us, we may well hope by continued reflection to advance farther than the acute man, to whom we owe the first spark of light.

I therefore first tried whether Hume's objection could not be put into a general form, and soon found that the concept of the connexion of cause and effect was by no means the only idea by which the understanding thinks the connexion of things a priori, but rather that metaphysics consists altogether of such connexions. I sought to ascertain their number, and when I had satisfactorily succeeded in this by starting from a single principle, I proceeded to the deduction of these concepts, which I was now certain were not deduced from experience, as Hume had apprehended, but sprang from the pure understanding. This deduction (which seemed impossible to my acute predecessor, which had never even occurred to any one else, though no one had hesitated to use the concepts without investigating the basis of their objective validity) was the most difficult task ever undertaken in the service of metaphysics; and the worst was that metaphysics, such as it then existed, could not assist me in the least, because this deduction alone can render metaphysics possible. But as soon as I had succeeded in solving Hume's problem not merely in a particular case, but with respect to the whole faculty of pure reason, I could proceed safely, though slowly, to determine the whole sphere of pure reason completely and from general principles, in its circumference as well as in its contents. This was required for metaphysics in order to construct its system according to a reliable method.

But I fear that the execution of Hume's problem in its widest extent (viz., my Critique of the Pure Reason) will fare as the problem itself fared, when first proposed. It will be misjudged because it is misunderstood, and misunderstood because men choose to skim through the book, and not to think through it—a disagreeable task, because the work is dry, obscure, opposed to all ordinary notions, and moreover long-winded. I confess, however, I did not expect to hear from philosophers complaints of want of popularity, entertainment, and facility, when the existence of a highly prized and indispensable cognition is at stake, which cannot be established otherwise than by the strictest rules of methodic precision. Popularity may follow, but is inadmissible at the beginning. Yet as regards a certain obscurity, arising partly from the diffuseness of the plan, owing to which the principal points of

the investigation are easily lost sight of, the complaint is just, and I intend to remove it by the present Prolegomena.

The first-mentioned work, which discusses the pure faculty of reason in its whole compass and bounds, will remain the foundation, to which the Prolegomena, as a preliminary exercise, refer; for our critique must first be established as a complete and perfected science, before we can think of letting Metaphysics appear on the scene, or even have the most distant hope of attaining it.

We have been long accustomed to seeing antiquated knowledge produced as new by taking it out of its former context, and reducing it to system in a new suit of any fancy pattern under new titles. Most readers will set out by expecting nothing else from the Critique; but these Prolegomena may persuade him that it is a perfectly new science, of which no one has ever even thought, the very idea of which was unknown, and for which nothing hitherto accomplished can be of the smallest use, except it be the suggestion of Hume's doubts. Yet ever, he did not suspect such a formal science, but ran his ship ashore, for safety's sake, landing on scepticism, there to let it lie and rot; whereas my object is rather to give it a pilot, who, by means of safe astronomical principles drawn from a knowledge of the globe, and provided with a complete chart and compass, may steer the ship safely, whither he listeth.

If in a new science, which is wholly isolated and unique in its kind, we started with the prejudice that we can judge of things by means of our previously acquired knowledge, which is precisely what has first to be called in question, we should only fancy we saw everywhere what we had already known, the expressions, having a similar sound, only that all would appear utterly metamorphosed, senseless and unintelligible, because we should have as a foundation our own notions, made by long habit a second nature, instead of the author's. But the longwindedness of the work, so far as it depends on the subject, and not the exposition, its consequent unavoidable dryness and its scholastic precision are qualities which can only benefit the science, though they may discredit the book.

Few writers are gifted with the subtilty, and at the same time with the grace, of David Hume, or with the depth, as well as the elegance, of Moses Mendelssohn. Yet I flatter myself I might have made my own exposition popular, had my object been merely to sketch out a plan and leave its completion to others, instead of having my heart in the welfare of the science, to which I had devoted myself so long; in truth, it required no little constancy, and even self-denial, to postpone the sweets of an immediate success to the prospect of a slower, but more lasting, reputation.

Making plans is often the occupation of an opulent and boastful mind, which thus obtains the reputation of a creative genius, by demanding what it cannot itself supply; by censuring, what it cannot improve; and by proposing, what it knows not where to find. And yet something more should belong to a sound plan of a general critique of pure reason than mere conjectures, if this plan is to be other than the usual declamations of pious aspirations. But pure reason is a sphere so separate and self-contained, that we cannot touch a part without affecting all the rest. We can therefore do nothing without first determining the position of each part, and its relation to the rest; for, as our judgment cannot be corrected by anything without, the validity and use of every part depends upon the relation in which it stands to all the rest within the domain of reason.

So in the structure of an organized body, the end of each member can only be deduced from the full conception of the whole. It may, then, be said of such a critique that it is never trustworthy except it be perfectly complete, down to the smallest elements of pure reason. In the sphere of this faculty you can determine either everything or nothing.

But although a mere sketch, preceding the Critique of Pure Reason, would be unintelligible, unreliable, and useless, it is all the more useful as a sequel. For so we are able to grasp the whole, to examine in detail the chief points of importance in the science, and to improve in many respects our exposition, as compared with the first execution of the work.

After the completion of the work I offer here such a plan which is sketched out after an analytical method, while the work itself had to be executed in the synthetical style, in order that the science may present all its articulations, as the structure of a peculiar cognitive faculty, in their natural combination. But should any reader find this plan, which I publish as the Prolegomena to any future Metaphysics, still obscure, let him consider that not every one is bound to study Metaphysics, that many minds will succeed very well, in the exact and even in deep sciences, more closely allied to practical experience,<sup>7</sup> while they cannot succeed in investigations dealing exclusively with abstract concepts. In such cases men should apply their talents to other subjects. But he who

undertakes to judge, or still more, to construct, a system of Metaphysics, must satisfy the demands here made, either by adopting my solution, or by thoroughly refuting it, and substituting another. To evade it is impossible.

In conclusion, let it be remembered that this much-abused obscurity (frequently serving as a mere pretext under which people hide their own indolence or dullness) has its uses, since all who in other sciences observe a judicious silence, speak authoritatively in metaphysics and make bold decisions, because their ignorance is not here contrasted with the knowledge of others. Yet it does contrast with sound critical principles, which we may therefore commend in the words of Virgil:

“Ignavum, fucos, pecus a praesepibus arcent.”

“Bees are defending their hives against drones, those indolent creatures.”

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (PREAMBLE)

### 1. Of the Sources of Metaphysics.

IF it becomes desirable to formulate any cognition as science, it will be necessary first to determine accurately those peculiar features which no other science has in common with it, constituting its characteristics; otherwise the boundaries of all sciences become confused, and none of them can be treated thoroughly according to its nature.

The characteristics of a science may consist of a simple difference of object, or of the sources of cognition, or of the kind of cognition, or perhaps of all three conjointly. On this, therefore, depends the idea of a possible science and its territory.

First, as concerns the sources of metaphysical cognition, its very concept implies that they cannot be empirical. Its principles (including not only its maxims but its basic notions) must never be derived from experience. It must not be physical but metaphysical knowledge, viz., knowledge lying beyond experience. It can therefore have for its basis neither external experience, which is the source of physics proper, nor internal, which is the basis of empirical psychology. It is therefore a priori knowledge, coming from pure Understanding and pure Reason.

But so far Metaphysics would not be distinguishable from pure Mathematics; it must therefore be called pure philosophical cognition; and for the meaning of this term I refer to the Critique of the Pure Reason (II. “Method of Transcendentalism,” Chap. I., Sec. i), where the distinction between these two employments of the reason is sufficiently explained. So far concerning the sources of metaphysical cognition.

### § 2. Concerning the Kind of Cognition which can alone be called Metaphysical.

a. Of the Distinction between Analytical and Synthetical Judgments in general.—The peculiarity of its sources demands that metaphysical cognition must consist of nothing but a priori judgments. But whatever be their origin, or their logical form, there is a distinction in judgments, as to their content, according to which they are either merely explicative, adding nothing to the content of the cognition, or expansive, increasing the given cognition: the former may be called analytical, the latter synthetical, judgments.

Analytical judgments express nothing in the predicate but what has been already actually thought in the concept of the subject, though not so distinctly or with the same (full) consciousness. When I say: All bodies are extended, I have not amplified in the least my concept of body, but have only analysed it, as extension was really thought to belong to that concept before the judgment was made, though it was not expressed; this judgment is therefore analytical. On the contrary, this judgment, All bodies have weight, contains in its predicate something not actually

thought in the general concept of the body; it amplifies my knowledge by adding something to my concept, and must therefore be called synthetical.

b. The Common Principle of all Analytical Judgments is the Law of Contradiction. — All analytical judgments depend wholly on the law of Contradiction, and are in their nature a priori cognitions, whether the concepts that supply them with matter be empirical or not. For the predicate of an affirmative analytical judgment is already contained in the concept of the subject, of which it cannot be denied without contradiction. In the same way its opposite is necessarily denied of the subject in an analytical, but negative, judgment, by the same law of contradiction. Such is the nature of the judgments: all bodies are extended, and no bodies are unextended (i.e., simple).

For this very reason all analytical judgments are a priori even when the concepts are empirical, as, for example, Gold is a yellow metal; for to know this I require no experience beyond my concept of gold as a yellow metal: it is, in fact, the very concept, and I need only analyse it, without looking beyond it elsewhere.

c. Synthetical Judgments require a different Principle from the Law of Contradiction. — There are synthetical a posteriori judgments of empirical origin; but there are also others which are proved to be certain a priori, and which spring from pure Understanding and Reason. Yet they both agree in this, that they cannot possibly spring from the principle of analysis, viz., the law of contradiction, alone; they require a quite different principle, though, from whatever they may be deduced, they must be subject to the law of contradiction, which must never be violated, even though everything cannot be deduced from it. I shall first classify synthetical judgments.

1. Empirical Judgments are always synthetical. For it would be absurd to base an analytical judgment on experience, as our concept suffices for the purpose without requiring any testimony from experience. That body is extended, is a judgment established a priori, and not an empirical judgment. For before appealing to experience, we already have all the conditions of the judgment in the concept, from which we have but to elicit the predicate according to the law of contradiction, and thereby to become conscious of the necessity of the judgment, which experience could not even teach us.

2. Mathematical Judgments are all synthetical. This fact seems hitherto to have altogether escaped the observation of those who have analysed human reason; it even seems directly opposed to all their conjectures, though incontestably certain, and most important in its consequences. For as it was found that the conclusions of mathematicians all proceed according to the law of contradiction (as is demanded by all apodeictic certainty), men persuaded themselves that the fundamental principles were known from the same law. This was a great mistake, for a synthetical proposition can indeed be comprehended according to the law of contradiction, but only by presupposing another synthetical proposition from which it follows, but never in itself.

First of all, we must observe that all proper mathematical judgments are a priori, and not empirical, because they carry with them necessity, which cannot be obtained from experience. But if this be not conceded to me, very good; I shall confine my assertion to pure Mathematics, the very notion of which implies that it contains pure a priori and not empirical cognitions.

It might at first be thought that the proposition  $7 + 5 = 12$  is a mere analytical judgment, following from the concept of the sum of seven and five, according to the law of contradiction. But on closer examination it appears that the concept of the sum of  $7 + 5$  contains merely their union in a single number, without its being at all thought what the particular number is that unites them. The concept of twelve is by no means thought by merely thinking of the combination of seven and five; and analyse this possible sum as we may, we shall not discover twelve in the concept. We must go beyond these concepts, by calling to our aid some concrete image (*Anschauung*), i.e., either our five fingers, or five points (as Segner has it in his *Arithmetic*), and we must add successively the units of the five, given in some concrete image (*Anschauung*), to the concept of seven. Hence our concept is really amplified by the proposition  $7 + 5 = 12$ , and we add to the first a second, not thought in it. Arithmetical judgments are therefore synthetical, and the more plainly according as we take larger numbers; for in such cases it is clear that, however closely we analyse our concepts without calling visual images (*Anschauung*) to our aid, we can never find the sum by such mere dissection.

All principles of geometry are no less analytical. That a straight line is the shortest path between two points, is a synthetical proposition. For my concept of straight contains nothing of quantity, but only a quality. The attribute of shortness is therefore altogether additional, and cannot be obtained by any analysis of the concept. Here, too, visualisation (*Anschauung*) must come to aid us. It alone makes the synthesis possible.

Some other principles, assumed by geometers, are indeed actually analytical, and depend on the law of contradiction; but they only serve, as identical propositions, as a method of concatenation, and not as principles, e.g.,  $a = a$ , the whole is equal to itself, or  $a + b > a$ , the whole is greater than its part. And yet even these, though they are recognised as valid from mere concepts, are only admitted in mathematics, because they can be represented in some visual form (*Anschauung*). What usually makes us believe that the predicate of such apodeictic<sup>8</sup> judgments is already contained in our concept, and that the judgment is therefore analytical, is the duplicity of the expression, requesting us to think a certain predicate as of necessity implied in the thought of a given concept, which necessity attaches to the concept. But the question is not what we are requested to join in thought to the given concept, but what we actually think together with and in it, though obscurely; and so it appears that the predicate belongs to these concepts necessarily indeed, yet not directly but indirectly by an added visualisation (*Anschauung*).

### § 3. A Remark on the General Division of Judgments into Analytical and Synthetical.

This division is indispensable, as concerns the Critique of human understanding, and therefore deserves to be called classical, though otherwise it is of little use, but this is the reason why dogmatic philosophers, who always seek the sources of metaphysical judgments in Metaphysics itself, and not apart from it, in the pure laws of reason generally, altogether neglected this apparently obvious distinction. Thus the celebrated Wolf, and his acute follower Baumgarten, came to seek the proof of the principle of Sufficient Reason, which is clearly synthetical, in the principle of Contradiction. In Locke's Essay, however, I find an indication of my division. For in the fourth book (chap. iii. § 9, seq.), having discussed the various connexions of representations in judgments, and their sources, one of which he makes "identity and contradiction" (analytical judgments), and another the coexistence of representations in a subject, he confesses (§ 10) that our a priori knowledge of the latter is very narrow, and almost nothing. But in his remarks on this species of cognition, there is so little of what is definite, and reduced to rules, that we cannot wonder if no one, not even Hume, was led to make investigations concerning this sort of judgments. For such general and yet definite principles are not easily learned from other men, who have had them obscurely in their minds. We must hit on them first by our own reflexion, then we find them elsewhere, where we could not possibly have found them at first, because the authors themselves did not know that such an idea lay at the basis of their observations. Men who never think independently have nevertheless the acuteness to discover everything, after it has been once shown them, in what was said long since, though no one ever saw it there before.

### § 4. The General Question of the Prolegomena.—Is Metaphysics at all Possible?

Were a metaphysics, which could maintain its place as a science, really in existence; could we say, here is metaphysics, learn it, and it will convince you irresistibly and irrevocably of its truth: this question would be useless, and there would only remain that other question (which would rather be a test of our acuteness, than a proof of the existence of the thing itself), "How is the science possible, and how does reason come to attain it?" But human reason has not been so fortunate in this case. There is no single book to which you can point as you do to Euclid, and say: This is Metaphysics; here you may find the noblest objects of this science, the knowledge of a highest Being, and of a future existence, proved from principles of pure reason. We can be shown indeed many judgments, demonstrably certain, and never questioned; but these are all analytical, and rather concern the materials and the scaffolding for Metaphysics, than the extension of knowledge, which is our proper object in studying it (§ 2). Even supposing you produce synthetical judgments (such as the law of Sufficient Reason, which you have never proved, as you ought to, from pure reason a priori, though we gladly concede its truth), you lapse when they come to be employed for your principal object, into such doubtful assertions, that in all ages one Metaphysics has contradicted another, either in its assertions, or their proofs, and thus has itself destroyed its own claim to lasting assent. Nay, the very attempts to set up such a science are the main cause of the early appearance of scepticism, a mental attitude in which reason treats itself with such violence that it could never have arisen save from complete despair of ever satisfying our most important aspirations. For long before men began to inquire into nature methodically, they consulted abstract reason, which had to some extent been exercised by means of ordinary experience; for reason is ever present, while laws of nature must usually be discovered with labor. So Metaphysics floated to the surface, like foam, which dissolved the moment it was scooped off. But immediately there appeared a new supply on the surface, to be ever eagerly gathered up by some, while others, instead of seeking in the depths the cause of the phenomenon, thought they showed their wisdom by ridiculing the idle labor of their neighbors.

The essential and distinguishing feature of pure mathematical cognition among all other a priori cognitions is, that it cannot at all proceed from concepts, but only by means of the construction of concepts (see Critique II., Method of Transcendentalism, chap. I., sect. 1). As therefore in its judgments it must proceed beyond the concept to that

which its corresponding visualisation (*Anschauung*) contains, these judgments neither can, nor ought to, arise analytically, by dissecting the concept, but are all synthetical.

I cannot refrain from pointing out the disadvantage resulting to philosophy from the neglect of this easy and apparently insignificant observation. Hume being prompted (a task worthy of a philosopher) to cast his eye over the whole field of a priori cognitions in which human understanding claims such mighty possessions, heedlessly severed from it a whole, and indeed its most valuable, province, viz., pure mathematics; for he thought its nature, or, so to speak, the state-constitution of this empire, depended on totally different principles, namely, on the law of contradiction alone; and although he did not divide Judgments in this manner formally and universally as I have done here, what he said was equivalent to this: that mathematics contains only analytical, but metaphysics synthetical, a priori judgments. In this, however, he was greatly mistaken, and the mistake had a decidedly injurious effect upon his whole conception. But for this, he would have extended his question concerning the origin of our synthetical judgments far beyond the metaphysical concept of Causality, and included in it the possibility of mathematics a priori also, for this latter he must have assumed to be equally synthetical. And then he could not have based his metaphysical judgments on mere experience without subjecting the axioms of mathematics equally to experience, a thing which he was far too acute to do. The good company into which metaphysics would thus have been brought, would have saved it from the danger of a contemptuous ill-treatment, for the thrust intended for it must have reached mathematics, which was not and could not have been Hume's intention. Thus that acute man would have been led into considerations which must needs be similar to those that now occupy us, but which would have gained inestimably by his inimitably elegant style.

Metaphysical judgments, properly so called, are all synthetical. We must distinguish judgments pertaining to metaphysics from metaphysical judgments properly so called. Many of the former are analytical, but they only afford the means for metaphysical judgments, which are the whole end of the science, and which are always synthetical. For if there be concepts pertaining to metaphysics (as, for example, that of substance), the judgments springing from simple analysis of them also pertain to metaphysics, as, for example, substance is that which only exists as subject; and by means of several such analytical judgments, we seek to approach the definition of the concept. But as the analysis of a pure concept of the understanding pertaining to metaphysics, does not proceed in any different manner from the dissection of any other, even empirical, concepts, not pertaining to metaphysics (such as: air is an elastic fluid, the elasticity of which is not destroyed by any known degree of cold), it follows that the concept indeed, but not the analytical judgment, is properly metaphysical. This science has something peculiar in the production of its a priori cognitions, which must therefore be distinguished from the features it has in common with other rational knowledge. Thus the judgment, that all the substance in things is permanent, is a synthetical and properly metaphysical judgment.

If the a priori principles, which constitute the materials of metaphysics, have first been collected according to fixed principles, then their analysis will be of great value; it might be taught as a particular part (as a *philosophia definitiva*), containing nothing but analytical judgments pertaining to metaphysics, and could be treated separately from the synthetical which constitute metaphysics proper. For indeed these analyses are not elsewhere of much value, except in metaphysics, i.e., as regards the synthetical judgments, which are to be generated by these previously analysed concepts.

The conclusion drawn in this section then is, that metaphysics is properly concerned with synthetical propositions a priori, and these alone constitute its end, for which it indeed requires various dissections of its concepts, viz., of its analytical judgments, but wherein the procedure is not different from that in every other kind of knowledge, in which we merely seek to render our concepts distinct by analysis. But the generation of a priori cognition by concrete images as well as by concepts, in fine of synthetical propositions a priori in philosophical cognition, constitutes the essential subject of Metaphysics.

Weary therefore as well of dogmatism, which teaches us nothing, as of scepticism, which does not even promise us anything, not even the quiet state of a contented ignorance; disquieted by the importance of knowledge so much needed; and lastly, rendered suspicious by long experience of all knowledge which we believe we possess, or which offers itself, under the title of pure reason: there remains but one critical question on the answer to which our future procedure depends, viz., Is Metaphysics at all possible? But this question must be answered not by sceptical objections to the asseverations of some actual system of metaphysics (for we do not as yet admit such a thing to exist), but from the conception, as yet only problematical, of a science of this sort.

In the Critique of Pure Reason I have treated this question synthetically, by making inquiries into pure reason itself, and endeavoring in this source to determine the elements as well as the laws of its pure use according to principles. The task is difficult, and requires a resolute reader to penetrate by degrees into a system, based on no data except reason itself, and which therefore seeks, without resting upon any fact, to unfold knowledge from its

original germs. Prolegomena, however, are designed for preparatory exercises; they are intended rather to point out what we have to do in order if possible to actualise a science, than to propound it. They must therefore rest upon something already known as trustworthy, from which we can set out with confidence, and ascend to sources as yet unknown, the discovery of which will not only explain to us what we knew, but exhibit a sphere of many cognitions which all spring from the same sources. The method of Prolegomena, especially of those designed as a preparation for future metaphysics, is consequently analytical.

But it happens fortunately, that though we cannot assume metaphysics to be an actual science, we can say with confidence that certain pure a priori synthetical cognitions, pure Mathematics and pure Physics are actual and given; for both contain propositions, which are thoroughly recognised as apodeictically certain, partly by mere reason, partly by general consent arising from experience, and yet as independent of experience. We have therefore some at least uncontested synthetical knowledge a priori, and need not ask whether it be possible, for it is actual, but how it is possible, in order that we may deduce from the principle which makes the given cognitions possible the possibility of all the rest.

The General Problem: How is Cognition from Pure Reason Possible?

§ 5. We have above learned the significant distinction between analytical and synthetical judgments. The possibility of analytical propositions was easily comprehended, being entirely founded on the law of Contradiction. The possibility of synthetical a posteriori judgments, of those which are gathered from experience, also requires no particular explanation; for experience is nothing but a continual synthesis of perceptions. There remain therefore only synthetical propositions a priori, of which the possibility must be sought or investigated, because they must depend upon other principles than the law of contradiction.

But here we need not first establish the possibility of such propositions so as to ask whether they are possible. For there are enough of them which indeed are of undoubted certainty, and as our present method is analytical, we shall start from the fact, that such synthetical but purely rational cognition actually exists; but we must now inquire into the reason of this possibility, and ask, how such cognition is possible, in order that we may from the principles of its possibility be enabled to determine the conditions of its use, its sphere and its limits. The proper problem upon which all depends, when expressed with scholastic precision, is therefore:

How are Synthetic Propositions a priori possible?

For the sake of popularity I have above expressed this problem somewhat differently, as an inquiry into purely rational cognition, which I could do for once without detriment to the desired comprehension, because, as we have only to do here with metaphysics and its sources, the reader will, I hope, after the foregoing remarks, keep in mind that when we speak of purely rational cognition, we do not mean analytical, but synthetical cognition.<sup>9</sup>

Metaphysics stands or falls with the solution of this problem: its very existence depends upon it. Let any one make metaphysical assertions with ever so much plausibility, let him overwhelm us with conclusions, if he has not previously proved able to answer this question satisfactorily, I have a right to say: this is all vain baseless philosophy and false wisdom. You speak through pure reason, and claim, as it were to create cognitions a priori by not only dissecting given concepts, but also by asserting connexions which do not rest upon the law of contradiction, and which you believe you conceive quite independently of all experience; how do you arrive at this, and how will you justify your pretensions? An appeal to the consent of the common sense of mankind cannot be allowed; for that is a witness whose authority depends merely upon rumor. Says Horace:

“Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.”

“To all that which thou provest me thus, I refuse to give credence.”

The answer to this question, though indispensable, is difficult; and though the principal reason that it was not made long ago is, that the possibility of the question never occurred to anybody, there is yet another reason, which is this that a satisfactory answer to this one question requires a much more persistent, profound, and painstaking reflexion, than the most diffuse work on Metaphysics, which on its first appearance promised immortality to its author. And every intelligent reader, when he carefully reflects what this problem requires, must at first be struck with its difficulty, and would regard it as insoluble and even impossible, did there not actually exist pure synthetical cognitions a priori. This actually happened to David Hume, though he did not conceive the question in its entire universality as is done here, and as must be done, should the answer be decisive for all Metaphysics. For how is it possible, says that acute man, that when a concept is given me, I can go beyond it and connect with it another, which is not contained in it, in such a manner as if the latter necessarily belonged to the

former? Nothing but experience can furnish us with such connexions (thus he concluded from the difficulty which he took to be an impossibility), and all that vaunted necessity, or, what is the same thing, all cognition assumed to be a priori, is nothing but a long habit of accepting something as true, and hence of mistaking subjective necessity for objective.

Should my reader complain of the difficulty and the trouble which I occasion him in the solution of this problem, he is at liberty to solve it himself in an easier way. Perhaps he will then feel under obligation to the person who has undertaken for him a labor of so profound research, and will rather be surprised at the facility with which, considering the nature of the subject, the solution has been attained. Yet it has cost years of work to solve the problem in its whole universality (using the term in the mathematical sense, viz., for that which is sufficient for all cases), and finally to exhibit it in the analytical form, as the reader finds it here.

All metaphysicians are therefore solemnly and legally suspended from their occupations till they shall have answered in a satisfactory manner the question, "How are synthetic cognitions a priori possible?" For the answer contains which they must show when they have anything to offer in the name of pure reason. But if they do not possess these credentials, they can expect nothing else of reasonable people, who have been deceived so often, than to be dismissed without further ado.

If they on the other hand desire to carry on their business, not as a science, but as an art of wholesome oratory suited to the common sense of man, they cannot in justice be prevented. They will then speak the modest language of a rational belief, they will grant that they are not allowed even to conjecture, far less to know, anything which lies beyond the bounds of all possible experience, but only to assume (not for speculative use, which they must abandon, but for practical purposes only) the existence of something that is possible and even indispensable for the guidance of the understanding and of the will in life. In this manner alone can they be called useful and wise men, and the more so as they renounce the title of metaphysicians; for the latter profess to be speculative philosophers, and since, when judgments a priori are under discussion, poor probabilities cannot be admitted (for what is declared to be known a priori is thereby announced as necessary), such men cannot be permitted to play with conjectures, but their assertions must be either science, or are worth nothing at all.

It may be said, that the entire transcendental philosophy, which necessarily precedes all metaphysics, is nothing but the complete solution of the problem here propounded, in systematical order and completeness, and hitherto we have never had any transcendental philosophy; for what goes by its name is properly a part of metaphysics, whereas the former science is intended first to constitute the possibility of the latter, and must therefore precede all metaphysics. And it is not surprising that when a whole science, deprived of all help from other sciences, and consequently in itself quite new, is required to answer a single question satisfactorily, we should find the answer troublesome and difficult, nay even shrouded in obscurity.

As we now proceed to this solution according to the analytical method, in which we assume that such cognitions from pure reasons actually exist, we can only appeal to two sciences of theoretical cognition (which alone is under consideration here), pure mathematics and pure natural science (physics). For these alone can exhibit to us objects in a definite and actualisable form (in der Anschauung), and consequently (if there should occur in them a cognition a priori) can show the truth or conformity of the cognition to the object in concreto, that is, its actuality, from which we could proceed to the reason of its possibility by the analytic method. This facilitates our work greatly for here universal considerations are not only applied to facts, but even start from them, while in a synthetic procedure they must strictly be derived in abstracto from concepts.

But, in order to rise from these actual and at the same time well-grounded pure cognitions a priori to such a possible cognition of the same as we are seeking, viz., to metaphysics as a science, we must comprehend that which occasions it, I mean the mere natural, though in spite of its truth not unsuspected, cognition a priori which lies at the bottom of that science, the elaboration of which without any critical investigation of its possibility is commonly called metaphysics. In a word, we must comprehend the natural conditions of such a science as a part of our inquiry, and thus the transcendental problem will be gradually answered by a division into four questions:

1. How is pure mathematics possible?
2. How is pure natural science possible?
3. How is metaphysics in general possible?
4. How is metaphysics as a science possible?

It may be seen that the solution of these problems, though chiefly designed to exhibit the essential matter of the Critique, has yet something peculiar, which for itself alone deserves attention. This is the search for the sources of given sciences in reason itself, so that its faculty of knowing something a priori may by its own deeds be investigated and measured. By this procedure these sciences gain, if not with regard to their contents, yet as to their proper use, and while they throw light on the higher question concerning their common origin, they give, at the same time, an occasion better to explain their own nature.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (FIRST PART OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL PROBLEM)

### How is Pure Mathematics Possible?

#### § 6.

HERE is a great and established branch of knowledge, encompassing even now a wonderfully large domain and promising an unlimited extension in the future. Yet it carries with it thoroughly apodeictical certainty, i.e., absolute necessity, which therefore rests upon no empirical grounds. Consequently it is a pure product of reason, and moreover is thoroughly synthetical. [Here the question arises:]

“How then is it possible for human reason to produce a cognition of this nature entirely a priori?”

Does not this faculty [which produces mathematics], as it neither is nor can be based upon experience, presuppose some ground of cognition a priori, which lies deeply hidden, but which might reveal itself by these its effects, if their first beginnings were but diligently ferreted out?

§ 7. But we find that all mathematical cognition has this peculiarity: it must first exhibit its concept in a visual form (Anschauung) and indeed a priori, therefore in a visual form which is not empirical, but pure. Without this mathematics cannot take a single step; hence its judgments are always visual, viz., “intuitive”; whereas philosophy must be satisfied with discursive judgments from mere concepts, and though it may illustrate its doctrines through a visual figure, can never derive them from it. This observation on the nature of mathematics gives us a clue to the first and highest condition of its possibility, which is, that some non-sensuous visualisation (called pure intuition, or reine Anschauung) must form its basis, in which all its concepts can be exhibited or constructed, in concreto and yet a priori. If we can find out this pure intuition and its possibility, we may thence easily explain how synthetical propositions a priori are possible in pure mathematics, and consequently how this science itself is possible. Empirical intuition [viz., sense-perception] enables us without difficulty to enlarge the concept which we frame of an object of intuition [or sense-perception], by new predicates, which intuition [i.e., sense-perception] itself presents synthetically in experience. Pure intuition [viz., the visualisation of forms in our imagination, from which every thing sensual, i.e., every thought of material qualities, is excluded] does so likewise, only with this difference, that in the latter case the synthetical judgment is a priori certain and apodeictical, in the former, only a posteriori and empirically certain; because this latter contains only that which occurs in contingent empirical intuition, but the former, that which must necessarily be discovered in pure intuition. Here intuition, being an intuition a priori, is before all experience, viz., before any perception of particular objects, inseparably conjoined with its concept.

§ 8. But with this step our perplexity seems rather to increase than to lessen. For the question now is, “How is it possible to intuite [in a visual form] anything a priori?” An intuition [viz., a visual sense-perception] is such a representation as immediately depends upon the presence of the object. Hence it seems impossible to intuite from the outset a priori, because intuition would in that event take place without either a former or a present object to refer to, and by consequence could not be intuition. Concepts indeed are such, that we can easily form some of

them a priori, viz., such as contain nothing but the thought of an object in general; and we need not find ourselves in an immediate relation to the object. Take, for instance, the concepts of Quantity, of Cause, etc. But even these require, in order to make them understood, a certain concrete use—that is, an application to some sense-experience (*Anschauung*), by which an object of them is given us. But how can the intuition of the object [its visualisation] precede the object itself?

§ 9. If our intuition [i.e., our sense-experience] were perforce of such a nature as to represent things as they are in themselves, there would not be any intuition a priori, but intuition would be always empirical. For I can only know what is contained in the object in itself when it is present and given to me. It is indeed even then incomprehensible how the visualising (*Anschauung*) of a present thing should make me know this thing as it is in itself, as its properties cannot migrate into my faculty of representation. But even granting this possibility, a visualising of that sort would not take place a priori, that is, before the object were presented to me; for without this latter fact no reason of a relation between my representation and the object can be imagined, unless it depend upon a direct inspiration.

Therefore in one way only can my intuition (*Anschauung*) anticipate the actuality of the object, and be a cognition a priori, viz.: if my intuition contains nothing but the form of sensibility, antedating in my subjectivity all the actual impressions through which I am affected by objects.

For that objects of sense can only be intuited according to this form of sensibility I can know a priori. Hence it follows: that propositions, which concern this form of sensuous intuition only, are possible and valid for objects of the senses; as also, conversely, that intuitions which are possible a priori can never concern any other things than objects of our senses.<sup>10</sup>

§ 10. Accordingly, it is only the form of the sensuous intuition by which we can intuit things a priori, but by which we can know objects only as they appear to us (to our senses), not as they are in themselves; and this assumption is absolutely necessary if synthetical propositions a priori be granted as possible, or if, in case they actually occur, their possibility is to be comprehended and determined beforehand.

Now, the intuitions which pure mathematics lays at the foundation of all its cognitions and judgments which appear at once apodeictic and necessary are Space and Time. For mathematics must first have all its concepts in intuition, and pure mathematics in pure intuition, that is, it must construct them. If it proceeded in any other way, it would be impossible to make any headway, for mathematics proceeds, not analytically by dissection of concepts, but synthetically, and if pure intuition be wanting, there is nothing in which the matter for synthetical judgments a priori can be given. Geometry is based upon the pure intuition of space. Arithmetic accomplishes its concept of number by the successive addition of units in time; and pure mechanics especially cannot attain its concepts of motion without employing the representation of time. Both representations, however, are only intuitions; for if we omit from the empirical intuitions of bodies and their alterations (motion) everything empirical, or belonging to sensation, space and time still remain, which are therefore pure intuitions that lie a priori at the basis of the empirical. Hence they can never be omitted, but at the same time, by their being pure intuitions a priori, they prove that they are mere forms of our sensibility, which must precede all empirical intuition, or perception of actual objects, and conformably to which objects can be known a priori, but only as they appear to us.

§ 11. The problem of the present section is therefore solved. Pure mathematics, as synthetical cognition a priori, is only possible by referring to no other objects than those of the senses. At the basis of their empirical intuition lies a pure intuition (of space and of time) which is a priori. This is possible, because the latter intuition is nothing but the mere form of sensibility, which precedes the actual appearance of the objects, in that it, in fact, makes them possible. Yet this faculty of intuiting a priori affects not the matter of the phenomenon (that is, the sense-element in it, for this constitutes that which is empirical), but its form, viz., space and time. Should any man venture to doubt that these are determinations adhering not to things in themselves, but to their relation to our sensibility, I should be glad to know how it can be possible to know the constitution of things a priori, viz., before we have any acquaintance with them and before they are presented to us. Such, however, is the case with space and time. But this is quite comprehensible as soon as both count for nothing more than formal conditions of our sensibility, while the objects count merely as phenomena; for then the form of the phenomenon, i.e., pure intuition, can by all means be represented as proceeding from ourselves, that is, a priori.

§ 12. In order to add something by way of illustration and confirmation, we need only watch the ordinary and necessary procedure of geometers. All proofs of the complete congruence of two given figures (where the one can in every respect be substituted for the other) come ultimately to this that they may be made to coincide; which is evidently nothing else than a synthetical proposition resting upon immediate intuition, and this intuition must be pure, or given a priori, otherwise the proposition could not rank as apodeictically certain, but would have empirical

certainty only. In that case, it could only be said that it is always found to be so, and holds good only as far as our perception reaches. That everywhere space (which [in its entirety] is itself no longer the boundary of another space) has three dimensions, and that space cannot in any way have more, is based on the proposition that not more than three lines can intersect at right angles in one point; but this proposition cannot by any means be shown from concepts, but rests immediately on intuition, and indeed on pure and a priori intuition, because it is apodeictically certain. That we can require a line to be drawn to infinity (in indefinitum), or that a series of changes (for example, spaces traversed by motion) shall be infinitely continued, presupposes a representation of space and time, which can only attach to intuition, namely, so far as it in itself is bounded by nothing, for from concepts it could never be inferred. Consequently, the basis of mathematics actually are pure intuitions, which make its synthetical and apodeictically valid propositions possible. Hence our transcendental deduction of the notions of space and of time explains at the same time the possibility of pure mathematics. Without some such deduction its truth may be granted, but its existence could by no means be understood, and we must assume "that everything which can be given to our senses (to the external senses in space, to the internal one in time) is intuited by us as it appears to us, not as it is in itself."

§ 13. Those who cannot yet rid themselves of the notion that space and time are actual qualities inhering in things in themselves, may exercise their acumen on the following paradox. When they have in vain attempted its solution, and are free from prejudices at least for a few moments, they will suspect that the degradation of space and of time to mere forms of our sensuous intuition may perhaps be well founded.

If two things are quite equal in all respects as much as can be ascertained by all means possible, quantitatively and qualitatively, it must follow, that the one can in all cases and under all circumstances replace the other, and this substitution would not occasion the least perceptible difference. This in fact is true of plane figures in geometry; but some spherical figures exhibit, notwithstanding a complete internal agreement, such a contrast in their external relation, that the one figure cannot possibly be put in the place of the other. For instance, two spherical triangles on opposite hemispheres, which have an arc of the equator as their common base, may be quite equal, both as regards sides and angles, so that nothing is to be found in either, if it be described for itself alone and completed, that would not equally be applicable to both; and yet the one cannot be put in the place of the other (being situated upon the opposite hemisphere). Here then is an internal difference between the two triangles, which difference our understanding cannot describe as internal, and which only manifests itself by external relations in space.

But I shall adduce examples, taken from common life, that are more obvious still.

What can be more similar in every respect and in every part more alike to my hand and to my ear, than their images in a mirror? And yet I cannot put such a hand as is seen in the glass in the place of its archetype; for if this is a right hand, that in the glass is a left one, and the image or reflexion of the right ear is a left one which never can serve as a substitute for the other. There are in this case no internal differences which our understanding could determine by thinking alone. Yet the differences are internal as the senses teach, for, notwithstanding their complete equality and similarity, the left hand cannot be enclosed in the same bounds as the right one (they are not congruent); the glove of one hand cannot be used for the other. What is the solution? These objects are not representations of things as they are in themselves, and as the pure understanding would cognise them, but sensuous intuitions, that is, appearances, the possibility of which rests upon the relation of certain things unknown in themselves to something else, viz., to our sensibility. Space is the form of the external intuition of this sensibility, and the internal determination of every space is only possible by the determination of its external relation to the whole space, of which it is a part (in other words, by its relation to the external sense). That is to say, the part is only possible through the whole, which is never the case with things in themselves, as objects of the mere understanding, but with appearances only. Hence the difference between similar and equal things, which are yet not congruent (for instance, two symmetric helices), cannot be made intelligible by any concept, but only by the relation to the right and the left hands which immediately refers to intuition.

Remark I.

Pure Mathematics, and especially pure geometry, can only have objective reality on condition that they refer to objects of sense. But in regard to the latter the principle holds good, that our sense representation is not a representation of things in themselves, but of the way in which they appear to us. Hence it follows, that the propositions of geometry are not the results of a mere creation of our poetic imagination, and that therefore they cannot be referred with assurance to actual objects; but rather that they are necessarily valid of space, and consequently of all that may be found in space, because space is nothing else than the form of all external appearances, and it is this form alone in which objects of sense can be given. Sensibility, the form of which is the

basis of geometry, is that upon which the possibility of external appearance depends. Therefore these appearances can never contain anything but what geometry prescribes to them.

It would be quite otherwise if the senses were so constituted as to represent objects as they are in themselves. For then it would not by any means follow from the conception of space, which with all its properties serves to the geometer as an a priori foundation, together with what is thence inferred, must be so in nature. The space of the geometer would be considered a mere fiction, and it would not be credited with objective validity, because we cannot see how things must of necessity agree with an image of them, which we make spontaneously and previous to our acquaintance with them. But if this image, or rather this formal intuition, is the essential property of our sensibility, by means of which alone objects are given to us, and if this sensibility represents not things in themselves, but their appearances: we shall easily comprehend, and at the same time indisputably prove, that all external objects of our world of sense must necessarily coincide in the most rigorous way with the propositions of geometry; because sensibility by means of its form of external intuition, viz., by space, the same with which the geometer is occupied, makes those objects at all possible as mere appearances.

It will always remain a remarkable phenomenon in the history of philosophy, that there was a time, when even mathematicians, who at the same time were philosophers, began to doubt, not of the accuracy of their geometrical propositions so far as they concerned space, but of their objective validity and the applicability of this concept itself, and of all its corollaries, to nature. They showed much concern whether a line in nature might not consist of physical points, and consequently that true space in the object might consist of simple [discrete] parts, while the space which the geometer has in his mind [being continuous] cannot be such. They did not recognise that this mental space renders possible the physical space, i.e., the extension of matter; that this pure space is not at all a quality of things in themselves, but a form of our sensuous faculty of representation; and that all objects in space are mere appearances, i.e., not things in themselves but representations of our sensuous intuition. But such is the case, for the space of the geometer is exactly the form of sensuous intuition which we find a priori in us, and contains the ground of the possibility of all external appearances (according to their form), and the latter must necessarily and most rigidly agree with the propositions of the geometer, which he draws not from any fictitious concept, but from the subjective basis of all external phenomena, which is sensibility itself. In this and no other way can geometry be made secure as to the undoubted objective reality of its propositions against all the intrigues of a shallow Metaphysics, which is surprised at them [the geometrical propositions], because it has not traced them to the sources of their concepts.

Remark II.

Whatever is given us as object, must be given us in intuition. All our intuition however takes place by means of the senses only; the understanding intuits nothing, but only reflects. And as we have just shown that the senses never and in no manner enable us to know things in themselves, but only their appearances, which are mere representations of the sensibility, we conclude that 'all bodies, together with the space in which they are, must be considered nothing but mere representations in us, and exist nowhere but in our thoughts.' You will say: Is not this manifest idealism?

Idealism consists in the assertion, that there are none but thinking beings, all other things, which we think are perceived in intuition, being nothing but representations in the thinking beings, to which no object external to them corresponds in fact. Whereas I say, that things as objects of our senses existing outside us are given, but we know nothing of what they may be in themselves, knowing only their appearances, i.e., the representations which they cause in us by affecting our senses. Consequently I grant by all means that there are bodies without us, that is, things which, though quite unknown to us as to what they are in themselves, we yet know by the representations which their influence on our sensibility procures us, and which we call bodies, a term signifying merely the appearance of the thing which is unknown to us, but not therefore less actual. Can this be termed idealism? It is the very contrary.

Long before Locke's time, but assuredly since him, it has been generally assumed and granted without detriment to the actual existence of external things, that many of their predicates may be said to belong not to the things in themselves, but to their appearances, and to have no proper existence outside our representation. Heat, color, and taste, for instance, are of this kind. Now, if I go farther, and for weighty reasons rank as mere appearances the remaining qualities of bodies also, which are called primary, such as extension, place, and in general space, with all that which belongs to it (impenetrability or materiality, space, etc.)—no one in the least can adduce the reason of its being inadmissible. As little as the man who admits colors not to be properties of the object in itself, but only as modifications of the sense of sight, should on that account be called an idealist, so little can my system be named idealistic, merely because I find that more, nay,

All the properties which constitute the intuition of a body belong merely to its appearance.

The existence of the thing that appears is thereby not destroyed, as in genuine idealism, but it is only shown, that we cannot possibly know it by the senses as it is in itself.

I should be glad to know what my assertions must be in order to avoid all idealism. Undoubtedly, I should say, that the representation of space is not only perfectly conformable to the relation which our sensibility has to objects—that I have said—but that it is quite similar to the object,—an assertion in which I can find as little meaning as if I said that the sensation of red has a similarity to the property of vermilion, which in me excites this sensation.

Remark III.

Hence we may at once dismiss an easily foreseen but futile objection, “that by admitting the ideality of space and of time the whole sensible world would be turned into mere sham.” At first all philosophical insight into the nature of sensuous cognition was spoiled, by making the sensibility merely a confused mode of representation, according to which we still know things as they are, but without being able to reduce everything in this our representation to a clear consciousness; whereas proof is offered by us that sensibility consists, not in this logical distinction of clearness and obscurity, but in the genetical one of the origin of cognition itself. For sensuous perception represents things not at all as they are, but only the mode in which they affect our senses, and consequently by sensuous perception appearances only and not things themselves are given to the understanding for reflexion. After this necessary corrective, an objection rises from an unpardonable and almost intentional misconception, as if my doctrine turned all the things of the world of sense into mere illusion.

When an appearance is given us, we are still quite free as to how we should judge the matter. The appearance depends upon the senses, but the judgment upon the understanding, and the only question is, whether in the determination of the object there is truth or not. But the difference between truth and dreaming is not ascertained by the nature of the representations, which are referred to objects (for they are the same in both cases), but by their connexion according to those rules, which determine the coherence of the representations in the concept of an object, and by ascertaining whether they can subsist together in experience or not. And it is not the fault of the appearances if our cognition takes illusion for truth, i.e., if the intuition, by which an object is given us, is considered a concept of the thing or of its existence also, which the understanding can only think. The senses represent to us the paths of the planets as now progressive, now retrogressive, and herein is neither falsehood nor truth, because as long as we hold this path to be nothing but appearance, we do not judge of the objective nature of their motion. But as a false judgment may easily arise when the understanding is not on its guard against this subjective mode of representation being considered objective, we say they appear to move backward; it is not the senses however which must be charged with the illusion, but the understanding, whose province alone it is to give an objective judgment on appearances.

Thus, even if we did not at all reflect on the origin of our representations, whenever we connect our intuitions of sense (whatever they may contain), in space and in time, according to the rules of the coherence of all cognition in experience, illusion or truth will arise according as we are negligent or careful. It is merely a question of the use of sensuous representations in the understanding, and not of their origin. In the same way, if I consider all the representations of the senses, together with their form, space and time, to be nothing but appearances, and space and time to be a mere form of the sensibility, which is not to be met with in objects out of it, and if I make use of these representations in reference to possible experience only, there is nothing in my regarding them as appearances that can lead astray or cause illusion. For all that they can correctly cohere according to rules of truth in experience. Thus all the propositions of geometry hold good of space as well as of all the objects of the senses, consequently of all possible experience, whether I consider space as a mere form of the sensibility, or as something cleaving to the things themselves. In the former case however I comprehend how I can know a priori these propositions concerning all the objects of external intuition. Otherwise, everything else as regards all possible experience remains just as if I had not departed from the vulgar view.

But if I venture to go beyond all possible experience with my notions of space and time, which I cannot refrain from doing if I proclaim them qualities inherent in things in themselves (for what should prevent me from letting them hold good of the same things, even though my senses might be different, and unsuited to them?), then a grave error may arise due to illusion, for thus I would proclaim to be universally valid what is merely a subjective condition of the intuition of things and sure only for all objects of sense, viz., for all possible experience; I would refer this condition to things in themselves, and do not limit it to the conditions of experience.

My doctrine of the ideality of space and of time, therefore, far from reducing the whole sensible world to mere illusion, is the only means of securing the application of one of the most important cognitions (that which mathematics propounds a priori) to actual objects, and of preventing its being regarded as mere illusion. For without this observation it would be quite impossible to make out whether the intuitions of space and time, which we borrow from no experience, and which yet lie in our representation a priori, are not mere phantasms of our brain, to which objects do not correspond, at least not adequately, and consequently, whether we have been able to show its unquestionable validity with regard to all the objects of the sensible world just because they are mere appearances.

Secondly, though these my principles make appearances of the representations of the senses, they are so far from turning the truth of experience into mere illusion, that they are rather the only means of preventing the transcendental illusion, by which metaphysics has hitherto been deceived, leading to the childish endeavor of catching at bubbles, because appearances, which are mere representations, were taken for things in themselves. Here originated the remarkable event of the antimony of Reason which I shall mention by and by, and which is destroyed by the single observation, that appearance, as long as it is employed in experience, produces truth, but the moment it transgresses the bounds of experience, and consequently becomes transcendent, produces nothing but illusion.

Inasmuch, therefore, as I leave to things as we obtain them by the senses their actuality, and only limit our sensuous intuition of these things to this, that they represent in no respect, not even in the pure intuitions of space and of time, anything more than mere appearance of those things, but never their constitution in themselves, this is not a sweeping illusion invented for nature by me. My protestation too against all charges of idealism is so valid and clear as even to seem superfluous, were there not incompetent judges, who, while they would have an old name for every deviation from their perverse though common opinion, and never judge of the spirit of philosophic nomenclature, but cling to the letter only, are ready to put their own conceits in the place of well-defined notions, and thereby deform and distort them. I have myself given this my theory the name of transcendental idealism, but that cannot authorise any one to confound it either with the empirical idealism of Descartes, (indeed, his was only an insoluble problem, owing to which he thought every one at liberty to deny the existence of the corporeal world, because it could never be proved satisfactorily), or with the mystical and visionary idealism of Berkeley, against which and other similar phantasms our Critique contains the proper antidote. My idealism concerns not the existence of things (the doubting of which, however, constitutes idealism in the ordinary sense), since it never came into my head to doubt it, but it concerns the sensuous representation of things, to which space and time especially belong. Of these [viz., space and time], consequently of all appearances in general, I have only shown, that they are neither things (but mere modes of representation), nor determinations belonging to things in themselves. But the word "transcendental," which with me means a reference of our cognition, i.e., not to things, but only to the cognitive faculty, was meant to obviate this misconception. Yet rather than give further occasion to it by this word, I now retract it, and desire this idealism of mine to be called critical. But if it be really an objectionable idealism to convert actual things (not appearances) into mere representations, by what name shall we call him who conversely changes mere representations to things? It may, I think, be called "dreaming idealism," in contradistinction to the former, which may be called "visionary," both of which are to be refuted by my transcendental, or, better, critical idealism.

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## **IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (SECOND PART OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL PROBLEM)**

How is the Science of Nature Possible?

§ 14.

NATURE is the existence of things, so far as it is determined according to universal laws. Should nature signify the existence of things in themselves, we could never cognise it either a priori or a posteriori. Not a priori, for how can we know what belongs to things in themselves, since this never can be done by the dissection of our concepts (in analytical judgments)? We do not want to know what is contained in our concept of a thing (for the [concept describes what] belongs to its logical being), but what is in the actuality of the thing superadded to our concept, and by what the thing itself is determined in its existence outside the concept. Our understanding, and the conditions on which alone it can connect the determinations of things in their existence, do not prescribe any rule to things themselves; these do not conform to our understanding, but it must conform itself to them; they must therefore be first given us in order to gather these determinations from them, wherefore they would not be cognised a priori.

A cognition of the nature of things in themselves a posteriori would be equally impossible. For, if experience is to teach us laws, to which the existence of things is subject, these laws, if they regard things in themselves, must belong to them of necessity even outside our experience. But experience teaches us what exists and how it exists, but never that it must necessarily exist so and not otherwise. Experience therefore can never teach us the nature of things in themselves.

§ 15. We nevertheless actually possess a pure science of nature in which are propounded, a priori and with all the necessity requisite to apodeictical propositions, laws to which nature is subject. I need only call to witness that propaedeutic of natural science which, under the title of the universal Science of Nature, precedes all Physics (which is founded upon empirical principles). In it we have Mathematics applied to appearance, and also merely discursive principles (or those derived from concepts), which constitute the philosophical part of the pure cognition of nature. But there are several things in it, which are not quite pure and independent of empirical sources: such as the concept of motion, that of impenetrability (upon which the empirical concept of matter rests), that of inertia, and many others, which prevent its being called a perfectly pure science of nature. Besides, it only refers to objects of the external sense, and therefore does not give an example of a universal science of nature, in the strict sense, for such a science must reduce nature in general, whether it regards the object of the external or that of the internal sense (the object of Physics as well as Psychology), to universal laws. But among the principles of this universal physics there are a few which actually have the required universality; for instance, the propositions that “substance is permanent,” and that “every event is determined by a cause according to constant laws,” etc. These are actually universal laws of nature, which subsist completely a priori. There is then in fact a pure science of nature, and the question arises, How is it possible?

§ 16. The word “nature” assumes yet another meaning, which determines the object, whereas in the former sense it only denotes the conformity to law [Gesetzmässigkeit] of the determinations of the existence of things generally. If we consider it materialiter (i.e., in the matter that forms its objects) “nature is the complex of all the objects of experience.” And with this only are we now concerned, for besides, things which can never be objects of experience, if they must be cognised as to their nature, would oblige us to have recourse to concepts whose meaning could never be given in concreto (by any example of possible experience). Consequently we must form for ourselves a list of concepts of their nature, the reality whereof (i.e., whether they actually refer to objects, or are mere creations of thought) could never be determined. The cognition of what cannot be an object of experience would be hyperphysical, and with things hyperphysical we are here not concerned, but only with the cognition of nature, the actuality of which can be confirmed by experience, though it [the cognition of nature] is possible a priori and precedes all experience.

§ 17. The formal [aspect] of nature in this narrower sense is therefore the conformity to law of all the objects of experience, and so far as it is cognised a priori, their necessary conformity. But it has just been shown that the laws of nature can never be cognised a priori in objects so far as they are considered not in reference to possible experience, but as things in themselves. And our inquiry here extends not to things in themselves (the properties of which we pass by), but to things as objects of possible experience, and the complex of these is what we properly designate as nature. And now I ask, when the possibility of a cognition of nature a priori is in question, whether it is better to arrange the problem thus: How can we cognise a priori that things as objects of experience necessarily conform to law? or thus: How is it possible to cognise a priori the necessary conformity to law of experience itself as regards all its objects generally?

Closely considered, the solution of the problem, represented in either way, amounts, with regard to the pure cognition of nature (which is the point of the question at issue), entirely to the same thing. For the subjective laws, under which alone an empirical cognition of things is possible, hold good of these things, as Objects of possible experience (not as things in themselves, which are not considered here). Either of the following statements means quite the same:

A judgment of observation can never rank as experience, without the law, that “whenever an event is observed, it is always referred to some antecedent, which it follows according to a universal rule.”

“Everything, of which experience teaches that it happens, must have a cause.”

It is, however, more commendable to choose the first formula. For we can a priori and previous to all given objects have a cognition of those conditions, on which alone experience is possible, but never of the laws to which things may in themselves be subject, without reference to possible experience. We cannot therefore study the nature of things a priori otherwise than by investigating the conditions and the universal (though subjective) laws, under which alone such a cognition as experience (as to mere form) is possible, and we determine accordingly the possibility of things, as objects of experience. For if I should choose the second formula, and seek the conditions a priori, on which nature as an object of experience is possible, I might easily fall into error, and fancy that I was speaking of nature as a thing in itself, and then move round in endless circles, in a vain search for laws concerning things of which nothing is given me.

Accordingly we shall here be concerned with experience only, and the universal conditions of its possibility which are given a priori. Thence we shall determine nature as the whole object of all possible experience. I think it will be understood that I here do not mean the rules of the observation of a nature that is already given, for these already presuppose experience. I do not mean how (through experience) we can study the laws of nature; for these would not then be laws a priori, and would yield us no pure science of nature; but [I mean to ask] how the conditions a priori of the possibility of experience are at the same time the sources from which all the universal laws of nature must be derived.

§ 18. In the first place we must state that, while all judgments of experience (*Erfahrungsurtheile*) are empirical (i.e., have their ground in immediate sense perception), vice versa, all empirical judgments (*empirische Urtheile*) are not judgments of experience, but, besides the empirical, and in general besides what is given to the sensuous intuition, particular concepts must yet be superadded—concepts which have their origin quite a priori in the pure understanding, and under which every perception must be first of all subsumed and then by their means changed into experience.<sup>11</sup>

Empirical judgments, so far as they have objective validity, are judgments of experience; but those which are only subjectively valid, I name mere judgments of perception. The latter require no pure concept of the understanding, but only the logical connexion of perception in a thinking subject. But the former always require, besides the representation of the sensuous intuition, particular concepts originally begotten in the understanding, which produce the objective validity of the judgment of experience.

All our judgments are at first merely judgments of perception; they hold good only for us (i.e., for our subject), and we do not till afterwards give them a new reference (to an object), and desire that they shall always hold good for us and in the same way for everybody else; for when a judgment agrees with an object, all judgments concerning the same object must likewise agree among themselves, and thus the objective validity of the judgment of experience signifies nothing else than its necessary universality of application. And conversely when we have reason to consider a judgment necessarily universal (which never depends upon perception, but upon the pure concept of the understanding, under which the perception is subsumed), we must consider it objective also, that is, that it expresses not merely a reference of our perception to a subject, but a quality of the object. For there would be no reason for the judgments of other men necessarily agreeing with mine, if it were not the unity of the object to which they all refer, and with which they accord; hence they must all agree with one another.

§ 19. Therefore objective validity and necessary universality (for everybody) are equivalent terms, and though we do not know the object in itself, yet when we consider a judgment as universal, and also necessary, we understand it to have objective validity. By this judgment we cognise the object (though it remains unknown as it is in itself) by the universal and necessary connexion of the given perceptions. As this is the case with all objects of sense, judgments of experience take their objective validity not from the immediate cognition of the object (which is impossible), but from the condition of universal validity in empirical judgments, which, as already said, never rests upon empirical, or, in short, sensuous conditions, but upon a pure concept of the understanding. The object always remains unknown in itself; but when by the concept of the understanding the connexion of the representations of the object, which are given to our sensibility, is determined as universally valid, the object is determined by this relation, and it is the judgment that is objective.

To illustrate the matter: When we say, “the room is warm, sugar sweet, and wormwood bitter”<sup>12</sup>—we have only subjectively valid judgments. I do not at all expect that I or any other person shall always find it as I now do; each of these sentences only expresses a relation of two sensations to the same subject, to myself, and that only in my

present state of perception; consequently they are not valid of the object. Such are judgments of perception. Judgments of experience are of quite a different nature. What experience teaches me under certain circumstances, it must always teach me and everybody; and its validity is not limited to the subject nor to its state at a particular time. Hence I pronounce all such judgments as being objectively valid. For instance, when I say the air is elastic, this judgment is as yet a judgment of perception only—I do nothing but refer two of my sensations to one another. But, if I would have it called a judgment of experience, I require this connexion to stand under a condition, which makes it universally valid. I desire therefore that I and everybody else should always connect necessarily the same perceptions under the same circumstances.

§ 20. We must consequently analyse experience in order to see what is contained in this product of the senses and of the understanding, and how the judgment of experience itself is possible. The foundation is the intuition of which I become conscious, i.e., perception (*perceptio*), which pertains merely to the senses. But in the next place, there are acts of judging (which belong only to the understanding). But this judging may be twofold—first, I may merely compare perceptions and connect them in a particular state of my consciousness; or, secondly, I may connect them in consciousness generally. The former judgment is merely a judgment of perception, and of subjective validity only: it is merely a connexion of perceptions in my mental state, without reference to the object. Hence it is not, as is commonly imagined, enough for experience to compare perceptions and to connect them in consciousness through judgment; there arises no universality and necessity, for which alone judgments can become objectively valid and be called experience.

Quite another judgment therefore is required before perception can become experience. The given intuition must be subsumed under a concept, which determines the form of judging in general relatively to the intuition, connects its empirical consciousness in consciousness generally, and thereby procures universal validity for empirical judgments. A concept of this nature is a pure a priori concept of the Understanding, which does nothing but determine for an intuition the general way in which it can be used for judgments. Let the concept be that of cause, then it determines the intuition which is subsumed under it, e.g., that of air, relative to judgments in general, viz., the concept of air serves with regard to its expansion in the relation of antecedent to consequent in a hypothetical judgment. The concept of cause accordingly is a pure concept of the understanding, which is totally disparate from all possible perception, and only serves to determine the representation subsumed under it, relatively to judgments in general, and so to make a universally valid judgment possible.

Before, therefore, a judgment of perception can become a judgment of experience, it is requisite that the perception should be subsumed under some such a concept of the understanding; for instance, air ranks under the concept of causes, which determines our judgment about it in regard to its expansion as hypothetical.<sup>13</sup> Thereby the expansion of the air is represented not as merely belonging to the perception of the air in my present state or in several states of mine, or in the state of perception of others, but as belonging to it necessarily. The judgment, “the air is elastic,” becomes universally valid, and a judgment of experience, only by certain judgments preceding it, which subsume the intuition of air under the concept of cause and effect: and they thereby determine the perceptions not merely as regards one another in me, but relatively to the form of judging in general, which is here hypothetical, and in this way they render the empirical judgment universally valid.

If all our synthetical judgments are analysed so far as they are objectively valid, it will be found that they never consist of mere intuitions connected only (as is commonly believed) by comparison into a judgment; but that they would be impossible were not a pure concept of the understanding superadded to the concepts abstracted from intuition, under which concept these latter are subsumed, and in this manner only combined into an objectively valid judgment. Even the judgments of pure mathematics in their simplest axioms are not exempt from this condition. The principle, “a straight line is the shortest between two points,” presupposes that the line is subsumed under the concept of quantity, which certainly is no mere intuition, but has its seat in the understanding alone, and serves to determine the intuition (of the line) with regard to the judgments which may be made about it, relatively to their quantity, that is, to plurality (as *judicia plurativa*).<sup>14</sup> For under them it is understood that in a given intuition there is contained a plurality of homogenous parts.

§ 21. To prove, then, the possibility of experience so far as it rests upon pure concepts of the understanding a priori, we must first represent what belongs to judgments in general and the various functions of the understanding, in a complete table. For the pure concepts of the understanding must run parallel to these functions, as such concepts are nothing more than concepts of intuitions in general, so far as these are determined by one or other of these functions of judging, in themselves, that is, necessarily and universally. Hereby also the a priori principles of the possibility of all experience, as of an objectively valid empirical cognition, will be precisely determined. For they are nothing but propositions by which all perception is (under certain universal conditions of intuition) subsumed under those pure concepts of the understanding.

Logical Table of Judgments.	
1.	2.
As to Quantity.	As to Quality.
Universal.	Affirmative.
Particular.	Negative.
Singular.	Infinite.
3.	4.
As to Relation.	As to Modality.
Categorical.	Problematical.
Hypothetical.	Assertorial.
Disjunctive.	Apodeictical.
Transcendental Table of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding.	
1.	2.
As to Quantity.	As to Quality.
Unity (the Measure).	Reality.
Plurality (the Quantity).	Negation.
Totality (the Whole).	Limitation.
3.	4.
As to Relation.	As to Modality.
Substance.	Possibility.
Cause.	Existence.
Community.	Necessity.
Pure Physiological Table of the Universal Principles of the Science of Nature.	
1.	2.
Axioms of Intuition.	Anticipations of Perception.
3.	4.
Analogies of Experience.	Postulates of Empirical Thinking generally.

§ 21a. In order to comprise the whole matter in one idea, it is first necessary to remind the reader that we are discussing not the origin of experience, but of that which lies in experience. The former pertains to empirical

psychology, and would even then never be adequately explained without the latter, which belongs to the Critique of cognition, and particularly of the understanding.

Experience consists of intuitions, which belong to the sensibility, and of judgments, which are entirely a work of the understanding. But the judgments, which the understanding forms alone from sensuous intuitions, are far from being judgments of experience. For in the one case the judgment connects only the perceptions as they are given in the sensuous intuition, while in the other the judgments must express what experience in general, and not what the mere perception (which possesses only subjective validity) contains. The judgment of experience must therefore add to the sensuous intuition and its logical connexion in a judgment (after it has been rendered universal by comparison) something that determines the synthetical judgment as necessary and therefore as universally valid. This can be nothing else than that concept which represents the intuition as determined in itself with regard to one form of judgment rather than another, viz., a concept of that synthetical unity of intuitions which can only be represented by a given logical function of judgments.

§ 22. The sum of the matter is this: the business of the senses is to intuite—that of the understanding is to think. But thinking is uniting representations in one consciousness. This union originates either merely relative to the subject, and is accidental and subjective, or is absolute, and is necessary or objective. The union of representations in one consciousness is judgment. Thinking therefore is the same as judging, or referring representations to judgments in general. Hence judgments are either merely subjective, when representations are referred to a consciousness in one subject only, and united in it, or objective, when they are united in a consciousness generally, that is, necessarily. The logical functions of all judgments are but various modes of uniting representations in consciousness. But if they serve for concepts, they are concepts of their necessary union in a consciousness, and so principles of objectively valid judgments. This union in a consciousness is either analytical, by identity, or synthetical, by the combination and addition of various representations one to another. Experience consists in the synthetical connexion of phenomena (perceptions) in consciousness, so far as this connexion is necessary. Hence the pure concepts of the understanding are those under which all perceptions must be subsumed ere they can serve for judgments of experience, in which the synthetical unity of the perceptions is represented as necessary and universally valid.<sup>15</sup>

§ 23. Judgments, when considered merely as the condition of the union of given representations in a consciousness, are rules. These rules, so far as they represent the union as necessary, are rules a priori, and so far as they cannot be deduced from higher rules, are fundamental principles. But in regard to the possibility of all experience, merely in relation to the form of thinking in it, no conditions of judgments of experience are higher than those which bring the phenomena, according to the various form of their intuition, under pure concepts of the understanding, and render the empirical judgment objectively valid. These concepts are therefore the a priori principles of possible experience.

The principles of possible experience are then at the same time universal laws of nature, which can be cognised a priori. And thus the problem in our second question, “How is the pure Science of Nature possible?” is solved. For the system which is required for the form of a science is to be met with in perfection here, because, beyond the above-mentioned formal conditions of all judgments in general offered in logic, no others are possible, and these constitute a logical system. The concepts grounded thereupon, which contain the a priori conditions of all synthetical and necessary judgments, accordingly constitute a transcendental system. Finally the principles, by means of which all phenomena are subsumed under these concepts, constitute a physical<sup>16</sup> system, that is, a system of nature, which precedes all empirical cognition of nature, makes it even possible, and hence may in strictness be denominated the universal and pure science of nature.

§ 24. The first one<sup>17</sup> of the physiological principles subsumes all phenomena, as intuitions in space and time, under the concept of Quantity, and is so far a principle of the application of Mathematics to experience. The second one subsumes the empirical element, viz., sensation which denotes the real in intuitions, not indeed directly under the concept of quantity, because sensation is not an intuition that contains either space or time, though it places the respective object into both. But still there is between reality (sense-representation) and the zero, or total void of intuition in time, a difference which has a quantity. For between every given degree of light and of darkness, between every degree of heat and of absolute cold, between every degree of weight and of absolute lightness, between every degree of occupied space and of totally void space, diminishing degrees can be conceived, in the same manner as between consciousness and total unconsciousness (the darkness of a psychological blank) ever diminishing degrees obtain. Hence there is no perception that can prove an absolute absence of it; for instance, no psychological darkness that cannot be considered as a kind of consciousness. This occurs in all cases of sensation, and so the understanding can anticipate even sensations, which constitute the peculiar quality of empirical representations (appearances), by means of the principle: “that they all have

(consequently that what is real in all phenomena has) a degree.” Here is the second application of mathematics (mathesis intensorum) to the science of nature.

§ 25. Anent the relation of appearances merely with a view to their existence, the determination is not mathematical but dynamical, and can never be objectively valid, consequently never fit for experience, if it does not come under a priori principles by which the cognition of experience relative to appearances becomes even possible. Hence appearances must be subsumed under the concept of Substance, which is the foundation of all determination of existence, as a concept of the thing itself; or secondly—so far as, a succession is found among phenomena, that is, an event—under the concept of an Effect with reference to Cause; or lastly—so far as coexistence is to be known objectively, that is, by a judgment of experience—under the concept of Community (action and reaction).<sup>18</sup> Thus a priori principles form the basis of objectively valid, though empirical judgments, that is, of the possibility of experience so far as it must connect objects as existing in nature. These principles are the proper laws of nature, which may be termed dynamical.

Finally the cognition of the agreement and connexion not only of appearances among themselves in experience, but of their relation to experience in general, belongs to the judgments of experience. This relation contains either their agreement with the formal conditions, which the understanding cognises, or their coherence with the materials of the senses and of perception, or combines both into one concept. Consequently it contains Possibility, Actuality, and Necessity according to universal laws of nature; and this constitutes the physical doctrine of method, or the distinction of truth and of hypotheses, and the bounds of the certainty of the latter.

§ 26. The third table of Principles drawn from the nature of the understanding itself after the critical method, shows an inherent perfection, which raises it far above every other table which has hitherto though in vain been tried or may yet be tried by analysing the objects themselves dogmatically. It exhibits all synthetical a priori principles completely and according to one principle, viz., the faculty of judging in general, constituting the essence of experience as regards the understanding, so that we can be certain that there are no more such principles, a satisfaction such as can never be attained by the dogmatical method. Yet is this not all: there is a still greater merit in it.

We must carefully bear in mind the proof which shows the possibility of this cognition a priori, and at the same time limits all such principles to a condition which must never be lost sight of, if we desire it not to be misunderstood, and extended in use beyond the original sense which the understanding attaches to it. This limit is that they contain nothing but the conditions of possible experience in general so far as it is subjected to laws a priori. Consequently I do not say, that things in themselves possess a quantity, that their actuality possesses a degree, their existence a connexion of accidents in a substance, etc. This nobody can prove, because such a synthetical connexion from mere concepts, without any reference to sensuous intuition on the one side, or connexion of it in a possible experience on the other, is absolutely impossible. The essential limitation of the concepts in these principles then is: That all things stand necessarily a priori under the afore-mentioned conditions, as objects of experience only.

Hence there follows secondly a specifically peculiar mode of proof of these principles: they are not directly referred to appearances and to their relations, but to the possibility of experience, of which appearances constitute the matter only, not the form. Thus they are referred to objectively and universally valid synthetical propositions, in which we distinguish judgments of experience from those of perception. This takes place because appearances, as mere intuitions, occupying a part of space and time, come under the concept of Quantity, which unites their multiplicity a priori according to rules synthetically. Again, so far as the perception contains, besides intuition, sensibility, and between the latter and nothing (i.e., the total disappearance of sensibility), there is an ever decreasing transition, it is apparent that that which is in appearances must have a degree, so far as it (viz., the perception) does not itself occupy any part of space or of time.<sup>19</sup> Still the transition to actuality from empty time or empty space is only possible in time; consequently though sensibility, as the quality of empirical intuition, can never be cognised a priori, by its specific difference from other sensibilities, yet it can, in a possible experience in general, as a quantity of perception be intensely distinguished from every other similar perception. Hence the application of mathematics to nature, as regards the sensuous intuition by which nature is given to us, becomes possible and is thus determined.

Above all, the reader must pay attention to the mode of proof of the principles which occur under the title of Analogies of experience. For these do not refer to the genesis of intuitions, as do the principles of applied mathematics, but to the connexion of their existence in experience; and this can be nothing but the determination of their existence in time according to necessary laws, under which alone the connexion is objectively valid, and thus becomes experience. The proof therefore does not turn on the synthetical unity in the connexion of things in

themselves, but merely of perceptions, and of these not in regard to their matter, but to the determination of time and of the relation of their existence in it, according to universal laws. If the empirical determination in relative time is indeed objectively valid (i.e., experience), these universal laws contain the necessary determination of existence in time generally (viz., according to a rule of the understanding a priori).

In these Prolegomena I cannot further descant on the subject, but my reader (who has probably been long accustomed to consider experience a mere empirical synthesis of perceptions, and hence not considered that it goes much beyond them, as it imparts to empirical judgments universal validity, and for that purpose requires a pure and a priori unity of the understanding) is recommended to pay special attention to this distinction of experience from a mere aggregate of perceptions, and to judge the mode of proof from this point of view.

§ 27. Now we are prepared to remove Hume's doubt. He justly maintains, that we cannot comprehend by reason the possibility of Causality, that is, of the reference of the existence of one thing to the existence of another, which is necessitated by the former. I add, that we comprehend just as little the concept of Subsistence, that is, the necessity that at the foundation of the existence of things there lies a subject which cannot itself be a predicate of any other thing; nay, we cannot even form a notion of the possibility of such a thing (though we can point out examples of its use in experience). The very same in comprehensibility affects the Community of things, as we cannot comprehend how from the state of one thing an inference to the state of quite another thing beyond it, and vice versa, can be drawn, and how substances which have each their own separate existence should depend upon one another necessarily. But I am very far from holding these concepts to be derived merely from experience, and the necessity represented in them, to be imaginary and a mere illusion produced in us by long habit. On the contrary, I have amply shown, that they and the theorems derived from them are firmly established a priori, or before all experience, and have their undoubted objective value, though only with regard to experience.

§ 28. Though I have no notion of such a connexion of things in themselves, that they can either exist as substances, or act as causes, or stand in community with others (as parts of a real whole), and I can just as little conceive such properties in appearances as such (because those concepts contain nothing that lies in the appearances, but only what the understanding alone must think): we have yet a notion of such a connexion of representations in our understanding, and in judgments generally; consisting in this that representations appear in one sort of judgments as subject in relation to predicates, in another as reason in relation to consequences, and in a third as parts, which constitute together a total possible cognition. Besides we cognise a priori that without considering the representation of an object as determined in some of these respects, we can have no valid cognition of the object, and, if we should occupy ourselves about the object in itself, there is no possible attribute, by which I could know that it is determined under any of these aspects, that is, under the concept either of substance, or of cause, or (in relation to other substances) of community, for I have no notion of the possibility of such a connexion of existence. But the question is not how things in themselves, but how the empirical cognition of things is determined, as regards the above aspects of judgments in general, that is, how things, as objects of experience, can and shall be subsumed under these concepts of the understanding. And then it is clear, that I completely comprehend not only the possibility, but also the necessity of subsuming all phenomena under these concepts, that is, of using them for principles of the possibility of experience.

§ 29. When making an experiment with Hume's problematical concept (his *crux metaphysicorum*), the concept of cause, we have, in the first place, given a priori, by means of logic, the form of a conditional judgment in general, i.e., we have one given cognition as antecedent and another as consequence. But it is possible, that in perception we may meet with a rule of relation, which runs thus: that a certain phenomenon is constantly followed by another (though not conversely), and this is a case for me to use the hypothetical judgment, and, for instance, to say, if the sun shines long enough upon a body, it grows warm. Here there is indeed as yet no necessity of connexion, or concept of cause. But I proceed and say, that if this proposition, which is merely a subjective connexion of perceptions, is to be a judgment of experience, it must be considered as necessary and universally valid. Such a proposition would be, "the sun is by its light the cause of heat." The empirical rule is now considered as a law, and as valid not merely of appearances but valid of them for the purposes of a possible experience which requires universal and therefore necessarily valid rules. I therefore easily comprehend the concept of cause, as a concept necessarily belonging to the mere form of experience, and its possibility as a synthetical union of perceptions in consciousness generally; but I do not at all comprehend the possibility of a thing generally as a cause, because the concept of cause denotes a condition not at all belonging to things, but to experience. It is nothing in fact but an objectively valid cognition of appearances and of their succession, so far as the antecedent can be conjoined with the consequent according to the rule of hypothetical judgments.

§ 30. Hence if the pure concepts of the understanding do not refer to objects of experience but to things in themselves (noumena), they have no signification whatever. They serve, as it were, only to decipher appearances, that we may be able to read them as experience. The principles which arise from their reference to

the sensible world, only serve our understanding for empirical use. Beyond this they are arbitrary combinations, without objective reality, and we can neither cognise their possibility a priori, nor verify their reference to objects, let alone make it intelligible by any example; because examples can only be borrowed from some possible experience, consequently the objects of these concepts can be found nowhere but in a possible experience.

This complete (though to its originator unexpected) solution of Hume's problem rescues for the pure concepts of the understanding their a priori origin, and for the universal laws of nature their validity, as laws of the understanding, yet in such a way as to limit their use to experience, because their possibility depends solely on the reference of the understanding to experience, but with a completely reversed mode of connexion which never occurred to Hume, not by deriving them from experience, but by deriving experience from them.

This is therefore the result of all our foregoing inquiries: "All synthetical principles a priori are nothing more than principles of possible experience, and can never be referred to things in themselves, but to appearances as objects of experience. And hence pure mathematics as well as a pure science of nature can never be referred to anything more than mere appearances, and can only represent either that which makes experience generally possible, or else that which, as it is derived from these principles, must always be capable of being represented in some possible experience.

§ 31. And thus we have at last something definite, upon which to depend in all metaphysical enterprises, which have hitherto, boldly enough but always at random, attempted everything without discrimination. That the aim of their exertions should be so near, struck neither the dogmatical thinkers nor those who, confident in their supposed sound common sense, started with concepts and principles of pure reason (which were legitimate and natural, but destined for mere empirical use) in quest of fields of knowledge, to which they neither knew nor could know any determinate bounds, because they had never reflected nor were able to reflect on the nature or even on the possibility of such a pure understanding.

Many a naturalist of pure reason (by which I mean the man who believes he can decide in matters of metaphysics without any science) may pretend, that he long ago by the prophetic spirit of his sound sense, not only suspected, but knew and comprehended, what is here propounded with so much ado, or, if he likes, with prolix and pedantic pomp: "that with all our reason we can never reach beyond the field of experience." But when he is questioned about his rational principles individually, he must grant, that there are many of them which he has not taken from experience, and which are therefore independent of it and valid a priori. How then and on what grounds will he restrain both himself and the dogmatist, who makes use of these concepts and principles beyond all possible experience, because they are recognised to be independent of it? And even he, this adept in sound sense, in spite of all his assumed and cheaply acquired wisdom, is not exempt from wandering inadvertently beyond objects of experience into the field of chimeras. He is often deeply enough involved in them, though in announcing everything as mere probability, rational conjecture, or analogy, he gives by his popular language a color to his groundless pretensions.

§ 32. Since the oldest days of philosophy inquirers into pure reason have conceived, besides the things of sense, or appearances (phenomena), which make up the sensible world, certain creations of the understanding (*Verstandeswesen*), called noumena, which should constitute an intelligible world. And as appearance and illusion were by those men identified (a thing which we may well excuse in an undeveloped epoch), actuality was only conceded to the creations of thought.

And we indeed, rightly considering objects of sense as mere appearances, confess thereby that they are based upon a thing in itself, though we know not this thing in its internal constitution, but only know its appearances, viz., the way in which our senses are affected by this unknown something. The understanding therefore, by assuming appearances, grants the existence of things in themselves also, and so far we may say, that the representation of such things as form the basis of phenomena, consequently of mere creations of the understanding, is not only admissible, but unavoidable.

Our critical deduction by no means excludes things of that sort (noumena), but rather limits the principles of the Aesthetic (the science of the sensibility) to this, that they shall not extend to all things, as everything would then be turned into mere appearance, but that they shall only hold good of objects of possible experience. Hereby then objects of the understanding are granted, but with the inculcation of this rule which admits of no exception: "that we neither know nor can know anything at all definite of these pure objects of the understanding, because our pure concepts of the understanding as well as our pure intuitions extend to nothing but objects of possible experience, consequently to mere things of sense, and as soon as we leave this sphere these concepts retain no meaning whatever."

§ 33. There is indeed something seductive in our pure concepts of the understanding, which tempts us to a transcendent use, —a use which transcends all possible experience. Not only are our concepts of substance, of power, of action, of reality, and others, quite independent of experience, containing nothing of sense appearance, and so apparently applicable to things in themselves (noumena), but, what strengthens this conjecture, they contain a necessity of determination in themselves, which experience never attains. The concept of cause implies a rule, according to which one state follows another necessarily; but experience can only show us, that one state of things often, or at most, commonly, follows another, and therefore affords neither strict universality, nor necessity.

Hence the Categories seem to have a deeper meaning and import than can be exhausted by their empirical use, and so the understanding inadvertently adds for itself to the house of experience a much more extensive wing, which it fills with nothing but creatures of thought, without ever observing that it has transgressed with its otherwise lawful concepts the bounds of their use.

§ 34. Two important, and even indispensable, though very dry, investigations had therefore become indispensable in the Critique of Pure Reason, —viz., the two chapters “Vom Schematismus der reinen Verstandsbegriffe,” and “Vom Grunde der Unterscheidung aller Verstandesbegriffe überhaupt in Phänomena und Noumena.” In the former it is shown, that the senses furnish not the pure concepts of the understanding in concreto, but only the schedule for their use, and that the object conformable to it occurs only in experience (as the product of the understanding from materials of the sensibility). In the latter it is shown, that, although our pure concepts of the understanding and our principles are independent of experience, and despite of the apparently greater sphere of their use, still nothing whatever can be thought by them beyond the field of experience, because they can do nothing but merely determine the logical form of the judgment relatively to given intuitions. But as there is no intuition at all beyond the field of the sensibility, these pure concepts, as they cannot possibly be exhibited in concreto, are void of all meaning; consequently all these noumena, together with their complex, the intelligible world,<sup>20</sup> are nothing but representation of a problem, of which the object in itself is possible, but the solution, from the nature of our understanding, totally impossible. For our understanding is not a faculty of intuition, but of the connexion of given intuitions in experience. Experience must therefore contain all the objects for our concepts; but beyond it no concepts have any significance, as there is no intuition that might offer them a foundation.

§ 35. The imagination may perhaps be forgiven for occasional vagaries, and for not keeping carefully within the limits of experience, since it gains life and vigor by such flights, and since it is always easier to moderate its boldness, than to stimulate its languor. But the understanding which ought to think can never be forgiven for indulging in vagaries; for we depend upon it alone for assistance to set bounds, when necessary, to the vagaries of the imagination.

But the understanding begins its aberrations very innocently and modestly. It first elucidates the elementary cognitions, which inhere in it prior to all experience, but yet must always have their application in experience. It gradually drops these limits, and what is there to prevent it, as it has quite freely derived its principles from itself? And then it proceeds first to newly-imagined powers in nature, then to beings, outside nature; in short to a world, for whose construction the materials cannot be wanting, because fertile fiction furnishes them abundantly, and though not confirmed, is never refuted, by experience. This is the reason that young thinkers are so partial to metaphysics of the truly dogmatical kind, and often sacrifice to it their time and their talents, which might be otherwise better employed.

But there is no use in trying to moderate these fruitless endeavors of pure reason by all manner of cautions as to the difficulties of solving questions so occult, by complaints of the limits of our reason, and by degrading our assertions into mere conjectures. For if their impossibility is not distinctly shown, and reason's cognition of its own essence does not become a true science, in which the field of its right use is distinguished, so to say, with mathematical certainty from that of its worthless and idle use, these fruitless efforts will never be abandoned for good.

§ 36. How is Nature itself possible?

This question—the highest point that transcendental philosophy can ever reach, and to which, as its boundary and completion, it must proceed—properly contains two questions.

First: How is nature at all possible in the material sense, by intuition, considered as the totality of appearances; how are space, time, and that which fills both—the object of sensation, in general possible? The answer is: By means of the constitution of our Sensibility, according to which it is specifically affected by objects, which are in

themselves unknown to it, and totally distinct from those phenomena. This answer is given in the Critique itself in the transcendental Aesthetic, and in these Prolegomena by the solution of the first general problem.

Secondly: How is nature possible in the formal sense, as the totality of the rules, under which all phenomena must come, in order to be thought as connected in experience? The answer must be this: It is only possible by means of the constitution of our Understanding, according to which all the above representations of the sensibility are necessarily referred to a consciousness, and by which the peculiar way in which we think (*viz.*, by rules), and hence experience also, are possible, but must be clearly distinguished from an insight into the objects in themselves. This answer is given in the Critique itself in the transcendental Logic, and in these Prolegomena, in the course of the solution of the second main problem.

But how this peculiar property of our sensibility itself is possible, or that of our understanding and of the apperception which is necessarily its basis and that of all thinking, cannot be further analysed or answered, because it is of them that we are in need for all our answers and for all our thinking about objects.

There are many laws of nature, which we can only know by means of experience; but conformity to law in the connexion of appearances, *i.e.*, in nature in general, we cannot discover by any experience, because experience itself requires laws which are a priori at the basis of its possibility.

The possibility of experience in general is therefore at the same time the universal law of nature, and the principles of the experience are the very laws of nature. For we do not know nature but as the totality of appearances, *i.e.*, of representations in us, and hence we can only derive the laws of its connexion from the principles of their connexion in us, that is, from the conditions of their necessary union in consciousness, which constitutes the possibility of experience.

Even the main proposition expounded throughout this section—that universal laws of nature can be distinctly cognised a priori—leads naturally to the proposition: that the highest legislation of nature must lie in ourselves, *i.e.*, in our understanding, and that we must not seek the universal laws of nature in nature by means of experience, but conversely must seek nature, as to its universal conformity to law, in the conditions of the possibility of experience, which lie in our sensibility and in our understanding. For how were it otherwise possible to know a priori these laws, as they are not rules of analytical cognition, but truly synthetical extensions of it?

Such a necessary agreement of the principles of possible experience with the laws of the possibility of nature, can only proceed from one of two reasons: either these laws are drawn from nature by means of experience, or conversely nature is derived from the laws of the possibility of experience in general, and is quite the same as the mere universal conformity to law of the latter. The former is self-contradictory, for the universal laws of nature can and must be cognised a priori (that is, independent of all experience), and be the foundation of all empirical use of the understanding; the latter alternative therefore alone remains.<sup>21</sup>

But we must distinguish the empirical laws of nature, which always presuppose particular perceptions, from the pure or universal laws of nature, which, without being based on particular perceptions, contain merely the conditions of their necessary union in experience. In relation to the latter, nature and possible experience are quite the same, and as the conformity to law here depends upon the necessary connexion of appearances in experience (without which we cannot cognise any object whatever in the sensible world), consequently upon the original laws of the understanding, it seems at first strange, but is not the less certain, to say:

The understanding does not derive its laws (*a priori*) from, but prescribes them to, nature.

§ 37. We shall illustrate this seemingly bold proposition by an example, which will show, that laws, which we discover in objects of sensuous intuition (especially when these laws are cognised as necessary), are commonly held by us to be such as have been placed there by the understanding, in spite of their being similar in all points to the laws of nature, which we ascribe to experience.

§ 38. If we consider the properties of the circle, by which this figure combines so many arbitrary determinations of space in itself, at once in a universal rule, we cannot avoid attributing a constitution (*eine Natur*) to this geometrical thing. Two right lines, for example, which intersect one another and the circle, howsoever they may be drawn, are always divided so that the rectangle constructed with the segments of the one is equal to that constructed with the segments of the other. The question now is: Does this law lie in the circle or in the understanding, that is, Does this figure, independently of the understanding, contain in itself the ground of the law, or does the understanding, having constructed according to its concepts (according to the quality of the radii) the figure itself, introduce into it this law of the chords cutting one another in geometrical proportion? When we follow

the proofs of this law, we soon perceive, that it can only be derived from the condition on which the understanding founds the construction of this figure, and which is that of the equality of the radii. But, if we enlarge this concept, to pursue further the unity of various properties of geometrical figures under common laws, and consider the circle as a conic section, which of course is subject to the same fundamental conditions of construction as other conic sections, we shall find that all the chords which intersect within the ellipse, parabola, and hyperbola, always intersect so that the rectangles of their segments are not indeed equal, but always bear a constant ratio to one another. If we proceed still farther, to the fundamental laws of physical astronomy, we find a physical law of reciprocal attraction diffused over all material nature, the rule of which is: "that it decreases inversely as the square of the distance from each attracting point, i.e., as the spherical surfaces increase, over which this force spreads," which law seems to be necessarily inherent in the very nature of things, and hence is usually propounded as cognisable a priori. Simple as the sources of this law are, merely resting upon the relation of spherical surfaces of different radii, its consequences are so valuable with regard to the variety of their agreement and its regularity, that not only are all possible orbits of the celestial bodies conic sections, but such a relation of these orbits to each other results, that no other law of attraction, than that of the inverse square of the distance, can be imagined as fit for a cosmical system.

Here accordingly is a nature that rests upon laws which the understanding cognises a priori, and chiefly from the universal principles of the determination of space. Now I ask:

Do the laws of nature lie in space, and does the understanding learn them by merely endeavoring to find out the enormous wealth of meaning that lies in space; or do they inhere in the understanding and in the way in which it determines space according to the conditions of the synthetical unity in which its concepts are all centred?

Space is something so uniform and as to all particular properties so indeterminate, that we should certainly not seek a store of laws of nature in it. Whereas that which determines space to assume the form of a circle or the figures of a cone and a sphere, is the understanding, so far as it contains the ground of the unity of their constructions.

The mere universal form of intuition, called space, must therefore be the substratum of all intuitions determinable to particular objects, and in it of course the condition of the possibility and of the variety of these intuitions lies. But the unity of the objects is entirely determined by the understanding, and on conditions which lie in its own nature; and thus the understanding is the origin of the universal order of nature, in that it comprehends all appearances under its own laws, and thereby first constructs, a priori, experience (as to its form), by means of which whatever is to be cognised only by experience, is necessarily subjected to its laws. For we are not now concerned with the nature of things in themselves, which is independent of the conditions both of our sensibility and our understanding, but with nature, as an object of possible experience, and in this case the understanding, whilst it makes experience possible, thereby insists that the sensuous world is either not an object of experience at all, or must be nature [viz., an existence of things, determined according to universal laws<sup>22</sup>].

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (APPENDIX TO THE PURE SCIENCE OF NATURE)

### § 39. Of the System of the Categories.

There can be nothing more desirable to a philosopher, than to be able to derive the scattered multiplicity of the concepts or the principles, which had occurred to him in concrete use, from a principle a priori, and to unite everything in this way in one cognition. He formerly only believed that those things, which remained after a certain abstraction, and seemed by comparison among one another to constitute a particular kind of cognitions, were

completely collected; but this was only an Aggregate. Now he knows, that just so many, neither more nor less, can constitute the mode of cognition, and perceives the necessity of his division, which constitutes comprehension; and now only he has attained a System.

To search in our daily cognition for the concepts, which do not rest upon particular experience, and yet occur in all cognition of experience, where they as it were constitute the mere form of connexion, presupposes neither greater reflexion nor deeper insight, than to detect in a language the rules of the actual use of words generally, and thus to collect elements for a grammar. In fact both researches are very nearly related, even though we are not able to give a reason why each language has just this and no other formal constitution, and still less why an exact number of such formal determinations in general are found in it.

Aristotle collected ten pure elementary concepts under the name of Categories.<sup>23</sup> To these, which are also called predicaments, he found himself obliged afterwards to add five post-predicaments,<sup>24</sup> some of which however (prius, simul, and motus) are contained in the former; but this random collection must be considered (and commended) as a mere hint for future inquirers, not as a regularly developed idea, and hence it has, in the present more advanced state of philosophy, been rejected as quite useless.

After long reflexion on the pure elements of human knowledge (those which contain nothing empirical), I at last succeeded in distinguishing with certainty and in separating the pure elementary notions of the Sensibility (space and time) from those of the Understanding. Thus the 7th, 8th, and 9th Categories had to be excluded from the old list. And the others were of no service to me; because there was no principle [in them], on which the understanding could be investigated, measured in its completion, and all the functions, whence its pure concepts arise, determined exhaustively and with precision.

But in order to discover such a principle, I looked about for an act of the understanding which comprises all the rest, and is distinguished only by various modifications or phases, in reducing the multiplicity of representation to the unity of thinking in general: I found this act of the understanding to consist in judging. Here then the labors of the logicians were ready at hand, though not yet quite free from defects, and with this help I was enabled to exhibit a complete table of the pure functions of the understanding, which are however undetermined in regard to any object. I finally referred these functions of judging to objects in general, or rather to the condition of determining judgments as objectively valid, and so there arose the pure concepts of the understanding, concerning which I could make certain, that these, and this exact number only, constitute our whole cognition of things from pure understanding. I was justified in calling them by their old name, Categories, while I reserved for myself the liberty of adding, under the title of "Predicables," a complete list of all the concepts deducible from them, by combinations whether among themselves, or with the pure form of the appearance, i.e., space or time, or with its matter, so far as it is not yet empirically determined (viz., the object of sensation in general), as soon as a system of transcendental philosophy should be completed with the construction of which I am engaged in the Critique of Pure Reason itself.

Now the essential point in this system of Categories, which distinguishes it from the old rhapsodical collection without any principle, and for which alone it deserves to be considered as philosophy, consists in this: that by means of it the true significance of the pure concepts of the understanding and the condition of their use could be precisely determined. For here it became obvious that they are themselves nothing but logical functions, and as such do not produce the least concept of an object, but require some sensuous intuition as a basis. They therefore only serve to determine empirical judgments, which are otherwise undetermined and indifferent as regards all functions of judging, relatively to these functions, thereby procuring them universal validity, and by means of them making judgments of experience in general possible.

Such an insight into the nature of the categories, which limits them at the same time to the mere use of experience, never occurred either to their first author, or to any of his successors; but without this insight (which immediately depends upon their derivation or deduction), they are quite useless and only a miserable list of names, without explanation or rule for their use. Had the ancients ever conceived such a notion, doubtless the whole study of the pure rational knowledge, which under the name of metaphysics has for centuries spoiled many a sound mind, would have reached us in quite another shape, and would have enlightened the human understanding, instead of actually exhausting it in obscure and vain speculations, thereby rendering it unfit for true science.

This system of categories makes all treatment of every object of pure reason itself systematic, and affords a direction or clue how and through what points of inquiry every metaphysical consideration must proceed, in order to be complete; for it exhausts all the possible movements (momenta) of the understanding, among which every

concept must be classed. In like manner the table of Principles has been formulated, the completeness of which we can only vouch for by the system of the categories. Even in the division of the concepts,<sup>25</sup> which must go beyond the physical application of the understanding, it is always the very same clue, which, as it must always be determined a priori by the same fixed points of the human understanding, always forms a closed circle. There is no doubt that the object of a pure conception either of the understanding or of reason, so far as it is to be estimated philosophically and on a priori principles, can in this way be completely cognised. I could not therefore omit to make use of this clue with regard to one of the most abstract ontological divisions, viz., the various distinctions of “the notions of something and of nothing,” and to construct accordingly (Critique, p. 207) a regular and necessary table of their divisions.<sup>26</sup>

And this system, like every other true one founded on a universal principle, shows its inestimable value in this, that it excludes all foreign concepts, which might otherwise intrude among the pure concepts of the understanding, and determines the place of every cognition. Those concepts, which under the name of “concepts of reflexion” have been likewise arranged in a table according to the clue of the categories, intrude, without having any privilege or title to be among the pure concepts of the understanding in Ontology. They are concepts of connexion, and thereby of the objects themselves, whereas the former are only concepts of a mere comparison of concepts already given, hence of quite another nature and use. By my systematic division<sup>27</sup> they are saved from this confusion. But the value of my special table of the categories will be still more obvious, when we separate the table of the transcendental concepts of Reason from the concepts of the understanding. The latter being of quite another nature and origin, they must have quite another form than the former. This so necessary separation has never yet been made in any system of metaphysics for, as a rule, these rational concepts all mixed up with the categories, like children of one family, which confusion was unavoidable in the absence of a definite system of categories.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (THIRD PART OF THE MAIN TRANSCENDENTAL PROBLEM)

How is Metaphysics in General Possible?

§ 40.

PURE mathematics and pure science of nature had no occasion for such a deduction, as we have made of both, for their own safety and certainty. For the former rests upon its own evidence; and the latter (though sprung from pure sources of the understanding) upon experience and its thorough confirmation. Physics cannot altogether refuse and dispense with the testimony of the latter; because with all its certainty, it can never, as philosophy, rival mathematics. Both sciences therefore stood in need of this inquiry, not for themselves, but for the sake of another science, metaphysics.

Metaphysics has to do not only with concepts of nature, which always find their application in experience, but also with pure rational concepts, which never can be given in any possible experience. Consequently the objective reality of these concepts (viz., that they are not mere chimeras), and the truth or falsity of metaphysical assertions, cannot be discovered or confirmed by any experience. This part of metaphysics however is precisely what constitutes its essential end, to which the rest is only a means, and thus this science is in need of such a deduction for its own sake. The third question now proposed relates therefore as it were to the root and essential difference of metaphysics, i.e., the occupation of Reason with itself, and the supposed knowledge of objects arising immediately from this incubation of its own concepts, without requiring, or indeed being able to reach that knowledge through, experience.<sup>28</sup>

Without solving this problem reason never is justified. The empirical use to which reason limits the pure understanding, does not fully satisfy the proper destination of the latter. Every single experience is only a part of the whole sphere of its domain, but the absolute totality of all possible experience is itself not experience. Yet it is a necessary [concrete] problem for reason, the mere representation of which requires concepts quite different from the categories, whose use is only immanent, or refers to experience, so far as it can be given. Whereas the concepts of reason aim at the completeness, i.e., the collective unity of all possible experience, and thereby transcend every given experience. Thus they become transcendent.

As the understanding stands in need of categories for experience, reason contains in itself the source of ideas, by which I mean necessary concepts, whose object cannot be given in any experience. The latter are inherent in the nature of reason, as the former are in that of the understanding. While the former carry with them an illusion likely to mislead, the illusion of the latter is inevitable, though it certainly can be kept from misleading us.

Since all illusion consists in holding the subjective ground of our judgments to be objective, a self-knowledge of pure reason in its transcendent (exaggerated) use is the sole preservative from the aberrations into which reason falls when it mistakes its destination, and refers that to the object transcendentally, which only regards its own subject and its guidance in all immanent use.

§ 41. The distinction of ideas, that is, of pure concepts of reason, from categories, or pure concepts of the understanding, as cognitions of a quite distinct species, origin and use, is so important a point in founding a science which is to contain the system of all these a priori cognitions, that without this distinction metaphysics is absolutely impossible, or is at best a random, bungling attempt to build a castle in the air without a knowledge of the materials or of their fitness for any purpose. Had the Critique of Pure Reason done nothing but first point out this distinction, it had thereby contributed more to clear up our conception of, and to guide our inquiry in, the field of metaphysics, than all the vain efforts which have hitherto been made to satisfy the transcendent problems of pure reason, without ever surmising that we were in quite another field than that of the understanding, and hence classing concepts of the understanding and those of reason together, as if they were of the same kind.

§ 42. All pure cognitions of the understanding have this feature, that their concepts present themselves in experience, and their principles can be confirmed by it; whereas the transcendent cognitions of reason cannot, either as ideas, appear in experience, or as propositions ever be confirmed or refuted by it. Hence whatever errors may slip in unawares, can only be discovered by pure reason itself—a discovery of much difficulty, because this very reason naturally becomes dialectical by means of its ideas, and this unavoidable illusion cannot be limited by any objective and dogmatical researches into things, but by a subjective investigation of reason itself as a source of ideas.

§ 43. In the Critique of Pure Reason it was always my greatest care to endeavor not only carefully to distinguish the several species of cognition, but to derive concepts belonging to each one of them from their common source. I did this in order that by knowing whence they originated, I might determine their use with safety, and also have the unanticipated but invaluable advantage of knowing the completeness of my enumeration, classification and specification of concepts a priori, and therefore according to principles. Without this, metaphysics is mere rhapsody, in which no one knows whether he has enough, or whether and where something is still wanting. We can indeed have this advantage only in pure philosophy, but of this philosophy it constitutes the very essence.

As I had found the origin of the categories in the four logical functions of all the judgments of the understanding, it was quite natural to seek the origin of the ideas in the three functions of the syllogisms of reason. For as soon as these pure concepts of reason (the transcendental ideas) are given, they could hardly, except they be held innate, be found anywhere else, than in the same activity of reason, which, so far as it regards mere form, constitutes the logical element of the syllogisms of reason; but, so far as it represents judgments of the understanding with respect to the one or to the other form a priori, constitutes transcendental concepts of pure reason.

The formal distinction of syllogisms renders their division into categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive necessary. The concepts of reason founded on them contained therefore, first, the idea of the complete subject (the substantial); secondly, the idea of the complete series of conditions; thirdly, the determination of all concepts in the idea of a complete complex of that which is possible.<sup>29</sup> The first idea is psychological, the second cosmological, the third theological, and, as all three give occasion to Dialectics, yet each in its own way, the division of the whole Dialectics of pure reason into its Paralogism, its Antinomy, and its Ideal, was arranged accordingly. Through this deduction we may feel assured that all the claims of pure reason are completely represented, and that none can be wanting; because the faculty of reason itself, whence they all take their origin, is thereby completely surveyed.

§ 44. In these general considerations it is also remarkable that the ideas of reason are unlike the categories, of no service to the use of our understanding in experience, but quite dispensable, and become even an impediment to the maxims of a rational cognition of nature. Yet in another aspect still to be determined they are necessary. Whether the soul is or is not a simple substance, is of no consequence to us in the explanation of its phenomena. For we cannot render the notion of a simple being intelligible by any possible experience that is sensuous or concrete. The notion is therefore quite void as regards all hoped-for insight into the cause of phenomena, and cannot at all serve as a principle of the explanation of that which internal or external experience supplies. So the cosmological ideas of the beginning of the world or of its eternity (a parte ante) cannot be of any greater service to us for the explanation of any event in the world itself. And finally we must, according to a right maxim of the philosophy of nature, refrain from all explanations of the design of nature, drawn from the will of a Supreme Being; because this would not be natural philosophy, but an acknowledgment that we have come to the end of it. The use of these ideas, therefore, is quite different from that of those categories by which (and by the principles built upon which) experience itself first becomes possible. But our laborious analytics of the understanding would be superfluous if we had nothing else in view than the mere cognition of nature as it can be given in experience; for reason does its work, both in mathematics and in the science of nature, quite safely and well without any of this subtle deduction. Therefore our Critique of the Understanding combines with the ideas of pure reason for a purpose which lies beyond the empirical use of the understanding; but this we have above declared to be in this aspect totally inadmissible, and without any object or meaning. Yet there must be a harmony between that of the nature of reason and that of the understanding, and the former must contribute to the perfection of the latter, and cannot possibly upset it.

The solution of this question is as follows: Pure reason does not in its ideas point to particular objects, which lie beyond the field of experience, but only requires completeness of the use of the understanding in the system of experience. But this completeness can be a completeness of principles only, not of intuitions (i.e., concrete sights or Anschauungen) and of objects. In order however to represent the ideas definitely, reason conceives them after the fashion of the cognition of an object. The cognition is as far as these rules are concerned completely determined, but the object is only an idea invented for the purpose of bringing the cognition of the understanding as near as possible to the completeness represented by that idea.

Prefatory Remark to the Dialectics of Pure Reason.

§ 45. We have above shown in §§ 33 and 34 that the purity of the categories from all admixture of sensuous determinations may mislead reason into extending their use, quite beyond all experience, to things in themselves; though as these categories themselves find no intuition which can give them meaning or sense in concreto, they, as mere logical functions, can represent a thing in general, but not give by themselves alone a determinate concept of anything. Such hyperbolic objects are distinguished by the appellation of Noûmena, or pure beings of the understanding (or better, beings of thought), such as, for example, "substance," but conceived without permanence in time, or "cause," but not acting in time, etc. Here predicates, that only serve to make the conformity-to-law of experience possible, are applied to these concepts, and yet they are deprived of all the conditions of intuition, on which alone experience is possible, and so these concepts lose all significance.

There is no danger, however, of the understanding spontaneously making an excursion so very wantonly beyond its own bounds into the field of the mere creatures of thought, without being impelled by foreign laws. But when reason, which cannot be fully satisfied with any empirical use of the rules of the understanding, as being always conditioned, requires a completion of this chain of conditions, then the understanding is forced out of its sphere. And then it partly represents objects of experience in a series so extended that no experience can grasp, partly even (with a view to complete the series) it seeks entirely beyond it noumena, to which it can attach that chain, and so, having at last escaped from the conditions of experience, make its attitude as it were final. These are then the transcendental ideas, which, though according to the true but hidden ends of the natural determination of our reason, they may aim not at extravagant concepts, but at an unbounded extension of their empirical use, yet seduce the understanding by an unavoidable illusion to a transcendent use, which, though deceitful, cannot be restrained within the bounds of experience by any resolution, but only by scientific instruction and with much difficulty.

I. The Psychological Idea.<sup>30</sup>

§ 46. People have long since observed, that in all substances the proper subject, that which remains after all the accidents (as predicates) are abstracted, consequently that which forms the substance of things remains unknown, and various complaints have been made concerning these limits to our knowledge. But it will be well to consider that the human understanding is not to be blamed for its inability to know the substance of things, that is, to determine it by itself, but rather for requiring to cognise it which is a mere idea definitely as though it were a

given object. Pure reason requires us to seek for every predicate of a thing its proper subject, and for this subject, which is itself necessarily nothing but a predicate, its subject, and so on indefinitely (or as far as we can reach). But hence it follows, that we must not hold anything, at which we can arrive, to be an ultimate subject, and that substance itself never can be thought by our understanding, however deep we may penetrate, even if all nature were unveiled to us. For the specific nature of our understanding consists in thinking everything discursively, that is, representing it by concepts, and so by mere predicates, to which therefore the absolute subject must always be wanting. Hence all the real properties, by which we cognise bodies, are mere accidents, not excepting impenetrability, which we can only represent to ourselves as the effect of a power of which the subject is unknown to us.

Now we appear to have this substance in the consciousness of ourselves (in the thinking subject), and indeed in an immediate intuition; for all the predicates of an internal sense refer to the ego, as a subject, and I cannot conceive myself as the predicate of any other subject. Hence completeness in the reference of the given concepts as predicates to a subject—not merely an idea, but an object—that is, the absolute subject itself, seems to be given in experience. But this expectation is disappointed. For the ego is not a concept,<sup>31</sup> but only the indication of the object of the internal sense, so far as we cognise it by no further predicate. Consequently it cannot be in itself a predicate of any other thing; but just as little can it be a determinate concept of an absolute subject, but is, as in all other cases, only the reference of the internal phenomena to their unknown subject. Yet this idea (which serves very well, as a regulative principle, totally to destroy all materialistic explanations of the internal phenomena of the soul) occasions by a very natural misunderstanding a very specious argument, which, from this supposed cognition of the substance of our thinking being, infers its nature, so far as the knowledge of it falls quite without the complex of experience.

§ 47. But though we may call this thinking self (the soul) substance, as being the ultimate subject of thinking which cannot be further represented as the predicate of another thing; it remains quite empty and without significance, if permanence—the quality which renders the concept of substances in experience fruitful—cannot be proved of it.

But permanence can never be proved of the concept of a substance, as a thing in itself, but for the purposes of experience only. This is sufficiently shown by the first Analogy of Experience,<sup>32</sup> and who ever will not yield to this proof may try for himself whether he can succeed in proving, from the concept of a subject which does not exist itself as the predicate of another thing, that its existence is thoroughly permanent, and that it cannot either in itself or by any natural cause originate or be annihilated. These synthetical a priori propositions can never be proved in themselves, but only in reference to things as objects of possible experience.

§ 48. If therefore from the concept of the soul as a substance, we would infer its permanence, this can hold good as regards possible experience only, not [of the soul] as a thing in itself and beyond all possible experience. But life is the subjective condition of all our possible experience, consequently we can only infer the permanence of the soul in life; for the death of man is the end of all experience which concerns the soul as an object of experience, except the contrary be proved, which is the very question in hand. The permanence of the soul can therefore only be proved (and no one cares for that) during the life of man, but not, as we desire to do, after death; and for this general reason, that the concept of substance, so far as it is to be considered necessarily combined with the concept of permanence, can be so combined only according to the principles of possible experience, and therefore for the purposes of experience only.<sup>33</sup>

§ 49. That there is something real without us which not only corresponds, but must correspond, to our external perceptions, can likewise be proved to be not a connexion of things in themselves, but for the sake of experience. This means that there is something empirical, i. e., some phenomenon in space without us, that admits of a satisfactory proof, for we have nothing to do with other objects than those which belong to possible experience; because objects which cannot be given us in any experience, do not exist for us. Empirically without me is that which appears in space, and space, together with all the phenomena which it contains, belongs to the representations, whose connexion according to laws of experience proves their objective truth, just as the connexion of the phenomena of the internal sense proves the actuality of my soul (as an object of the internal sense). By means of external experience I am conscious of the actuality of bodies, as external phenomena in space, in the same manner as by means of the internal experience I am conscious of the existence of my soul in time, but this soul is only cognised as an object of the internal sense by phenomena that constitute an internal state, and of which the essence in itself, which forms the basis of these phenomena, is unknown. Cartesian idealism therefore does nothing but distinguish external experience from dreaming; and the conformity to law (as a criterion of its truth) of the former, from the irregularity and the false illusion of the latter. In both it presupposes space and time as conditions of the existence of objects, and it only inquires whether the objects of the external

senses, which we when awake put in space, are as actually to be found in it, as the object of the internal sense, the soul, is in time; that is, whether experience carries with it sure criteria to distinguish it from imagination. This doubt, however, may be easily disposed of, and we always do so in common life by investigating the connexion of phenomena in both space and time according to universal laws of experience, and we cannot doubt, when the representation of external things throughout agrees therewith, that they constitute truthful experience. Material idealism, in which phenomena are considered as such only according to their connexion in experience, may accordingly be very easily refuted; and it is just as sure an experience, that bodies exist without us (in space), as that I myself exist according to the representation of the internal sense (in time): for the notion without us, only signifies existence in space. However as the Ego in the proposition, "I am," means not only the object of internal intuition (in time), but the subject of consciousness, just as body means not only external intuition (in space), but the thing-in-itself, which is the basis of this phenomenon; [as this is the case] the question, whether bodies (as phenomena of the external sense) exist as bodies apart from my thoughts, may without any hesitation be denied in nature. But the question, whether I myself as a phenomenon of the internal sense (the soul according to empirical psychology) exist apart from my faculty of representation in time, is an exactly similar inquiry, and must likewise be answered in the negative. And in this manner everything, when it is reduced to its true meaning, is decided and certain. The formal (which I have also called transcendental) actually abolishes the material, or Cartesian, idealism. For if space be nothing but a form of my sensibility, it is as a representation in me just as actual as I myself am, and nothing but the empirical truth of the representations in it remains for consideration. But, if this is not the case, if space and the phenomena in it are something existing without us, then all the criteria of experience beyond our perception can never prove the actuality of these objects without us.

## II. The Cosmological Idea.<sup>34</sup>

§ 50. This product of pure reason in its transcendent use is its most remarkable curiosity. It serves as a very powerful agent to rouse philosophy from its dogmatic slumber, and to stimulate it to the arduous task of undertaking a Critique of Reason itself.

I term this idea cosmological, because it always takes its object only from the sensible world, and does not use any other than those whose object is given to sense, consequently it remains in this respect in its native home, it does not become transcendent, and is therefore so far not mere idea; whereas, to conceive the soul as a simple substance, already means to conceive such an object (the simple) as cannot be presented to the senses. Yet the cosmological idea extends the connexion of the conditioned with its condition (whether the connexion is mathematical or dynamical) so far, that experience never can keep up with it. It is therefore with regard to this point always an idea, whose object never can be adequately given in any experience.

§ 51. In the first place, the use of a system of categories becomes here so obvious and unmistakable, that even if there were not several other proofs of it, this alone would sufficiently prove it indispensable in the system of pure reason. There are only four such transcendent ideas, as there are so many classes of categories; in each of which, however, they refer only to the absolute completeness of the series of the conditions for a given conditioned. In analogy to these cosmological ideas there are only four kinds of dialectical assertions of pure reason, which, as they are dialectical, thereby prove, that to each of them, on equally specious principles of pure reason, a contradictory assertion stands opposed. As all the metaphysical art of the most subtle distinction cannot prevent this opposition, it compels the philosopher to recur to the first sources of pure reason itself. This Antinomy, not arbitrarily invented, but founded in the nature of human reason, and hence unavoidable and never ceasing, contains the following four theses together with their antitheses:

1.

Thesis.

The World has, as to Time and Space, a Beginning (limit).

Antithesis.

The World is, as to Time and Space, infinite.

2.

Thesis.

Everything in the World consists of [elements that are] simple.

Antithesis.

There is nothing simple, but everything is composite.

3.

Thesis.

There are in the World Causes through Freedom.

Antithesis.

There is no Liberty, but all is Nature.

4.

Thesis.

In the Series of the World-Causes there is some necessary Being.

Antithesis.

There is Nothing necessary in the World, but in this Series All is incidental.

§ 52.a. Here is the most singular phenomenon of human reason, no other instance of which can be shown in any other use. If we, as is commonly done, represent to ourselves the appearances of the sensible world as things in themselves, if we assume the principles of their combination as principles universally valid of things in themselves and not merely of experience, as is usually, nay without our Critique, unavoidably done, there arises an unexpected conflict, which never can be removed in the common dogmatical way; because the thesis, as well as the antithesis, can be shown by equally clear, evident, and irresistible proofs—for I pledge myself as to the correctness of all these proofs—and reason therefore perceives that it is divided with itself, a state at which the sceptic rejoices, but which must make the critical philosopher pause and feel ill at ease.

§ 52.b. We may blunder in various ways in metaphysics without any fear of being detected in falsehood. For we never can be refuted by experience if we but avoid self-contradiction, which in synthetical, though purely fictitious propositions, may be done whenever the concepts, which we connect, are mere ideas, that cannot be given (in their whole content) in experience. For how can we make out by experience, whether the world is from eternity or had a beginning, whether matter is infinitely divisible or consists of simple parts? Such concept cannot be given in any experience, be it ever so extensive, and consequently the falsehood either of the positive or the negative proposition cannot be discovered by this touch-stone.

The only possible way in which reason could have revealed unintentionally its secret Dialectics, falsely announced as Dogmatics, would be when it were made to ground an assertion upon a universally admitted principle, and to deduce the exact contrary with the greatest accuracy of inference from another which is equally granted. This is actually here the case with regard to four natural ideas of reason, whence four assertions on the one side, and as many counter-assertions on the other arise, each consistently following from universally-acknowledged principles. Thus they reveal by the use of these principles the dialectical illusion of pure reason which would otherwise forever remain concealed.

This is therefore a decisive experiment, which must necessarily expose any error lying hidden in the assumptions of reason.<sup>35</sup> Contradictory propositions cannot both be false, except the concept, which is the subject of both, is self-contradictory; for example, the propositions, “a square circle is round, and a square circle is not round,” are both false. For, as to the former it is false, that the circle is round, because it is quadrangular; and it is likewise false, that it is not round, that is, angular, because it is a circle. For the logical criterion of the impossibility of a concept consists in this, that if we presuppose it, two contradictory propositions both become false; consequently, as no middle between them is conceivable, nothing at all is thought by that concept.

§ 52.c. The first two antinomies, which I call mathematical, because they are concerned with the addition or division of the homogeneous, are founded on such a self-contradictory concept; and hence I explain how it happens, that both the Thesis and Antithesis of the two are false.

When I speak of objects in time and in space, it is not of things in themselves, of which I know nothing, but of things in appearance, that is, of experience, as the particular way of cognising objects which is afforded to man. I must not say of what I think in time or in space, that in itself, and independent of these my thoughts, it exists in space and in time; for in that case I should contradict myself; because space and time, together with the appearances in them, are nothing existing in themselves and outside of my representations, but are themselves only modes of representation, and it is palpably contradictory to say, that a mere mode of representation exists without our representation. Objects of the senses therefore exist only in experience; whereas to give them a self-subsisting existence apart from experience or before it, is merely to represent to ourselves that experience actually exists apart from experience or before it.

Now if I inquire after the quantity of the world, as to space and time, it is equally impossible, as regards all my notions, to declare it infinite or to declare it finite. For neither assertion can be contained in experience, because experience either of an infinite space, or of an infinite time elapsed, or again, of the boundary of the world by a void space, or by an antecedent void time, is impossible; these are mere ideas. This quantity of the world, which is determined in either way, should therefore exist in the world itself apart from all experience. This contradicts the notion of a world of sense, which is merely a complex of the appearances whose existence and connexion occur only in our representations, that is, in experience, since this latter is not an object in itself, but a mere mode of representation. Hence it follows, that as the concept of an absolutely existing world of sense is self-contradictory, the solution of the problem concerning its quantity, whether attempted affirmatively or negatively, is always false.

The same holds good of the second antinomy, which relates to the division of phenomena. For these are mere representations, and the parts exist merely in their representation, consequently in the division, or in a possible experience where they are given, and the division reaches only as far as this latter reaches. To assume that an appearance, e.g., that of body, contains in itself before all experience all the parts, which any possible experience can ever reach, is to impute to a mere appearance, which can exist only in experience, an existence previous to experience. In other words, it would mean that mere representations exist before they can be found in our faculty of representation. Such an assertion is self-contradictory, as also every solution of our misunderstood problem, whether we maintain, that bodies in themselves consist of an infinite number of parts, or of a finite number of simple parts.

§ 53. In the first (the mathematical) class of antinomies the falsehood of the assumption consists in representing in one concept something self-contradictory as if it were compatible (i.e., an appearance as an object in itself). But, as to the second (the dynamical) class of antinomies, the falsehood of the representation consists in representing as contradictory what is compatible; so that, as in the former case, the opposed assertions are both false, in this case, on the other hand, where they are opposed to one another by mere misunderstanding, they may both be true.

Any mathematical connexion necessarily presupposes homogeneity of what is connected (in the concept of magnitude), while the dynamical one by no means requires the same. When we have to deal with extended magnitudes, all the parts must be homogeneous with one another and with the whole; whereas, in the connexion of cause and effect, homogeneity may indeed likewise be found, but is not necessary; for the concept of causality (by means of which something is posited through something else quite different from it), at all events, does not require it.

If the objects of the world of sense are taken for things in themselves, and the above laws of nature for the laws of things in themselves, the contradiction would be unavoidable. So also, if the subject of freedom were, like other objects, represented as mere appearance, the contradiction would be just as unavoidable, for the same predicate would at once be affirmed and denied of the same kind of object in the same sense. But if natural necessity is referred merely to appearances, and freedom merely to things in themselves, no contradiction arises, if we at once assume, or admit both kinds of causality, however difficult or impossible it may be to make the latter kind conceivable.

As appearance every effect is an event, or something that happens in time; it must, according to the universal law of nature, be preceded by a determination of the causality of its cause (a state), which follows according to a constant law. But this determination of the cause as causality must likewise be something that takes place or happens; the cause must have begun to act, otherwise no succession between it and the effect could be conceived. Otherwise the effect, as well as the causality of the cause, would have always existed. Therefore the determination of the cause to act must also have originated among appearances, and must consequently, as well as its effect, be an event, which must again have its cause, and so on; hence natural necessity must be the condition, on which effective causes are determined. Whereas if freedom is to be a property of certain causes of appearances, it must, as regards these, which are events, be a faculty of starting them spontaneously, that is,

without the causality of the cause itself, and hence without requiring any other ground to determine its start. But then the cause, as to its causality, must not rank under time-determinations of its state, that is, it cannot be an appearance, and must be considered a thing in itself, while its effects would be only appearances.<sup>36</sup> If without contradiction we can think of the beings of understanding [Verstandeswesen] as exercising such an influence on appearances, then natural necessity will attach to all connexions of cause and effect in the sensuous world, though on the other hand, freedom can be granted to such cause, as is itself not an appearance (but the foundation of appearance). Nature therefore and freedom can without contradiction be attributed to the very same thing, but in different relations—on one side as a phenomenon, on the other as a thing in itself.

We have in us a faculty, which not only stands in connexion with its subjective determining grounds that are the natural causes of its actions, and is so far the faculty of a being that itself belongs to appearances, but is also referred to objective grounds, that are only ideas, so far as they can determine this faculty, a connexion which is expressed by the word ought. This faculty is called reason, and, so far as we consider a being (man) entirely according to this objectively determinable reason, he cannot be considered as a being of sense, but this property is that of a thing in itself, of which we cannot comprehend the possibility—I mean how the ought (which however has never yet taken place) should determine its activity, and can become the cause of actions, whose effect is an appearance in the sensible world. Yet the causality of reason would be freedom with regard to the effects in the sensuous world, so far as we can consider objective grounds, which are themselves ideas, as their determinants. For its action in that case would not depend upon subjective conditions, consequently not upon those of time, and of course not upon the law of nature, which serves to determine them, because grounds of reason give to actions the rule universally, according to principles, without the influence of the circumstances of either time or place.

What I adduce here is merely meant as an example to make the thing intelligible, and does not necessarily belong to our problem, which must be decided from mere concepts, independently of the properties which we meet in the actual world.

Now I may say without contradiction: that all the actions of rational beings, so far as they are appearances (occurring in any experience), are subject to the necessity of nature; but the same actions, as regards merely the rational subject and its faculty of acting according to mere reason, are free. For what is required for the necessity of nature? Nothing more than the determinability of every event in the world of sense according to constant laws, that is, a reference to cause in the appearance; in this process the thing in itself at its foundation and its causality remain unknown. But I say, that the law of nature remains, whether the rational being is the cause of the effects in the sensuous world from reason, that is, through freedom, or whether it does not determine them on grounds of reason. For, if the former is the case, the action is performed according to maxims, the effect of which as appearance is always conformable to constant laws; if the latter is the case, and the action not performed on principles of reason, it is subjected to the empirical laws of the sensibility, and in both cases the effects are connected according to constant laws; more than this we do not require or know concerning natural necessity. But in the former case reason is the cause of these laws of nature, and therefore free; in the latter the effects follow according to mere natural laws of sensibility, because reason does not influence it; but reason itself is not determined on that account by the sensibility, and is therefore free in this case too. Freedom is therefore no hindrance to natural law in appearance, neither does this law abrogate the freedom of the practical use of reason, which is connected with things in themselves, as determining grounds.

Thus practical freedom, viz., the freedom in which reason possesses causality according to objectively determining grounds, is rescued and yet natural necessity is not in the least curtailed with regard to the very same effects, as appearances. The same remarks will serve to explain what we had to say concerning transcendental freedom and its compatibility with natural necessity (in the same subject, but not taken in the same reference). For, as to this, every beginning of the action of a being from objective causes regarded as determining grounds, is always a first start, though the same action is in the series of appearances only a subordinate start, which must be preceded by a state of the cause, which determines it, and is itself determined in the same manner by another immediately preceding. Thus we are able, in rational beings, or in beings generally, so far as their causality is determined in them as things in themselves, to imagine a faculty of beginning from itself a series of states, without falling into contradiction with the laws of nature. For the relation of the action to objective grounds of reason is not a time-relation; in this case that which determines the causality does not precede in time the action, because such determining grounds represent not a reference to objects of sense, e.g., to causes in the appearances, but to determining causes, as things in themselves, which do not rank under conditions of time. And in this way the action, with regard to the causality of reason, can be considered as a first start in respect to the series of appearances, and yet also as a merely subordinate beginning. We may therefore without contradiction consider it in the former aspect as free, but in the latter (in so far as it is merely appearance) as subject to natural necessity.

As to the fourth Antinomy, it is solved in the same way as the conflict of reason with itself in the third. For, provided the cause in the appearance is distinguished from the cause of the appearance (so far as it can be thought as a thing in itself), both propositions are perfectly reconcilable: the one, that there is nowhere in the sensuous world a cause (according to similar laws of causality), whose existence is absolutely necessary; the other, that this world is nevertheless connected with a Necessary Being as its cause (but of another kind and according to another law). The incompatibility of these propositions entirely rests upon the mistake of extending what is valid merely of appearances to things in themselves, and in general confusing both in one concept.

§ 54. This then is the proposition and this the solution of the whole antinomy, in which reason finds itself involved in the application of its principles to the sensible world. The former alone (the mere proposition) would be a considerable service in the cause of our knowledge of human reason, even though the solution might fail to fully satisfy the reader, who has here to combat a natural illusion, which has been but recently exposed to him, and which he had hitherto always regarded as genuine. For one result at least is unavoidable. As it is quite impossible to prevent this conflict of reason with itself—so long as the objects of the sensible world are taken for things in themselves, and not for mere appearances, which they are in fact—the reader is thereby compelled to examine over again the deduction of all our a priori cognition and the proof which I have given of my deduction in order to come to a decision on the question. This is all I require at present; for when in this occupation he shall have thought himself deep enough into the nature of pure reason, those concepts by which alone the solution of the conflict of reason is possible, will become sufficiently familiar to him. Without this preparation I cannot expect an unreserved assent even from the most attentive reader.

### III. The Theological Idea.<sup>37</sup>

§ 55. The third transcendental Idea, which affords matter for the most important, but, if pursued only speculatively, transcendent and thereby dialectical use of reason, is the ideal of pure reason. Reason in this case does not, as with the psychological and the cosmological Ideas, begin from experience, and err by exaggerating its grounds, in striving to attain, if possible, the absolute completeness of their series. It rather totally breaks with experience, and from mere concepts of what constitutes the absolute completeness of a thing in general, consequently by means of the idea of a most perfect primal Being, it proceeds to determine the possibility and therefore the actuality of all other things. And so the mere presupposition of a Being, who is conceived not in the series of experience, yet for the purposes of experience—for the sake of comprehending its connexion, order, and unity—i.e., the idea [the notion of it], is more easily distinguished from the concept of the understanding here, than in the former cases. Hence we can easily expose the dialectical illusion which arises from our making the subjective conditions of our thinking objective conditions of objects themselves, and an hypothesis necessary for the satisfaction of our reason, a dogma. As the observations of the Critique on the pretensions of transcendental theology are intelligible, clear, and decisive, I have nothing more to add on the subject.

#### General Remark on the Transcendental Ideas.

§ 56. The objects, which are given us by experience, are in many respects incomprehensible, and many questions, to which the law of nature leads us, when carried beyond a certain point (though quite conformably to the laws of nature), admit of no answer; as for example the question: why substances attract one another? But if we entirely quit nature, or in pursuing its combinations, exceed all possible experience, and so enter the realm of mere ideas, we cannot then say that the object is incomprehensible, and that the nature of things proposes to us insoluble problems. For we are not then concerned with nature or in general with given objects, but with concepts, which have their origin merely in our reason, and with mere creations of thought; and all the problems that arise from our notions of them must be solved, because of course reason can and must give a full account of its own procedure.<sup>38</sup> As the psychological, cosmological, and theological Ideas are nothing but pure concepts of reason, which cannot be given in any experience, the questions which reason asks us about them are put to us not by the objects, but by mere maxims of our reason for the sake of its own satisfaction. They must all be capable of satisfactory answers, which is done by showing that they are principles which bring our use of the understanding into thorough agreement, completeness, and synthetical unity, and that they so far hold good of experience only, but of experience as a whole.

Although an absolute whole of experience is impossible, the idea of a whole of cognition according to principles must impart to our knowledge a peculiar kind of unity, that of a system, without which it is nothing but piecework, and cannot be used for proving the existence of a highest purpose (which can only be the general system of all purposes), I do not here refer only to the practical, but also to the highest purpose of the speculative use of reason.

The transcendental Ideas therefore express the peculiar application of reason as a principle of systematic unity in the use of the understanding. Yet if we assume this unity of the mode of cognition to be attached to the object of cognition, if we regard that which is merely regulative to be constitutive, and if we persuade ourselves that we can by means of these Ideas enlarge our cognition transcendently, or far beyond all possible experience, while it only serves to render experience within itself as nearly complete as possible, i.e., to limit its progress by nothing that cannot belong to experience: we suffer from a mere misunderstanding in our estimate of the proper application of our reason and of its principles, and from a Dialectic, which both confuses the empirical use of reason, and also sets reason at variance with itself.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (CONCLUSION)

### On the Determination of the Bounds of Pure Reason

§ 57. Having adduced the clearest arguments, it would be absurd for us to hope that we can know more of any object, than belongs to the possible experience of it, or lay claim to the least atom of knowledge about anything not assumed to be an object of possible experience, which would determine it according to the constitution it has in itself. For how could we determine anything in this way, since time, space, and the categories, and still more all the concepts formed by empirical experience or perception in the sensible world (*Anschauung*), have and can have no other use, than to make experience possible. And if this condition is omitted from the pure concepts of the understanding, they do not determine any object, and have no meaning whatever.

But it would be on the other hand a still greater absurdity if we conceded no things in themselves, or set up our experience for the only possible mode of knowing things, our way of beholding (*Anschauung*) them in space and in time for the only possible way, and our discursive understanding for the archetype of every possible understanding; in fact if we wished to have the principles of the possibility of experience considered universal conditions of things in themselves.

Our principles, which limit the use of reason to possible experience, might in this way become transcendent, and the limits of our reason be set up as limits of the possibility of things in themselves (as Hume's dialogues may illustrate), if a careful critique did not guard the bounds of our reason with respect to its empirical use, and set a limit to its pretensions. Scepticism originally arose from metaphysics and its licentious dialectics. At first it might, merely to favor the empirical use of reason, announce everything that transcends this use as worthless and deceitful; but by and by, when it was perceived that the very same principles that are used in experience, insensibly, and apparently with the same right, led still further than experience extends, then men began to doubt even the propositions of experience. But here there is no danger; for common sense will doubtless always assert its rights. A certain confusion, however, arose in science which cannot determine how far reason is to be trusted, and why only so far and no further, and this confusion can only be cleared up and all future relapses obviated by a formal determination, on principle, of the boundary of the use of our reason.

We cannot indeed, beyond all possible experience, form a definite notion of what things in themselves may be. Yet we are not at liberty to abstain entirely from inquiring into them; for experience never satisfies reason fully, but in answering questions, refers us further and further back, and leaves us dissatisfied with regard to their complete solution. This any one may gather from the Dialectics of pure reason, which therefore has its good subjective grounds. Having acquired, as regards the nature of our soul, a clear conception of the subject, and having come to the conviction, that its manifestations cannot be explained materialistically, who can refrain from asking what the soul really is, and, if no concept of experience suffices for the purpose, from accounting for it by a concept of reason (that of a simple immaterial being), though we cannot by any means prove its objective reality? Who can satisfy himself with mere empirical knowledge in all the cosmological questions of the duration and of the quantity of the world, of freedom or of natural necessity, since every answer given on principles of experience begets a fresh question, which likewise requires its answer and thereby clearly shows the insufficiency of all physical

modes of explanation to satisfy reason? Finally, who does not see in the thorough-going contingency and dependence of all his thoughts and assumptions on mere principles of experience, the impossibility of stopping there? And who does not feel himself compelled, notwithstanding all interdictions against losing himself in transcendent ideas, to seek rest and contentment beyond all the concepts which he can vindicate by experience, in the concept of a Being, the possibility of which we cannot conceive, but at the same time cannot be refuted, because it relates to a mere being of the understanding, and without it reason must needs remain forever dissatisfied?

Bounds (in extended beings) always presuppose a space existing outside a certain definite place, and in closing it; limits do not require this, but are mere negations, which affect a quantity, so far as it is not absolutely complete. But our reason, as it were, sees in its surroundings a space for the cognition of things in themselves, though we can never have definite notions of them, and are limited to appearances only.

As long as the cognition of reason is homogeneous, definite bounds to it are inconceivable. In mathematics and in natural philosophy human reason admits of limits, but not of bounds, viz., that something indeed lies without it, at which it can never arrive, but not that it will at any point find completion in its internal progress. The enlarging of our views in mathematics, and the possibility of new discoveries, are infinite; and the same is the case with the discovery of new properties of nature, of new powers and laws, by continued experience and its rational combination. But limits cannot be mistaken here, for mathematics refers to appearances only, and what cannot be an object of sensuous contemplation, such as the concepts of metaphysics and of morals, lies entirely without its sphere, and it can never lead to them; neither does it require them. It is therefore not a continual progress and an approximation towards these sciences, and there is not, as it were, any point or line of contact. Natural science will never reveal to us the internal constitution of things, which though not appearance, yet can serve as the ultimate ground of explaining appearance. Nor does that science require this for its physical explanations. Nay even if such grounds should be offered from other sources (for instance, the influence of immaterial beings), they must be rejected and not used in the progress of its explanations. For these explanations must only be grounded upon that which as an object of sense can belong to experience, and be brought into connexion with our actual perceptions and empirical laws.

But metaphysics leads us towards bounds in the dialectical attempts of pure reason (not undertaken arbitrarily or wantonly, but stimulated thereto by the nature of reason itself). And the transcendental Ideas, as they do not admit of evasion, and are never capable of realisation, serve to point out to us actually not only the bounds of the pure use of reason, but also the way to determine them. Such is the end and the use of this natural predisposition of our reason, which has brought forth metaphysics as its favorite child, whose generation, like every other in the world, is not to be ascribed to blind chance, but to an original germ, wisely organised for great ends. For metaphysics, in its fundamental features, perhaps more than any other science, is placed in us by nature itself, and cannot be considered the production of an arbitrary choice or a casual enlargement in the progress of experience from which it is quite disparate.

Reason with all its concepts and laws of the understanding, which suffice for empirical use, i.e., within the sensible world, finds in itself no satisfaction because ever-recurring questions deprive us of all hope of their complete solution. The transcendental ideas, which have that completion in view, are such problems of reason. But it sees clearly, that the sensuous world cannot contain this completion, neither consequently can all the concepts, which serve merely for understanding the world of sense, such as space and time, and whatever we have adduced under the name of pure concepts of the understanding. The sensuous world is nothing but a chain of appearances connected according to universal laws; it has therefore no subsistence by itself; it is not the thing in itself, and consequently must point to that which contains the basis of this experience, to beings which cannot be cognised merely as phenomena, but as things in themselves. In the cognition of them alone reason can hope to satisfy its desire of completeness in proceeding from the conditioned to its conditions.

We have above (§§ 33, 34) indicated the limits of reason with regard to all cognition of mere creations of thought. Now, since the transcendental ideas have urged us to approach them, and thus have led us, as it were, to the spot where the occupied space (viz., experience) touches the void (that of which we can know nothing, viz., noumena), we can determine the bounds of pure reason. For in all bounds there is something positive (e.g., a surface is the boundary of corporeal space, and is therefore itself a space, a line is a space, which is the boundary of the surface, a point the boundary of the line, but yet always a place in space), whereas limits contain mere negations. The limits pointed out in those paragraphs are not enough after we have discovered that beyond them there still lies something (though we can never cognise what it is in itself). For the question now is, What is the attitude of our reason in this connexion of what we know with what we do not, and never shall, know? This is an actual connexion of a known thing with one quite unknown (and which will always remain so), and though what

is unknown should not become the least more known—which we cannot even hope—yet the notion of this connexion must be definite, and capable of being rendered distinct.

We must therefore accept an immaterial being, a world of understanding, and a Supreme Being (all mere noumena), because in them only, as things in themselves, reason finds that completion and satisfaction, which it can never hope for in the derivation of appearances from their homogeneous grounds, and because these actually have reference to something distinct from them (and totally heterogeneous), as appearances always presuppose an object in itself, and therefore suggest its existence whether we can know more of it or not.

But as we can never cognise these beings of understanding as they are in themselves, that is, definitely, yet must assume them as regards the sensible world, and connect them with it by reason, we are at least able to think this connexion by means of such concepts as express their relation to the world of sense. Yet if we represent to ourselves a being of the understanding by nothing but pure concepts of the understanding, we then indeed represent nothing definite to ourselves, consequently our concept has no significance; but if we think it by properties borrowed from the sensuous world, it is no longer a being of understanding, but is conceived as an appearance, and belongs to the sensible world. Let us take an instance from the notion of the Supreme Being.

Our deistic conception is quite a pure concept of reason, but represents only a thing containing all realities, without being able to determine any one of them; because for that purpose an example must be taken from the world of sense, in which case we should have an object of sense only, not something quite heterogeneous, which can never be an object of sense. Suppose I attribute to the Supreme Being understanding, for instance; I have no concept of an understanding other than my own, one that must receive its perceptions (*Anschauung*) by the senses, and which is occupied in bringing them under rules of the unity of consciousness. Then the elements of my concept would always lie in the appearance; I should however by the insufficiency of the appearance be necessitated to go beyond them to the concept of a being which neither depends upon appearance, nor is bound up with them as conditions of its determination. But if I separate understanding from sensibility to obtain a pure understanding, then nothing remains but the mere form of thinking without perception (*Anschauung*), by which form alone I can cognise nothing definite, and consequently no object. For that purpose I should conceive another understanding, such as would directly perceive its objects,<sup>39</sup> but of which I have not the least notion; because the human understanding is discursive, and can [not directly perceive, it can] only cognise by means of general concepts. And the very same difficulties arise if we attribute a will to the Supreme Being; for we have this concept only by drawing it from our internal experience, and therefore from our dependence for satisfaction upon objects whose existence we require; and so the notion rests upon sensibility, which is absolutely incompatible with the pure concept of the Supreme Being.

Hume's objections to deism are weak, and affect only the proofs, and not the deistic assertion itself. But as regards theism, which depends on a stricter determination of the concept of the Supreme Being which in deism is merely transcendent, they are very strong, and as this concept is formed, in certain (in fact in all common) cases irrefutable. Hume always insists, that by the mere concept of an original being, to which we apply only ontological predicates (eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence), we think nothing definite, and that properties which can yield a concept in concreto must be superadded; that it is not enough to say, it is Cause, but we must explain the nature of its causality, for example, that of an understanding and of a will. He then begins his attacks on the essential point itself, i.e., theism, as he had previously directed his battery only against the proofs of deism, an attack which is not very dangerous to it in its consequences. All his dangerous arguments refer to anthropomorphism, which he holds to be inseparable from theism, and to make it absurd in itself; but if the former be abandoned, the latter must vanish with it, and nothing remain but deism, of which nothing can come, which is of no value, and which cannot serve as any foundation to religion or morals. If this anthropomorphism were really unavoidable, no proofs whatever of the existence of a Supreme Being, even were they all granted, could determine for us the concept of this Being without involving us in contradictions.

If we connect with the command to avoid all transcendent judgments of pure reason, the command (which apparently conflicts with it) to proceed to concepts that lie beyond the field of its immanent (empirical) use, we discover that both can subsist together, but only at the boundary of all lawful use of reason. For this boundary belongs as well to the field of experience, as to that of the creations of thought, and we are thereby taught, as well, how these so remarkable ideas serve merely for marking the bounds of human reason. On the one hand they give warning not boundlessly to extend cognition of experience, as if nothing but world<sup>40</sup> remained for us to cognise, and yet, on the other hand, not to transgress the bounds of experience, and to think of judging about things beyond them, as things in themselves.

But we stop at this boundary if we limit our judgment merely to the relation which the world may have to a Being whose very concept lies beyond all the knowledge which we can attain within the world. For we then do not attribute to the Supreme Being any of the properties in themselves, by which we represent objects of experience, and thereby avoid dogmatic anthropomorphism; but we attribute them to his relation to the world, and allow ourselves a symbolical anthropomorphism, which in fact concerns language only, and not the object itself.

If I say that we are compelled to consider the world, as if it were the work of a Supreme Understanding and Will, I really say nothing more, than that a watch, a ship, a regiment, bears the same relation to the watchmaker, the shipbuilder, the commanding officer, as the world of sense (or whatever constitutes the substratum of this complex of appearances) does to the Unknown, which I do not hereby cognise as it is in itself, but as it is for me or in relation to the world, of which I am a part.

§ 58. Such a cognition is one of analogy, and does not signify (as is commonly understood) an imperfect similarity of two things, but a perfect similarity of relations between two quite dissimilar things.<sup>41</sup> By means of this analogy, however, there remains a concept of the Supreme Being sufficiently determined for us, though we have left out everything that could deter mine it absolutely or in itself; for we determine it as regards the world and as regards ourselves, and more do we not require. The attacks which Hume makes upon those who would determine this concept absolutely, by taking the materials for so doing from themselves and the world, do not affect us; and he cannot object to us, that we have nothing left if we give up the objective anthropomorphism of the concept of the Supreme Being.

For let us assume at the outset (as Hume in his dialogues makes Philo grant Cleanthes), as a necessary hypothesis, the deistical concept of the First Being, in which this Being is thought by the mere ontological predicates of substance, of cause, etc. This must be done, because reason, actuated in the sensible world by mere conditions, which are themselves always conditional, cannot otherwise have any satisfaction, and it therefore can be done without falling into anthropomorphism (which transfers predicates from the world of sense to a Being quite distinct from the world), because those predicates are mere categories, which, though they do not give a determinate concept of God, yet give a concept not limited to any conditions of sensibility. Thus nothing can prevent our predicating of this Being a causality through reason with regard to the world, and thus passing to theism, without being obliged to attribute to God in himself this kind of reason, as a property inhering in him. For as to the former, the only possible way of prosecuting the use of reason (as regards all possible experience, in complete harmony with itself) in the world of sense to the highest point, is to assume a supreme reason as a cause of all the connexions in the world. Such a principle must be quite advantageous to reason and can hurt it nowhere in its application to nature. As to the latter, reason is thereby not transferred as a property to the First Being in himself, but only to his relation to the world of sense, and so anthropomorphism is entirely avoided. For nothing is considered here but the cause of the form of reason which is perceived everywhere in the world, and reason is attributed to the Supreme Being, so far as it contains the ground of this form of reason in the world, but according to analogy only, that is, so far as this expression shows merely the relation, which the Supreme Cause unknown to us has to the world, in order to determine everything in it conformably to reason in the highest degree. We are thereby kept from using reason as an attribute for the purpose of conceiving God, but instead of conceiving the world in such a manner as is necessary to have the greatest possible use of reason according to principle. We thereby acknowledge that the Supreme Being is quite inscrutable and even unthinkable in any definite way as to what he is in himself. We are thereby kept, on the one hand, from making a transcendent use of the concepts which we have of reason as an efficient cause (by means of the will), in order to determine the Divine Nature by properties, which are only borrowed from human nature, and from losing ourselves in gross and extravagant notions, and on the other hand from deluging the contemplation of the world with hyperphysical modes of explanation according to our notions of human reason, which we transfer to God, and so losing for this contemplation its proper application, according to which it should be a rational study of mere nature, and not a presumptuous derivation of its appearances from a Supreme Reason. The expression suited to our feeble notions is, that we conceive the world as if it came, as to its existence and internal plan, from a Supreme Reason, by which notion we both cognise the constitution, which belongs to the world itself, yet without pretending to determine the nature of its cause in itself, and on the other hand, we transfer the ground of this constitution (of the form of reason in the world) upon the relation of the Supreme Cause to the world, without finding the world sufficient by itself for that purpose.<sup>42</sup>

Thus the difficulties which seem to oppose theism disappear by combining with Hume's principle—"not to carry the use of reason dogmatically beyond the field of all possible experience"—this other principle, which he quite overlooked: "not to consider the field of experience as one which bounds itself in the eye of our reason." The Critique of Pure Reason here points out the true mean between dogmatism, which Hume combats, and skepticism, which he would substitute for it—a mean which is not like other means that we find advisable to

determine for ourselves as it were mechanically (by adopting something from one side and something from the other), and by which nobody is taught a better way, but such a one as can be accurately determined on principles.

§ 59. At the beginning of this annotation I made use of the metaphor of a boundary, in order to establish the limits of reason in regard to its suitable use. The world of sense contains merely appearances, which are not things in themselves, but the understanding must assume these latter ones, viz., noumena. In our reason both are comprised, and the question is, How does reason proceed to set boundaries to the understanding as regards both these fields? Experience, which contains all that belongs to the sensuous world, does not bound itself; it only proceeds in every case from the conditioned to some other equally conditioned object. Its boundary must lie quite without it, and this field is that of the pure beings of the understanding. But this field, so far as the determination of the nature of these beings is concerned, is an empty space for us, and if dogmatically-determined concepts alone are in question, we cannot pass out of the field of possible experience. But as a boundary itself is something positive, which belongs as well to that which lies within, as to the space that lies without the given complex, it is still an actual positive cognition, which reason only acquires by enlarging itself to this boundary, yet without attempting to pass it; because it there finds itself in the presence of an empty space, in which it can conceive forms of things, but not things themselves. But the setting of a boundary to the field of the understanding by something, which is otherwise unknown to it, is still a cognition which belongs to reason even at this standpoint, and by which it is neither confined within the sensible, nor straying without it, but only refers, as befits the knowledge of a boundary, to the relation between that which lies without it, and that which is contained within it.

Natural theology is such a concept at the boundary of human reason, being constrained to look beyond this boundary to the Idea of a Supreme Being (and, for practical purposes to that of an intelligible world also), not in order to determine anything relatively to this pure creation of the understanding, which lies beyond the world of sense, but in order to guide the use of reason within it according to principles of the greatest possible (theoretical as well as practical) unity. For this purpose we make use of the reference of the world of sense to an independent reason, as the cause of all its connexions. Thereby we do not purely invent a being, but, as beyond the sensible world there must be something that can only be thought by the pure understanding, we determine that something in this particular way, though only of course according to analogy.

And thus there remains our original proposition, which is the résumé of the whole Critique: “that reason by all its a priori principles never teaches us anything more than objects of possible experience, and even of these nothing more than can be cognised in experience.” But this limitation does not prevent reason leading us to the objective boundary of experience, viz., to the reference to something which is not itself an object of experience, but is the ground of all experience. Reason does not however teach us anything concerning the thing in itself: it only instructs us as regards its own complete and highest use in the field of possible experience. But this is all that can be reasonably desired in the present case, and with which we have cause to be satisfied.

§ 60. Thus we have fully exhibited metaphysics as it is actually given in the natural predisposition of human reason, and in that which constitutes the essential end of its pursuit, according to its subjective possibility. Though we have found, that this merely natural use of such a predisposition of our reason, if no discipline arising only from a scientific critique bridles and sets limits to it, involves us in transcendent, either apparently or really conflicting, dialectical syllogisms; and this fallacious metaphysics is not only unnecessary as regards the promotion of our knowledge of nature, but even disadvantageous to it: there yet remains a problem worthy of solution, which is to find out the natural ends intended by this disposition to transcendent concepts in our reason, because everything that lies in nature must be originally intended for some useful purpose.

Such an inquiry is of a doubtful nature; and I acknowledge, that what I can say about it is conjecture only, like every speculation about the first ends of nature. The question does not concern the objective validity of metaphysical judgments, but our natural predisposition to them, and therefore does not belong to the system of metaphysics but to anthropology.

When I compare all the transcendental Ideas, the totality of which constitutes the particular problem of natural pure reason, compelling it to quit the mere contemplation of nature, to transcend all possible experience, and in this endeavor to produce the thing (be it knowledge or fiction) called metaphysics, I think I perceive that the aim of this natural tendency is, to free our notions from the fetters of experience and from the limits of the mere contemplation of nature so far as at least to open to us a field containing mere objects for the pure understanding, which no sensibility can reach, not indeed for the purpose of speculatively occupying ourselves with them (for there we can find no ground to stand on), but because practical principles, which, without finding some such scope for their necessary expectation and hope, could not expand to the universality which reason unavoidably requires from a moral point of view.

So I find that the Psychological Idea (however little it may reveal to me the nature of the human soul, which is higher than all concepts of experience), shows the insufficiency of these concepts plainly enough, and thereby deters me from materialism, the psychological notion of which is unfit for any explanation of nature, and besides confines reason in practical respects. The Cosmological Ideas, by the obvious insufficiency of all possible cognition of nature to satisfy reason in its lawful inquiry, serve in the same manner to keep us from naturalism, which asserts nature to be sufficient for itself. Finally, all natural necessity in the sensible world is conditional, as it always presupposes the dependence of things upon others, and unconditional necessity must be sought only in the unity of a cause different from the world of sense. But as the causality of this cause, in its turn, were it merely nature, could never render the existence of the contingent (as its consequent) comprehensible, reason frees itself by means of the Theological Idea from fatalism, (both as a blind natural necessity in the coherence of nature itself, without a first principle, and as a blind causality of this principle itself), and leads to the concept of a cause possessing freedom, or of a Supreme Intelligence. Thus the transcendental Ideas serve, if not to instruct us positively, at least to destroy the rash assertions of Materialism, of Naturalism, and of Fatalism, and thus to afford scope for the moral Ideas beyond the field of speculation. These considerations, I should think, explain in some measure the natural predisposition of which I spoke.

The practical value, which a merely speculative science may have, lies without the bounds of this science, and can therefore be considered as a scholion merely, and like all scholia does not form part of the science itself. This application however surely lies within the bounds of philosophy, especially of philosophy drawn from the pure sources of reason, where its speculative use in metaphysics must necessarily be at unity with its practical use in morals. Hence the unavoidable dialectics of pure reason, considered in metaphysics, as a natural tendency, deserves to be explained not as an illusion merely, which is to be removed, but also, if possible, as a natural provision as regards its end, though this duty, a work of supererogation, cannot justly be assigned to metaphysics proper.

The solutions of these questions which are treated in the chapter on the Regulative Use of the Ideas of Pure Reason<sup>43</sup> should be considered a second scholion which however has a greater affinity with the subject of metaphysics. For there certain rational principles are expounded which determine a priori the order of nature or rather of the understanding, which seeks nature's laws through experience. They seem to be constitutive and legislative with regard to experience, though they spring from pure reason, which cannot be considered, like the understanding, as a principle of possible experience. Now whether or not this harmony rests upon the fact, that just as nature does not inhere in appearances or in their source (the sensibility) itself, but only in so far as the latter is in relation to the understanding, as also a systematic unity in applying the understanding to bring about an entirety of all possible experience can only belong to the understanding when in relation to reason; and whether or not experience is in this way mediately subordinate to the legislation of reason: may be discussed by those who desire to trace the nature of reason even beyond its use in metaphysics, into the general principles of a history of nature; I have represented this task as important, but not attempted its solution, in the book itself.<sup>44</sup>

And thus I conclude the analytical solution of the main question which I had proposed: How is metaphysics in general possible? by ascending from the data of its actual use in its consequences, to the grounds of its possibility.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (EXPLANATORY COMMENT)

Solution to the General Question of the Prolegomena, "How is Metaphysics Possible as a Science?"

METAPHYSICS, as a natural disposition of reason, is actual, but if considered by itself alone (as the analytical solution of the third principal question showed), dialectical and illusory. If we think of taking principles from it, and in using them follow the natural, but on that account not less false, illusion, we can never produce science, but only a vain dialectical art, in which one school may outdo another, but none can ever acquire a just and lasting approbation.

In order that as a science metaphysics may be entitled to claim not mere fallacious plausibility, but in sight and conviction, a Critique of Reason must itself exhibit the whole stock of a priori concepts, their division according to their various sources (Sensibility, Understanding, and Reason), together with a complete table of them, the analysis of all these concepts, with all their consequences, especially by means of the deduction of these concepts, the possibility of synthetical cognition a priori, the principles of its application and finally its bounds, all in a complete system. Critique, therefore, and critique alone, contains in itself the whole well-proved and well-tested plan, and even all the means required to accomplish metaphysics, as a science; by other ways and means it is impossible. The question here therefore is not so much how this performance is possible, as how to set it going, and induce men of clear heads to quit their hitherto perverted and fruitless cultivation for one that will not deceive, and how such a union for the common end may best be directed.

This much is certain, that whoever has once tasted Critique will be ever after disgusted with all dogmatical twaddle which he formerly put up with, because his reason must have something, and could find nothing better for its support.

Critique stands in the same relation to the common metaphysics of the schools, as chemistry does to alchemy, or as astronomy to the astrology of the fortune-teller. I pledge myself that nobody who has read through and through, and grasped the principles of, the Critique even in these Prolegomena only, will ever return to that old and sophisticated pseudo-science; but will rather with a certain delight look forward to metaphysics which is now indeed in his power, requiring no more preparatory discoveries, and now at last affording permanent satisfaction to reason. For here is an advantage upon which, of all possible sciences, metaphysics alone can with certainty reckon: that it can be brought to such completion and fixity as to be incapable of further change, or of any augmentation by new discoveries; because here reason has the sources of its knowledge in itself, not in objects and their observation (*Anschauung*), by which latter its stock of knowledge cannot be further increased. When therefore it has exhibited the fundamental laws of its faculty completely and so definitely as to avoid all misunderstanding, there remains nothing for pure reason to cognise a priori, nay, there is even no ground to raise further questions. The sure prospect of knowledge so definite and so compact has a peculiar charm, even though we should set aside all its advantages, of which I shall hereafter speak.

All false art, all vain wisdom, lasts its time, but finally destroys itself, and its highest culture is also the epoch of its decay. That this time is come for metaphysics appears from the state into which it has fallen among all learned nations, despite of all the zeal with which other sciences of every kind are prosecuted. The old arrangement of our university studies still preserves its shadow; now and then an Academy of Science tempts men by offering prizes to write essays on it, but it is no longer numbered among thorough sciences; and let any one judge for himself how a man of genius, if he were called a great metaphysician, would receive the compliment, which may be well-meant, but is scarce envied by anybody.

Yet, though the period of the downfall of all dogmatical metaphysics has undoubtedly arrived, we are yet far from being able to say that the period of its regeneration is come by means of a thorough and complete Critique of Reason. All transitions from a tendency to its contrary pass through the stage of indifference, and this moment is the most dangerous for an author, but, in my opinion, the most favorable for the science. For, when party spirit has died out by a total dissolution of former connexions, minds are in the best state to listen to several proposals for an organisation according to a new plan.

When I say, that I hope these Prolegomena will excite investigation in the field of critique and afford a new and promising object to sustain the general spirit of philosophy, which seems on its speculative side to want sustenance, I can imagine beforehand, that every one, whom the thorny paths of my Critique have tired and put out of humor, will ask me, upon what I found this hope. My answer is, upon the irresistible law of necessity.

That the human mind will ever give up metaphysical researches is as little to be expected as that we should prefer to give up breathing altogether, to avoid inhaling impure air. There will therefore always be metaphysics in the world; nay, every one, especially every man of reflexion, will have it, and for want of a recognised standard, will shape it for himself after his own pattern. What has hitherto been called metaphysics, cannot satisfy any critical mind, but to forego it entirely is impossible; therefore a Critique of Pure Reason itself must now be attempted or, if

one exists, investigated, and brought to the full test, because there is no other means of supplying this pressing want, which is something more than mere thirst for knowledge.

Ever since I have come to know critique, whenever I finish reading a book of metaphysical contents, which, by the preciseness of its notions, by variety, order, and an easy style, was not only entertaining but also helpful, I cannot help asking, "Has this author indeed advanced metaphysics a single step?" The learned men, whose works have been useful to me in other respects and always contributed to the culture of my mental powers, will, I hope, forgive me for saying, that I have never been able to find either their essays or my own less important ones (though self-love may recommend them to me) to have advanced the science of metaphysics in the least, and why?

Here is the very obvious reason: metaphysics did not then exist as a science, nor can it be gathered piecemeal, but its germ must be fully preformed in the Critique. But in order to prevent all misconception, we must remember what has been already said, that by the analytical treatment of our concepts the understanding gains indeed a great deal, but the science (of metaphysics) is thereby not in the least advanced, because these dissections of concepts are nothing but the materials from which the intention is to carpenter our science. Let the concepts of substance and of accident be ever so well dissected and determined, all this is very well as a preparation for some future use. But if we cannot prove, that in all which exists the substance endures, and only the accidents vary, our science is not the least advanced by all our analyses.

Metaphysics has hitherto never been able to prove a priori either this proposition, or that of sufficient reason, still, less any more complex theorem, such as belongs to psychology or cosmology, or indeed any synthetical proposition. By all its analysing therefore nothing is affected, nothing obtained or forwarded, and the science, after all this bustle and noise, still remains as it was in the days of Aristotle, though far better preparations were made for it than of old, if the clue to synthetical cognitions had only been discovered.

If any one thinks himself offended, he is at liberty to refute my charge by producing a single synthetical proposition belonging to metaphysics, which he would prove dogmatically a priori, for until he has actually performed this feat, I shall not grant that he has truly advanced the science; even should this proposition be sufficiently confirmed by common experience. No demand can be more moderate or more equitable, and in the (inevitably certain) event of its non-performance, no assertion more just, than that hitherto metaphysics has never existed as a science.

But there are two things which, in case the challenge be accepted, I must deprecate: first, trifling about probability and conjecture, which are suited as little to metaphysics, as to geometry; and secondly, a decision by means of the magic wand of common sense, which does not convince every one, but which accommodates itself to personal peculiarities.

For as to the former, nothing can be more absurd, than in metaphysics, a philosophy from pure reason to think of grounding our judgments upon probability and conjecture. Everything that is to be cognised a priori, is thereby announced as apodeictically certain, and must therefore be proved in this way. We might as well think of grounding geometry or arithmetic upon conjectures. As to the doctrine of chances in the latter, it does not contain probable, but perfectly certain, judgments concerning the degree of the probability of certain cases, under given uniform conditions, which, in the sum of all possible cases, infallibly happen according to the rule, though it is not sufficiently determined in respect to every single chance. Conjectures (by means of induction and of analogy) can be suffered in an empirical science of nature only, yet even there the possibility at least of what we assume must be quite certain.

The appeal to common sense is even more absurd, when concept and principles are announced as valid, not in so far as they hold with regard to experience, but even beyond the conditions of experience. For what is common sense? It is normal good sense, so far it judges right. But what is normal good sense? It is the faculty of the knowledge and use of rules in concreto, as distinguished from the speculative understanding, which is a faculty of knowing rules in abstracto. Common sense can hardly understand the rule, "that every event is determined by means of its cause," and can never comprehend it thus generally. It therefore demands an example from experience, and when it hears that this rule means nothing but what it always thought when a pane was broken or a kitchen-utensil missing, it then understands the principle and grants it. Common sense therefore is only of use so far as it can see its rules (though they actually are a priori) confirmed by experience; consequently to comprehend them a priori, or independently of experience, belongs to the speculative understanding, and lies quite beyond the horizon of common sense. But the province of metaphysics is entirely confined to the latter kind of knowledge, and it is certainly a bad index of common sense to appeal to it as a witness, for it cannot here form

any opinion whatever, and men look down upon it with contempt until they are in difficulties, and can find in their speculation neither in nor out.

It is a common subterfuge of those false friends of common sense (who occasionally prize it highly, but usually despise it) to say, that there must surely be at all events some propositions which are immediately certain, and of which there is no occasion to give any proof, or even any account at all, because we otherwise could never stop inquiring into the grounds of our judgments. But if we except the principle of contradiction, which is not sufficient to show the truth of synthetical judgments, they can never adduce, in proof of this privilege, anything else indubitable, which they can immediately ascribe to common sense, except mathematical propositions, such as twice two make four, between two points there is but one straight line, etc. But these judgments are radically different from those of metaphysics. For in mathematics I myself can by thinking construct whatever I represent to myself as possible by a concept: I add to the first two the other two, one by one, and myself make the number four, or I draw in thought from one point to another all manner of lines, equal as well as unequal; yet I can draw one only, which is like itself in all its parts. But I cannot, by all my power of thinking, extract from the concept of a thing the concept of something else, whose existence is necessarily connected with the former, but I must call in experience. And though my understanding furnishes me a priori (yet only in reference to possible experience) with the concept of such a connexion (i.e., causation), I cannot exhibit it, like the concepts of mathematics, by (*Anschauung*) visualising them, a priori, and so show its possibility a priori. This concept, together with the principles of its application, always requires, if it shall hold a priori—as is requisite in metaphysics—a justification and deduction of its possibility, because we cannot otherwise know how far it holds good, and whether it can be used in experience only or beyond it also.

Therefore in metaphysics, as a speculative science of pure reason, we can never appeal to common sense, but may do so only when we are forced to surrender it, and to renounce all purely speculative cognition, which must always be knowledge, and consequently when we forego metaphysics itself and its instruction, for the sake of adopting a rational faith which alone may be possible for us, and sufficient to our wants, perhaps even more salutary than knowledge itself. For in this case the attitude of the question is quite altered. Metaphysics must be science, not only as a whole, but in all its parts, otherwise it is nothing; because, as a speculation of pure reason, it finds a hold only on general opinions. Beyond its field, however, probability and common sense may be used with advantage and justly, but on quite special principles, of which the importance always depends on the reference to practical life.

This is what I hold myself justified in requiring for the possibility of metaphysics as a science.

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## IMMANUEL KANT: PROLEGOMENA TO ANY FUTURE METAPHYSICS (APPENDIX)

### On What Can be Done to Make Metaphysics Actual as a Science

SINCE all the ways heretofore taken have failed to attain the goal, and since without a preceding critique of pure reason it is not likely ever to be attained, the present essay now before the public has a fair title to an accurate and careful investigation, except it be thought more advisable to give up all pretensions to metaphysics, to which, if men but would consistently adhere to their purpose, no objection can be made.

If we take the course of things as it is, not as it ought to be, there are two sorts of judgments: (1) one a judgment which precedes investigation (in our case one in which the reader from his own metaphysics pronounces judgment on the Critique of Pure Reason which was intended to discuss the very possibility of metaphysics); (2) the other a judgment subsequent to investigation. In the latter the reader is enabled to waive for awhile the consequences of the critical researches that may be repugnant to his formerly adopted metaphysics, and first examines the grounds whence those consequences are derived. If what common metaphysics propounds were demonstrably certain, as for instance the theorems of geometry, the former way of judging would hold good. For if

the consequences of certain principles are repugnant to established truths, these principles are false and without further inquiry to be repudiated. But if metaphysics does not possess a stock of indisputably certain (synthetical) propositions, and should it even be the case that there are a number of them, which, though among the most specious, are by their consequences in mutual collision, and if no sure criterion of the truth of peculiarly metaphysical (synthetical) propositions is to be met with in it, then the former way of judging is not admissible, but the investigation of the principles of the critique must precede all judgments as to its value.

#### ON A SPECIMEN OF A JUDGMENT OF THE CRITIQUE PRIOR TO ITS EXAMINATION.

This judgment is to be found in the Göttingischen gelehrten Anzeigen, in the supplement to the third division, of January 19, 1782, pages 40 et seq.

When an author who is familiar with the subject of his work and endeavors to present his independent reflexions in its elaboration, falls into the hands of a reviewer who, in his turn, is keen enough to discern the points on which the worth or worthlessness of the book rests, who does not cling to words, but goes to the heart of the subject, sifting and testing more than the mere principles which the author takes as his point of departure, the severity of the judgment may indeed displease the latter, but the public does not care, as it gains thereby; and the author himself may be contented, as an opportunity of correcting or explaining his positions is afforded to him at an early date by the examination of a competent judge, in such a manner, that if he believes himself fundamentally right, he can remove in time any stone of offence that might hurt the success of his work.

I find myself, with my reviewer, in quite another position. He seems not to see at all the real matter of the investigation with which (successfully or unsuccessfully) I have been occupied. It is either impatience at thinking out a lengthy work, or vexation at a threatened reform of a science in which he believed he had brought everything to perfection long ago, or, what I am unwilling to imagine, real narrowmindedness, that prevents him from ever carrying his thoughts beyond his school-metaphysics. In short, he passes impatiently in review a long series of propositions, by which, without knowing their premises, we can think nothing, intersperses here and there his censure, the reason of which the reader understands just as little as the propositions against which it is directed; and hence [his report] can neither serve the public nor damage me, in the judgment of experts. I should, for these reasons, have passed over this judgment altogether, were it not that it may afford me occasion for some explanations which may in some cases save the readers of these Prolegomena from a misconception.

In order to take a position from which my reviewer could most easily set the whole work in a most unfavorable light, without venturing to trouble himself with any special investigation, he begins and ends by saying:

“This work is a system of transcendent (or, as he translates it, of higher) Idealism.”<sup>45</sup>

A glance at this line soon showed me the sort of criticism that I had to expect, much as though the reviewer were one who had never seen or heard of geometry, having found a Euclid, and coming upon various figures in turning over its leaves, were to say, on being asked his opinion of it: “The work is a text-book of drawing; the author introduces a peculiar terminology, in order to give dark, incomprehensible directions, which in the end teach nothing more than what every one can effect by a fair natural accuracy of eye, etc.”

Let us see, in the meantime, what sort of an idealism it is that goes through my whole work, although it does not by a long way constitute the soul of the system.

The dictum of all genuine idealists from the Eleatic school to Bishop Berkeley, is contained in this formula: “All cognition through the senses and experience is nothing but sheer illusion, and only, in the ideas of the pure understanding and reason there is truth.”

The principle that throughout dominates and determines my Idealism, is on the contrary: “All cognition of things merely from pure understanding or pure reason is nothing but sheer illusion, and only in experience is there truth.”

But this is directly contrary to idealism proper. How came I then to use this expression for quite an opposite purpose, and how came my reviewer to see it everywhere?

The solution of this difficulty rests on something that could have been very easily understood from the general bearing of the work, if the reader had only desired to do so. Space and time, together with all that they contain, are not things nor qualities in themselves, but belong merely to the appearances of the latter: up to this point I am one in confession with the above idealists. But these, and amongst them more particularly Berkeley, regarded space as a mere empirical presentation that, like the phenomenon it contains, is only known to us by means of

experience or perception, together with its determinations. I, on the contrary, prove in the first place, that space (and also time, which Berkeley did not consider) and all its determinations a priori, can be cognised by us, because, no less than time, it inheres in our sensibility as a pure form before all perception or experience and makes all intuition of the same, and therefore all its phenomena, possible. It follows from this, that as truth rests on universal and necessary laws as its criteria, experience, according to Berkeley, can have no criteria of truth, because its phenomena (according to him) have nothing a priori at their foundation; whence it follows, that they are nothing but sheer illusion; whereas with us, space and time (in conjunction with the pure conceptions of the understanding) prescribe their law to all possible experience a priori, and at the same time afford the certain criterion for distinguishing truth from illusion therein.<sup>46</sup>

My so-called (properly critical) Idealism is of quite a special character, in that it subverts the ordinary idealism, and that through it all cognition a priori, even that of geometry, first receives objective reality, which, without my demonstrated ideality of space and time, could not be maintained by the most zealous realists. This being the state of the case, I could have wished, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, to have named this conception of mine otherwise, but to alter it altogether was impossible. It may be permitted me however, in future, as has been above intimated, to term it the formal, or better still, the critical Idealism, to distinguish it from the dogmatic Idealism of Berkeley, and from the sceptical Idealism of Descartes.

Beyond this, I find nothing further remarkable in the judgment of my book. The reviewer criticises here and there, makes sweeping criticisms, a mode prudently chosen, since it does not betray one's own knowledge or ignorance; a single thorough criticism in detail, had it touched the main question, as is only fair, would have exposed, it may be my error, or it may be my reviewer's measure of insight into this species of research. It was, moreover, not a badly conceived plan, in order at once to take from readers (who are accustomed to form their conceptions of books from newspaper reports) the desire to read the book itself, to pour out in one breath a number of passages in succession, torn from their connexion, and their grounds of proof and explanations, and which must necessarily sound senseless, especially considering how antipathetic they are to all school-metaphysics; to exhaust the reader's patience ad nauseam, and then, after having made me acquainted with the sensible proposition that persistent illusion is truth, to conclude with the crude paternal moralisation: to what end, then, the quarrel with accepted language, to what end, and whence, the idealistic distinction? A judgment which seeks all that is characteristic of my book, first supposed to be metaphysically heterodox, in a mere innovation of the nomenclature, proves clearly that my would-be judge has understood nothing of the subject, and in addition, has not understood himself.<sup>47</sup>

My reviewer speaks like a man who is conscious of important and superior insight which he keeps hidden; for I am aware of nothing recent with respect to metaphysics that could justify his tone. But he should not withhold his discoveries from the world, for there are doubtless many who, like myself, have not been able to find in all the fine things that have for long past been written in this department, anything that has advanced the science by so much as a fingerbreadth; we find indeed the giving a new point to definitions, the supplying of lame proofs with new crutches, the adding to the crazy-quilt of metaphysics fresh patches or changing its pattern; but all this is not what the world requires. The world is tired of metaphysical assertions; it wants the possibility of the science, the sources from which certainty therein can be derived, and certain criteria by which it may distinguish the dialectical illusion of pure reason from truth. To this the critic seems to possess a key, otherwise he would never have spoken out in such a high tone.

But I am inclined to suspect that no such requirement of the science has ever entered his thoughts, for in that case he would have directed his judgment to this point, and even a mistaken attempt in such an important matter, would have won his respect. If that be the case, we are once more good friends. He may penetrate as deeply as he likes into metaphysics, without any one hindering him; only as concerns that which lies outside metaphysics, its sources, which are to be found in reason, he cannot form a judgment. That my suspicion is not without foundation, is proved by the fact that he does not mention a word about the possibility of synthetic knowledge a priori, the special problem upon the solution of which the fate of metaphysics wholly rests, and upon which my Critique (as well as the present Prolegomena) entirely hinges. The Idealism he encountered, and which he hung upon, was only taken up in the doctrine as the sole means of solving the above problem (although it received its confirmation on other grounds), and hence he must have shown either that the above problem does not possess the importance I attribute to it (even in these Prolegomena), or that by my conception of appearances, it is either not solved at all, or can be better solved in another way; but I do not find a word of this in the criticism. The reviewer, then, understands nothing of my work, and possibly also nothing of the spirit and essential nature of metaphysics itself; and it is not, what I would rather assume, the hurry of a man incensed at the labor of plodding through so many obstacles, that threw an unfavorable shadow over the work lying before him, and made its fundamental features unrecognisable.

There is a good deal to be done before a learned journal, it matters not with what care its writers may be selected, can maintain its otherwise well-merited reputation, in the field of metaphysics as elsewhere. Other sciences and branches of knowledge have their standard. Mathematics has it, in itself; history and theology, in profane or sacred books; natural science and the art of medicine, in mathematics and experience; jurisprudence, in law books; and even matters of taste in the examples of the ancients. But for the judgment of the thing called metaphysics, the standard has yet to be found. I have made an attempt to determine it, as well as its use. What is to be done, then, until it be found, when works of this kind have to be judged of? If they are of a dogmatic character, one may do what one likes; no one will play the master over others here for long, before someone else appears to deal with him in the same manner. If, however, they are critical in their character, not indeed with reference to other works, but to reason itself, so that the standard of judgment cannot be assumed but has first of all to be sought for, then, though objection and blame may indeed be permitted, yet a certain degree of leniency is indispensable, since the need is common to us all, and the lack of the necessary insight makes the high-handed attitude of judge unwarranted.

In order, however, to connect my defence with the interest of the philosophical commonwealth, I propose a test, which must be decisive as to the mode, whereby all metaphysical investigations may be directed to their common purpose. This is nothing more than what formerly mathematicians have done, in establishing the advantage of their methods by competition. I challenge my critic to demonstrate, as is only just, on a priori grounds, in his way, a single really metaphysical principle asserted by him. Being metaphysical it must be synthetic and cognised a priori from conceptions, but it may also be any one of the most indispensable principles, as for instance, the principle of the persistence of substance, or of the necessary determination of events in the world by their causes. If he cannot do this (silence however is confession), he must admit, that as metaphysics without apodeictic certainty of propositions of this kind is nothing at all, its possibility or impossibility must before all things be established in a critique of the pure reason. Thus he is bound either to confess that my principles in the Critique are correct, or he must prove their invalidity. But as I can already foresee, that, confidently as he has hitherto relied on the certainty of his principles, when it comes to a strict test he will not find a single one in the whole range of metaphysics he can bring forward, I will concede to him an advantageous condition, which can only be expected in such a competition, and will relieve him of the onus probandi by laying it on myself.

He finds in these Prolegomena and in my Critique (chapter on the "Theses and Antitheses of the Four Antinomies") eight propositions, of which two and two contradict one another, but each of which necessarily belongs to metaphysics, by which it must either be accepted or rejected (although there is not one that has not in this time been held by some philosopher). Now he has the liberty of selecting any one of these eight propositions at his pleasure, and accepting it without any proof, of which I shall make him a present, but only one (for waste of time will be just as little serviceable to him as to me), and then of attacking my proof of the opposite proposition. If I can save this one, and at the same time show, that according to principles which every dogmatic metaphysics must necessarily recognise, the opposite of the proposition adopted by him can be just as clearly proved, it is thereby established that metaphysics has an hereditary failing, not to be explained, much less set aside, until we ascend to its birth-place, pure reason itself, and thus my Critique must either be accepted or a better one take its place; it must at least be studied, which is the only thing I now require. If, on the other hand, I cannot save my demonstration, then a synthetic proposition a priori from dogmatic principles is to be reckoned to the score of my opponent, then also I will deem my impeachment of ordinary metaphysics as unjust, and pledge myself to recognise his stricture on my Critique as justified (although this would not be the consequence by a long way). To this end it would be necessary, it seems to me, that he should step out of his incognito. Otherwise I do not see how it could be avoided, that instead of dealing with one, I should be honored by several problems coming from anonymous and unqualified opponents.

#### PROPOSALS AS TO AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CRITIQUE UPON WHICH A JUDGMENT MAY FOLLOW.

I feel obliged to the honored public even for the silence with which it for a long time favored my Critique, for this proves at least a postponement of judgment, and some supposition that in a work, leaving all beaten tracks and striking out on a new path, in which one cannot at once perhaps so easily find one's way, something may perchance lie, from which an important but at present dead branch of human knowledge may derive new life and productiveness. Hence may have originated a solicitude for the as yet tender shoot, lest it be destroyed by a hasty judgment. A test of a judgment, delayed for the above reasons, is now before my eye in the Gothaischen gelehrten Zeitung, the thoroughness of which every reader will himself perceive, from the clear and unperverted presentation of a fragment of one of the first principles of my work, without taking into consideration my own suspicious praise.

And now I propose, since an extensive structure cannot be judged of as a whole from a hurried glance, to test it piece by piece from its foundations, so thereby the present Prolegomena may fitly be used as a general outline

with which the work itself may occasionally be compared. This notion, if it were founded on nothing more than my conceit of importance, such as vanity commonly attributes to one's own productions, would be immodest and would deserve to be repudiated with disgust. But now, the interests of speculative philosophy have arrived at the point of total extinction, while human reason hangs upon them with inextinguishable affection, and only after having been ceaselessly deceived does it vainly attempt to change this into indifference.

In our thinking age it is not to be supposed but that many deserving men would use any good opportunity of working for the common interest of the more and more enlightened reason, if there were only some hope of attaining the goal. Mathematics, natural science, laws, arts, even morality, etc., do not completely fill the soul; there is always a space left over, reserved for pure and speculative reason, the vacuity of which prompts us to seek in vagaries, buffooneries, and myticism for what seems to be employment and entertainment, but what actually is mere pastime; in order to deaden the troublesome voice of reason, which in accordance with its nature requires something that can satisfy it, and not merely subserve other ends or the interests of our inclinations. A consideration, therefore, which is concerned only with reason as it exists for it itself, has as I may reasonably suppose a great fascination for every one who has attempted thus to extend his conceptions, and I may even say a greater than any other theoretical branch of knowledge, for which he would not willingly exchange it, because here all other cognitions, and even purposes, must meet and unite themselves in a whole.

I offer, therefore, these Prolegomena as a sketch and text-book for this investigation, and not the work itself. Although I am even now perfectly satisfied with the latter as far as contents, order, and mode of presentation, and the care that I have expended in weighing and testing every sentence before writing it down, are concerned (for it has taken me years to satisfy myself fully, not only as regards the whole, but in some cases even as to the sources of one particular proposition); yet I am not quite satisfied with my exposition in some sections of the doctrine of elements, as for instance in the deduction of the conceptions of the Understanding, or in that on the paralogisms of pure reason, because a certain diffuseness takes away from their clearness, and in place of them, what is here said in the Prolegomena respecting these sections, may be made the basis of the test.

It is the boast of the Germans that where steady and continuous industry are requisite, they can carry things farther than other nations. If this opinion be well founded, an opportunity, a business, presents itself, the successful issue of which we can scarcely doubt, and in which all thinking men can equally take part, though they have hitherto been unsuccessful in accomplishing it and in thus confirming the above good opinion. But this is chiefly because the science in question is of so peculiar a kind, that it can be at once brought to completion and to that enduring state that it will never be able to be brought in the least degree farther or increased by later discoveries, or even changed (leaving here out of account adornment by greater clearness in some places, or additional uses), and this is an advantage no other science has or can have, because there is none so fully isolated and independent of others, and which is concerned with the faculty of cognition pure and simple. And the present moment seems, moreover, not to be unfavorable to my expectation, for just now, in Germany, no one seems to know wherewith to occupy himself, apart from the so-called useful sciences, so as to pursue not mere play, but a business possessing an enduring purpose.

To discover the means how the endeavors of the learned may be united in such a purpose, I must leave to others. In the meantime, it is my intention to persuade any one merely to follow my propositions, or even to flatter me with the hope that he will do so; but attacks, repetitions, limitations, or confirmation, completion, and extension, as the case may be, should be appended. If the matter be but investigated from its foundation, it cannot fail that a system, albeit not my own, shall be erected, that shall be a possession for future generations for which they may have reason to be grateful.

It would lead us too far here to show what kind of metaphysics may be expected, when only the principles of criticism have been perfected, and how, because the old false feathers have been pulled out, she need by no means appear poor and reduced to an insignificant figure, but may be in other respects richly and respectably adorned. But other and great uses which would result from such a reform, strike one immediately. The ordinary metaphysics had its uses, in that it sought out the elementary conceptions of the pure understanding in order to make them clear through analysis, and definite by explanation. In this way it was a training for reason, in whatever direction it might be turned; but this was all the good it did; service was subsequently effaced when it favored conceit by venturesome assertions, sophistry by subtle distinctions and adornment, and shallowness by the ease with which it decided the most difficult problems by means of a little school-wisdom, which is only the more seductive the more it has the choice, on the one hand, of taking something from the language of science, and on the other from that of popular discourse, thus being everything to everybody, but in reality nothing at all. By criticism, however, a standard is given to our judgment, whereby knowledge may be with certainty distinguished from pseudo-science, and firmly founded, being brought into full operation in metaphysics; a mode of thought extending by degrees its beneficial influence over every other use of reason, at once infusing into it the true

philosophical spirit. But the service also that metaphysics performs for theology, by making it independent of the judgment of dogmatic speculation, thereby assuring it completely against the attacks of all such opponents, is certainly not to be valued lightly. For ordinary metaphysics, although it promised the latter much advantage, could not keep this promise, and moreover, by summoning speculative dogmatics to its assistance, did nothing but arm enemies against itself. Mysticism, which can prosper in a rationalistic age only when it hides itself behind a system of school-metaphysics, under the protection of which it may venture to rave with a semblance of rationality, is driven from this, its last hiding-place, by critical philosophy. Last, but not least, it cannot be otherwise than important to a teacher of metaphysics, to be able to say with universal assent, that what he expounds is Science, and that thereby genuine services will be rendered to the commonweal.

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# CHAPTER 6: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

## WHAT IS RELIGION?

### Nature of Religion

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## RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

### Religions of the World

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## CONCEPTION AND NATURE OF GOD (OVERVIEW)

The **existence of God** is a subject of debate in the [philosophy of religion](#), [popular culture](#), and philosophy.<sup>[1]</sup> A wide variety of arguments for and against the existence of **God** can be categorized as [metaphysical](#), [logical](#), [empirical](#), or [subjective](#). In [philosophical](#) terms, the notion of the existence of God involves the disciplines of [epistemology](#) (the nature and scope of [knowledge](#)) and [ontology](#) (study of the nature of [being](#), [existence](#), or [reality](#)) and the [theory of value](#) (since concepts of perfection are connected to notions of **God**).

The [Western tradition of philosophical discussion](#) of the existence of God began with [Plato](#) and [Aristotle](#), who made arguments that would now be categorized as [cosmological](#). Other arguments for the existence of God have been proposed by [St. Anselm](#), who formulated the first [ontological argument](#); [Ibn Rushd \(Averroes\)](#) and [Aquinas](#), who presented their own versions of the cosmological argument (the [kalam argument](#) and the [first way](#), respectively); [René Descartes](#), who said that the existence of a benevolent God is [logically necessary](#) for the evidence of the senses to be meaningful; and [Immanuel Kant](#), who argued that the existence of God can be [deduced](#) from the existence of [good](#). Philosophers who have provided arguments against the existence of God include [David Hume](#), Kant, [Nietzsche](#), and [Bertrand Russell](#). In modern culture, the question of God's existence has been discussed by scientists such as [Stephen Hawking](#), [Francis Collins](#), [Lawrence M. Krauss](#), [Richard Dawkins](#), and [John Lennox](#), as well as philosophers including [Richard Swinburne](#), [Alvin Plantinga](#), [William Lane Craig](#), [Rebecca Goldstein](#), [A. C. Grayling](#), [Daniel Dennett](#), [Edward Feser](#), [David Bentley Hart](#) and [Sam Harris](#).

The [Catholic Church](#) maintains that knowledge of the existence of God is the “natural light of human reason”.<sup>[2]</sup> [Fideists](#) acknowledge that belief in the existence of God may not be amenable to demonstration or refutation, but rests on [faith](#) alone. [Atheism](#) views arguments for the existence of God as insufficient, mistaken or weighing less in comparison to arguments against. Other religions, such as [Buddhism](#), don't concern themselves with the existence of gods at all, while religions such as [Jainism](#) reject the possibility of a [creator deity](#).

## Definition of God

In [classical theism](#), God is characterized as the metaphysically ultimate being (the first, timeless, absolutely simple, and sovereign being, who is devoid of any [anthropomorphic](#) qualities), in distinction to other conceptions such as [theistic personalism](#), [open theism](#), and [process theism](#). Classical theists do not believe that God can be completely defined. They believe that this would contradict the [transcendent](#) nature of God for mere humans to define him. Robert Barron explains by analogy that it seems impossible for a two-dimensional object to conceive of three-dimensional humans.<sup>[3]</sup>

By contrast, much of [Eastern religious](#) thought (chiefly [pantheism](#)) posits God as a force contained in every imaginable phenomenon. For example, [Baruch Spinoza](#) and his followers use the term God in a particular philosophical sense to mean the essential substance/principles of nature.

In modern Western societies, the [concepts of God](#) typically entail a [monotheistic](#), supreme, ultimate, and [personal being](#), as found in the [Islamic](#), [Christian](#) and [Jewish](#) traditions. In monotheisms outside the [Abrahamic traditions](#), the existence of God is discussed in similar terms.

In the [Advaita Vedanta](#) school of Hinduism, reality is ultimately seen as a single, qualityless, changeless [nirguna Brahman](#). Advaitin philosophy introduces the concept of [saguna Brahman](#) or [Ishvara](#) as a way of talking about Brahman to people. [Ishvara](#), in turn, is ascribed such qualities as [omniscience](#), [omnipotence](#), and benevolence.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Ignosticism

[Ignosticism](#) or “igtheism” is the theological position that every other theological position (including [agnosticism](#) and atheism) assumes too much about the concept of God and many other theological concepts. It can be defined as encompassing two related views about the existence of God. The view that a coherent definition of God must be presented before the question of the existence of God can be meaningfully discussed. Furthermore, if that definition is [unfalsifiable](#), the ignostic takes the [theological noncognitivist](#) position that the question of the existence of God (per that definition) is meaningless. In this case, the concept of God is not considered meaningless; the term “God” is considered meaningless. The second view is synonymous with theological noncognitivism, and skips the step of first asking “What is meant by ‘God’?” before proclaiming the original question “Does God exist?” as meaningless.

Some philosophers have seen ignosticism as a variation of agnosticism or atheism,<sup>[5]</sup> while others have considered it to be distinct. An ignostic maintains that he cannot even say whether he is a [theist](#) or an atheist until a sufficient definition of theism is put forth.

The term “ignosticism” was coined in the 1960s by [Sherwin Wine](#), a [rabbi](#) and a founding figure of [Humanistic Judaism](#). The term “igtheism” was coined by the [secular humanist Paul Kurtz](#) in his 1992 book *The New Skepticism*.<sup>[6]</sup>

## The problem of the supernatural

One problem posed by the question of the existence of God is that traditional beliefs usually ascribe to God various [supernatural](#) powers. Supernatural beings may be able to conceal and reveal themselves for their own purposes, as for example in the tale of [Baucis and Philemon](#). In addition, according to concepts of God, God is not part of the natural order, but the ultimate creator of nature and of the scientific laws. Thus, in [Aristotelian philosophy](#), God is viewed as part of the explanatory structure needed to support scientific conclusions, and any powers God possesses are, strictly speaking, of the natural order—that is, derived from God's place as originator of nature. (See also [Monadology](#))

In [Karl Popper's philosophy of science](#), belief in a supernatural God is outside the natural domain of scientific investigation because all scientific hypotheses must be falsifiable in the natural world. The [non-overlapping magisteria](#) view proposed by [Stephen Jay Gould](#) also holds that the existence (or otherwise) of God is irrelevant to and beyond the domain of science.

[Logical positivists](#), such as [Rudolf Carnap](#) and [A. J. Ayer](#) viewed any talk of gods as literal nonsense. For the logical positivists and adherents of similar schools of thought, statements about religious or other transcendent experiences can not have a [truth value](#), and are deemed to be without meaning, because the version of [metaphysical naturalism](#) upon which logical positivism is based automatically excludes the possibility of the supernatural *a priori* without proof. As the Christian biologist [Scott C. Todd](#) put it “Even if all the data pointed to an intelligent designer, such a hypothesis is excluded from science because it is not naturalistic.”<sup>[7]</sup> This argument limits the domain of science to the empirically observable and limits the domain of God to the unprovable.

## Nature of relevant proofs and arguments

[John Polkinghorne](#) suggests that the nearest analogy to the existence of God in physics are the ideas of [quantum mechanics](#) which are seemingly paradoxical but make sense of a great deal of disparate data.<sup>[8]</sup>

Alvin Plantinga compares the question of the existence of God to the question of the existence of [other minds](#), claiming both are notoriously impossible to “prove” against a determined skeptic.<sup>[9]</sup>

One approach, suggested by writers such as [Stephen D. Unwin](#), is to treat (particular versions of) theism and [naturalism](#) as though they were two hypotheses in the [Bayesian](#) sense, to list certain data (or alleged data), about the world, and to suggest that the likelihoods of these data are significantly higher under one hypothesis than the other.<sup>[10]</sup> Most of the arguments for, or against, the existence of God can be seen as pointing to particular aspects of the universe in this way. In almost all cases it is not seriously suggested by proponents of the arguments that they are irrefutable, merely that they make one worldview seem significantly more likely than the other. However, since an assessment of the weight of evidence depends on the [prior probability](#) that is assigned to each worldview, arguments that a theist finds convincing may seem thin to an atheist and vice versa.<sup>[11]</sup>

Philosophers, such as [Wittgenstein](#), take a view that is considered [anti-realist](#) and oppose philosophical arguments related to God's existence. For instance, [Charles Taylor](#) contends that the real is whatever will not go away. If we cannot reduce talk about God to anything else, or replace it, or prove it false, then perhaps God is as real as anything else.<sup>[12]</sup>

In [George Berkeley's A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge](#) of 1710, he argued that a “naked thought” cannot exist, and that a perception is a thought; therefore only minds can be proven to exist, since all else is merely an idea conveyed by a perception. From this Berkeley argued that the universe is based upon observation and is non-objective. However, he noted that the universe includes “ideas” not perceptible to humankind, and that there must therefore exist an omniscient superobserver, which perceives such things. Berkeley considered this proof of the existence of the Christian god.

[C.S. Lewis](#), in [Mere Christianity](#) and elsewhere, raised the [argument from desire](#). He posed that all natural desires have a natural object. One thirsts, and there exists water to quench this thirst; One hungers, and there exists food to satisfy this hunger. He then argued that the human desire for perfect justice, perfect peace, perfect happiness, and other intangibles strongly implies the existence of such things, though they seem unobtainable on earth. He further posed that the unquenchable desires of this life strongly imply that we are intended for a different life, necessarily governed by a God who can provide the desired intangibles.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Outside of Western thought

Existence in absolute truth is central to [Vedanta](#) epistemology. Traditional sense perception based approaches were put into question as possibly misleading due to preconceived or superimposed ideas. But though all object-cognition can be doubted, the existence of the doubter remains a fact even in [nastika](#) traditions of [mayavada](#) schools following [Adi Shankara](#).<sup>[14]</sup> The five eternal principles to be discussed under ontology, beginning with God or Isvara, the [Ultimate Reality](#) cannot be established by the means of [logic](#) alone, and often require superior

proof.<sup>[15]</sup> In [Vaisnavism Vishnu](#), or his intimate ontological form of [Krishna](#), is equated to personal absolute God of the Western traditions. Aspects of Krishna as [svayam bhagavan](#) in original Absolute Truth, [sat chit ananda](#), are understood originating from three essential attributes of Krishna's form, i.e., "eternal existence" or [sat](#), related to the [brahman](#) aspect; "knowledge" or [chit](#), to the [paramatman](#); and "bliss" or [ananda](#) in [Sanskrit](#), to [bhagavan](#).<sup>[16]</sup>

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## ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (OVERVIEW)

### Aquinas' Five Ways

For in depth analysis of the individual arguments, see [unmoved mover](#), [first cause](#), [argument from contingency](#), [argument from degree](#), or [teleological argument](#).

In the first part of his [Summa Theologica](#), [Thomas Aquinas](#) developed his five arguments for God's existence. These arguments are grounded in an Aristotelian ontology and make use of the [infinite regression argument](#).<sup>[17][18]</sup> Aquinas did not intend to fully prove the existence of God as he is orthodoxly conceived (with all of his traditional attributes), but proposed his Five Ways as a first stage, which he built upon later in his work.<sup>[19]</sup> Aquinas' Five Ways argued from the [unmoved mover](#), [first cause](#), [necessary being](#), [argument from degree](#), and the [teleological argument](#).

- The unmoved mover argument asserts that, from our experience of motion in the universe (motion being the transition from potentiality to actuality) we can see that there must have been an initial mover. Aquinas argued that whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another thing, so there must be an unmoved mover.<sup>[17]</sup>
- Aquinas' argument from first cause started with the premise that it is impossible for a being to cause itself (because it would have to exist before it caused itself) and that it is impossible for there to be an infinite chain of causes, which would result in infinite regress. Therefore, there must be a first cause, itself uncaused.<sup>[17]</sup>
- The argument from [necessary being](#) asserts that all beings are [contingent](#), meaning that it is possible for them not to exist. Aquinas argued that if everything can possibly not exist, there must have been a time when nothing existed; as things exist now, there must exist a being with necessary existence, regarded as God.<sup>[17]</sup>
- Aquinas argued from degree, considering the occurrence of degrees of goodness. He believed that things which are called good, must be called good in relation to a standard of good—a maximum. There must be a maximum goodness that which causes all goodness.<sup>[17]</sup>
- The teleological argument asserts the view that things without intelligence are ordered towards a purpose. Aquinas argued that unintelligent objects cannot be ordered unless they are done so by an intelligent being, which means that there must be an intelligent being to move objects to their ends: God.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Rational warrant

Philosopher [Stephen Toulmin](#) is notable for his work in the history of ideas<sup>[20]</sup> that features the (rational) warrant: a statement that connects the premises to a conclusion.

Joseph Hinman applied Toulmin's approach in his argument for the existence of God, particularly in his book *The Trace of God: A Rational Warrant for Belief*.<sup>[21]</sup> Instead of attempting to prove the existence of God, Hinman argues you can "demonstrate the rationally warranted nature of belief".<sup>[22]</sup>

Hinman uses a wide range of studies, including ones by Robert Wuthnow, Andrew Greeley, Mathes and Kathleen Nobel to establish that mystical experiences are life-transformative in a way that is significant, positive and lasting.<sup>[23]</sup> He draws on additional work to add several additional major points to his argument. First, the people who have these experiences not only do not exhibit traditional signs of mental illness but, often, are in better mental and physical health than the general population due to the experience.<sup>[24]</sup> Second, the experiences work. In other words, they provide a framework for navigating life that is useful and effective.<sup>[25]</sup> All of the evidence of the positive effects of the experience upon people's lives he, adapting a term from Derrida, terms "the trace of God": the footprints left behind that point to the impact.

Finally, he discusses how both religious experience and belief in God is, and has always been, normative among humans.<sup>[26]</sup> people do not need to prove the existence of God. If there is no need to prove, Hinman argues, and the Trace of God (for instance, the impact of mystical experiences on them), belief in God is rationally warranted.

## Deductive arguments

### Ontological argument

The ontological argument has been formulated by philosophers including [St. Anselm](#) and [René Descartes](#). The argument proposes that God's existence is self-evident. The logic, depending on the formulation, reads roughly as follows:<sup>[27]</sup>

Whatever is contained in a clear and distinct idea of a thing must be predicated of that thing; but a clear and distinct idea of an absolutely perfect Being contains the idea of actual existence; therefore since we have the idea of an absolutely perfect Being such a Being must really exist.<sup>[27]</sup>

Thomas Aquinas criticized the argument for proposing a definition of God which, if God is transcendent, should be impossible for humans.<sup>[28]</sup> Immanuel Kant criticized the proof from a logical standpoint: he stated that the term "God" really signifies two different terms: both idea of God, and God. Kant concluded that the proof is equivocation, based on the ambiguity of the word God.<sup>[29]</sup> Kant also challenged the argument's assumption that existence is a predicate (of perfection) because it does not add anything to the essence of a being. If existence is not a predicate, then it is not [necessarily true](#) that the greatest possible being exists.<sup>[30]</sup> A common rebuttal to Kant's critique is that, although "existence" does add something to both the concept and the reality of God, the concept would be vastly different if its referent is an unreal Being.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Another response to Kant is attributed to Alvin Plantinga who explains that even if one were to grant Kant that "existence" is not a real predicate, "Necessary Existence", which is the correct formulation of an understanding of God, is a real predicate, thus according to Plantinga Kant's argument is refuted.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Inductive arguments

Inductive arguments argue their conclusions through [inductive reasoning](#).

- Another class of philosophers asserts that the proofs for the existence of God present a fairly large probability though not absolute certainty. A number of obscure points, they say, always remain; an act of faith is required to dismiss these difficulties. This view is maintained, among others, by the [Scottish](#) statesman [Arthur Balfour](#) in his book *The Foundations of Belief* (1895). The opinions set forth in this work were adopted in [France](#) by [Ferdinand Brunetière](#), the editor of the *Revue des deux Mondes*. Many orthodox Protestants express themselves in the same manner, as, for instance, Dr. E. Dennert, President of the Kepler Society, in his work *Ist Gott tot?*<sup>[32]</sup>

## Other arguments

- The hypothesis of well design proposes that certain features of the universe and of [living things](#) are the product of an [intelligent cause](#).<sup>[33]</sup> Its proponents are mainly Christians.<sup>[34]</sup>
- Argument from belief in God being properly basic as presented by Alvin Plantinga.<sup>[35]</sup>
- Argument from the confluence of proper function and reliability and the [evolutionary argument against naturalism](#), concluding that naturalism is incapable of providing humans with the cognitive apparatus necessary for their knowledge to have positive epistemic status.<sup>[36]</sup>
- Argument from Personal Identity.<sup>[37]</sup>
- Argument from the “divine attributes of scientific law”.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Subjective arguments

### Arguments from historical events or personages

- The sincere seeker’s argument, espoused by Muslim Sufis of the Tasawwuf tradition, posits that every individual who follows a formulaic path towards guidance, arrives at the same destination of conviction in the existence of God and specifically in the monotheistic tenets and laws of Islam. This could only be true if the formula and supplication were being answered by the same Divine entity being addressed, as claimed in Islamic revelations. This was formally organized by Imam Abu Hamid [Al-Ghazali](#) in such notable works as “Deliverance from Error” and “The Alchemy of Happiness,” in Arabic “[Kimiya-yi sa’adat](#)“. The path includes following the golden rule of no harm to others and treating others with compassion, silence or minimal speech, seclusion, daily fasting or minimalist diet of water and basic nourishment, honest wages, and daily supplication towards “the Creator of the Universe” for guidance.<sup>[39][40]</sup>
- [Christianity](#) and [Judaism](#) assert that God intervened in key specific moments in history, especially at [the Exodus](#) and the giving of the [Ten Commandments](#) in front of all the tribes of Israel, posing an argument from empirical evidence stemming from sheer number of witnesses, thus demonstrating his existence.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
- The argument from the [Resurrection of Jesus](#). This asserts that there is sufficient historical evidence for Jesus’s resurrection to support his claim to be the son of God and indicates, *a fortiori*, God’s existence.<sup>[41]</sup> This is one of several arguments known as the [Christological argument](#).
- Islam asserts that the revelation of its holy book, the [Qur’an](#), and its unique literary attributes, vindicate its divine authorship, and thus the existence of God.<sup>[42][43]</sup>
- [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#), also known as [Mormonism](#), similarly asserts that the miraculous appearance of God, Jesus Christ, and angels to [Joseph Smith](#) and others and subsequent finding and translation of the [Book of Mormon](#) establishes the existence of God. The whole [Latter Day Saint movement](#) makes the same claim for example [Community of Christ](#), [Church of Christ \(Temple Lot\)](#), [Church of Jesus Christ \(Bickertonite\)](#), [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints \(Strangite\)](#), [Church of Jesus Christ \(Cutlerite\)](#), etc.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
  - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Strangite), similarly asserts that the finding and translation of the [Plates of Laban](#), also known as the [Brass Plates](#), into the [Book of the Law of the Lord](#) and [Voree plates](#) by [James Strang](#), [One Mighty and Strong](#), establishes the existence of God.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
  - Various sects that have broken from the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) (such as [Church of Christ “With the Elijah Message”](#) and [Church of Christ \(Assured Way\)](#)) claim that the message brought by [John the Baptist](#), [One Mighty and Strong](#), to [Otto Fetting](#) and [W. A. Draves](#) in [The Word of the Lord Brought to Mankind by an Angel](#) establishes the existence of God.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

## Arguments from testimony

Arguments from testimony rely on the testimony or experience of witnesses, possibly embodying the propositions of a specific revealed religion. Swinburne argues that it is a principle of rationality that one should accept testimony unless there are strong reasons for not doing so.<sup>[44]</sup>

- The [witness argument](#) gives credibility to personal [witnesses](#), contemporary and throughout the ages. A variation of this is the [argument from miracles](#) (also referred to as “the priest stories”) which relies on testimony of supernatural events to establish the existence of God.
- The [majority argument](#) argues that the theism of people throughout most of recorded history and in many different places provides *prima facie* demonstration of God’s existence.

## Arguments grounded in personal experiences

- The sincere seeker’s argument, espoused by Muslim Sufis of the Tasawwuf tradition, posits that every individual who follows a formulaic path towards guidance, arrives at the same destination of conviction in the existence of God and specifically in the monotheistic tenets and laws of Islam. This apparent natural law for guidance and belief could only be consistent if the formula and supplication were being answered by the same Divine entity being addressed, as claimed in Islamic revelations. This was formally organized by Imam Abu Hamid [Al-Ghazali](#) in such notable works as “Deliverance from Error” and “The Alchemy of Happiness,” in Arabic “[Kimiya-yi sa’adat](#)“. The path includes following the golden rule of no harm to others and treating others with compassion, silence or minimal speech, seclusion, daily fasting or minimalist diet of water and basic nourishment, honest wages, and daily supplication towards “the Creator of the Universe” for guidance.<sup>[39][40]</sup>
- An argument for God is often made from an unlikely complete reversal in lifestyle by an individual towards God. [Paul of Tarsus](#), a persecutor of the early Church, became a pillar of the Church after his conversion on the road to [Damascus](#). Modern day examples in Evangelical Protestantism are sometimes called “[Born-Again Christians](#)“.
- The [Scottish School of Common Sense](#) led by [Thomas Reid](#) taught that the fact of the existence of God is accepted by people without knowledge of reasons but simply by a natural impulse. That God exists, this school said, is one of the chief metaphysical principles that people accept not because they are evident in themselves or because they can be proved, but because [common sense](#) obliges people to accept them.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
- The [Argument from a Proper Basis](#) argues that belief in God is “properly basic”; that it is similar to statements like “I see a chair” or “I feel pain”.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Such beliefs are non-falsifiable and, thus, neither provable nor disprovable; they concern perceptual beliefs or indisputable mental states.
- In [Germany](#), the School of [Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi](#) taught that human reason is able to perceive the suprasensible. Jacobi distinguished three faculties: sense, [reason](#), and understanding. Just as sense has immediate perception of the material so has reason immediate perception of the immaterial, while the understanding brings these perceptions to a person’s consciousness and unites them to one another.<sup>[45]</sup> God’s existence, then, cannot be proven (Jacobi, like Immanuel Kant, rejected the absolute value of the principle of causality), it must be felt by the mind.
- In [Emile](#), [Jean-Jacques Rousseau](#) asserted that when a person’s understanding ponders over the existence of God it encounters nothing but contradictions; the impulses of people’s hearts, however, are of more value than the understanding, and these proclaim clearly the truths of natural religion, namely, the existence of God and the immortality of the [soul](#).<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
- The same theory was advocated in Germany by [Friedrich Schleiermacher](#), who assumed an inner religious sense by means of which people feel religious truths. According to Schleiermacher, religion consists solely in this inner perception, and dogmatic doctrines are inessential.<sup>[46]</sup>
- Many modern [Protestant](#) theologians follow in Schleiermacher’s footsteps, and teach that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated; certainty as to this truth is only furnished to people by inner experience, feeling, and perception.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>
- [Modernist Christianity](#) also denies the demonstrability of the existence of God. According to them, one can only know something of God by means of the vital immanence, that is, under favorable circumstances the need of the divine dormant in one’s subconsciousness becomes conscious and arouses that religious feeling or experience in which God reveals himself.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> In condemnation of this view the [Oath Against Modernism](#) formulated by [Pius X](#), a [Pope](#) of the Catholic Church, says: “Deum ... naturali rationis lumine per ea quae facta sunt, hoc est per visibilia creationis opera, tanquam

causam per effectus certo cognosci adeoque demonstrari etiam posse, profiteor.” (“I declare that by the natural light of reason, God can be certainly known and therefore his existence demonstrated through the things that are made, i.e., through the visible works of [creation](#), as the cause is known through its effects.”)

- [Brahma Kumaris](#) religion was established in 1936, when God was said to enter the body of diamond merchant [Lekhraj Kripalani](#) (1876–1969) in Hyderabad, Sindh and started to speak through him.<sup>[47][48]</sup>

## Hindu arguments

Most schools of [Hindu philosophy](#) accept the existence of a creator god ([Brahma](#)), while [some](#) do not. The school of Vedanta argues that one of the proofs of the existence of God is the law of [karma](#). In a commentary to [Brahma Sutras](#) (III, 2, 38, and 41), a Vedantic text, [Adi Sankara](#), an [Indian philosopher](#) who consolidated the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta, a sub-school of Vedanta, argues that the original karmic actions themselves cannot bring about the proper results at some future time; neither can super sensuous, non-intelligent qualities like [adrsta](#)—an unseen force being the metaphysical link between work and its result—by themselves mediate the appropriate, justly deserved pleasure and pain. The fruits, according to him, then, must be administered through the action of a conscious agent, namely, a supreme being ([Ishvara](#)).<sup>[49]</sup>

A human’s karmic acts result in merits and demerits. Since unconscious things generally do not move except when caused by an agent (for example, the axe moves only when swung by an agent), and since the law of karma is an unintelligent and unconscious law, Sankara argues there must be a conscious supreme Being who knows the merits and demerits which persons have earned by their actions, and who functions as an instrumental cause in helping individuals reap their appropriate fruits.<sup>[50]</sup> Thus, God affects the person’s environment, even to its atoms, and for those souls who reincarnate, produces the appropriate rebirth body, all in order that the person might have the karmically appropriate experiences.<sup>[51]</sup> Thus, there must be a theistic administrator or supervisor for karma, i.e., God.

The [Nyaya](#) school, one of six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, states that one of the proofs of the existence of God is karma;<sup>[52]</sup> it is seen that some people in this world are happy, some are in misery. Some are rich and some are poor. The Naiyanikas explain this by the concept of karma and reincarnation. The fruit of an individual’s actions does not always lie within the reach of the individual who is the agent; there ought to be, therefore, a dispenser of the fruits of actions, and this supreme dispenser is God.<sup>[52]</sup> This belief of Nyaya, accordingly, is the same as that of Vedanta.<sup>[52]</sup>

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# ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (OVERVIEW)

An **ontological argument** is a philosophical argument for the [existence of God](#) that uses [ontology](#). Many arguments fall under the category of the ontological, and they tend to involve arguments about the state of being or existing. More specifically, ontological arguments tend to start with an *a priori* theory about the organization of the universe. If that organizational structure is true, the argument will provide reasons why God must exist.

The first ontological argument in the [Western Christian](#) tradition<sup>[1]</sup> was proposed by [Anselm of Canterbury](#) in his 1078 work *Proslogion*. Anselm defined God as “that than which nothing greater can be conceived”, and argued that this being must exist in the mind; even in the mind of the person who denies the existence of God. He suggested that, if the greatest possible being exists in the mind, it must also exist in reality. If it only exists in the mind, then an even greater being must be possible — one which exists both in the mind and in reality. Therefore, this greatest possible being must exist in reality. Seventeenth century French philosopher [René Descartes](#) deployed a similar argument. Descartes published several variations of his argument, each of which centred on the idea that God’s existence is immediately inferable from a “clear and distinct” idea of a supremely perfect

being. In the early eighteenth century, [Gottfried Leibniz](#) augmented Descartes' ideas in an attempt to prove that a "supremely perfect" being is a coherent concept. A more recent ontological argument came from [Kurt Gödel](#), who proposed a [formal argument](#) for God's existence. Norman Malcolm revived the ontological argument in 1960 when he located a second, stronger ontological argument in Anselm's work; [Alvin Plantinga](#) challenged this argument and proposed an alternative, based on [modal logic](#). Attempts have also been made to validate Anselm's proof using an [automated theorem prover](#). Other arguments have been categorised as ontological, including those made by Islamic philosopher [Mulla Sadra](#).

Since its proposal, few philosophical ideas have generated as much interest and discussion as the ontological argument. Nearly all of the great minds of Western philosophy have found the argument worthy of their attention and criticism. The general consensus is that the argument is erroneous. However, consensus as to the exact nature of the argument's error or errors has long proved elusive to the philosophical community. The first critic of the ontological argument was Anselm's contemporary, [Gaunilo of Marmoutiers](#). He used the analogy of a perfect island, suggesting that the ontological argument could be used to prove the existence of anything. This was the first of many parodies, all of which attempted to show that the argument has [absurd consequences](#). Later, [Thomas Aquinas](#) rejected the argument on the basis that humans cannot know God's nature. Also, [David Hume](#) offered an empirical objection, criticising its lack of evidential reasoning and rejecting the idea that anything can exist necessarily. [Immanuel Kant](#)'s critique was based on what he saw as the false premise that existence is a [predicate](#). He argued that "existing" adds nothing (including perfection) to the essence of a being, and thus a "supremely perfect" being can be conceived not to exist. Finally, philosophers including [C. D. Broad](#) dismissed the coherence of a maximally great being, proposing that some attributes of greatness are incompatible with others, rendering "maximally great being" incoherent.

The traditional definition of an ontological argument was given by Immanuel Kant.<sup>[2]</sup> He contrasted the ontological argument (literally any argument "concerned with being")<sup>[3]</sup> with the [cosmological](#) and physio-theoretical arguments.<sup>[4]</sup> According to the Kantian view, ontological arguments are those founded on *a priori* reasoning.<sup>[2]</sup>

[Graham Oppy](#), who elsewhere expressed the view that he "see[s] no urgent reason" to depart from the traditional definition,<sup>[2]</sup> defined ontological arguments as those that begin with "nothing but analytic, a priori and necessary premises" and conclude that God exists. Oppy admitted, however, that not all of the "traditional characteristics" of an ontological argument (analyticity, necessity, and a priority) are found in all ontological arguments<sup>[5]</sup> and, in his 2007 work *Ontological Arguments and Belief in God*, suggested that a better definition of an ontological argument would employ only considerations "entirely internal to the theistic worldview".<sup>[2]</sup>

Oppy subclassified ontological arguments into definitional, conceptual (or hyperintensional), modal, Meinongian, experiential, mereological, higher-order, or Hegelian categories, based on the qualities of their premises.<sup>[5]</sup> He defined these qualities as follows: definitional arguments invoke definitions; conceptual arguments invoke "the possession of certain kinds of ideas or concepts"; modal arguments consider possibilities; Meinongian arguments assert "a distinction between different categories of existence"; experiential arguments employ the idea that God exists solely to those who have had experience of him; and Hegelian arguments are from [Hegel](#).<sup>[2]</sup> He later categorised mereological as arguments that "draw on... the theory of the whole-part relation".<sup>[6]</sup>

[William Lane Craig](#) criticised Oppy's study as too vague for useful classification. Craig argued that an argument can be classified as ontological if it attempts to deduce the existence of God, along with other necessary truths, from his definition. He suggested that proponents of ontological arguments would claim that, if one fully understood the concept of God, one must accept his existence.<sup>[7]</sup> [William L. Rowe](#) defined ontological arguments as those that start from the definition of God and, using only a priori principles, conclude with God's existence.<sup>[8]</sup>

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# ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (ANSELM, DESCARTES, AND PLANTINGA)

## St. Anselm

Theologian and philosopher Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) proposed an ontological argument in the second and third chapters of his *Proslogion*.<sup>[19]</sup> Anselm's argument was not presented in order to prove God's existence; rather, *Proslogion* was a work of meditation in which he documented how the idea of God became self-evident to him.<sup>[20]</sup>

In Chapter 2 of the *Proslogion*, Anselm defined God as a “being than which no greater can be conceived”.<sup>[5]</sup> He suggested that even “the fool” can understand this concept, and this understanding itself means that the being must exist in the mind. The concept must exist either only in our mind, or in both our mind and in reality. If such a being exists only in our mind, then a greater being—that which exists in the mind and in reality—can be conceived (this argument is generally regarded as a *reductio ad absurdum* because the view of the fool is proven to be inconsistent). Therefore, if we can conceive of a being than which nothing greater can be conceived, it must exist in reality. Thus, a being than which nothing greater could be conceived, which Anselm defined as God, must exist in reality.<sup>[21]</sup>

Anselm's argument in Chapter 2 can be summarized as follows:<sup>[22]</sup>

1. It is a conceptual truth (or, so to speak, true by definition) that God is a being than which none greater can be imagined (that is, the greatest possible being that can be imagined).
2. God exists as an idea in the mind.
3. A being that exists as an idea in the mind and in reality is, other things being equal, greater than a being that exists only as an idea in the mind.
4. Thus, if God exists only as an idea in the mind, then we can imagine something that is greater than God (that is, a greatest possible being that does exist).
5. But we cannot imagine something that is greater than God (for it is a contradiction to suppose that we can imagine a being greater than the greatest possible being that can be imagined.)
6. Therefore, God exists.

In Chapter 3, Anselm presented a further argument in the same vein:

1. By definition, God is a being than which none greater can be imagined.
2. A being that necessarily exists in reality is greater than a being that does not necessarily exist.
3. Thus, by definition, if God exists as an idea in the mind but does not necessarily exist in reality, then we can imagine something that is greater than God.
4. But we cannot imagine something that is greater than God.
5. Thus, if God exists in the mind as an idea, then God necessarily exists in reality.
6. God exists in the mind as an idea.
7. Therefore, God necessarily exists in reality.<sup>[22]</sup>

This contains the notion of a being that cannot be conceived not to exist. He argued that if something can be conceived not to exist, then something greater can be conceived. Consequently, a thing than which nothing greater can be conceived cannot be conceived not to exist and so it must exist. This can be read as a restatement of the argument in Chapter 2, although Norman Malcolm believed it to be a different, stronger argument.<sup>[23]</sup>

## René Descartes

French thinker René Descartes composed several arguments that could be termed ontological.

René Descartes (1596–1650) composed a number of ontological arguments, which differed from Anselm’s formulation. Generally speaking, they are less formal arguments than natural intuition.

Descartes wrote in the *Fifth Meditation*:

But, if the mere fact that I can produce from my thought the idea of something entails that everything that I clearly and distinctly perceive to belong to that thing really does belong to it, is not this a possible basis for another argument to prove the existence of God? Certainly, the idea of God, or a supremely perfect being, is one that I find within me just as surely as the idea of any shape or number. And my understanding that it belongs to his nature that he always exists is no less clear and distinct than is the case when I prove of any shape or number that some property belongs to its nature.

— Descartes, (AT 7:65; CSM 2:45)<sup>[24]</sup>

Descartes argued that God’s existence can be deduced from his nature, just as **geometric** ideas can be deduced from the nature of shapes—he used the deduction of the sizes of angles in a triangle as an example. He suggested that the concept of God is that of a supremely perfect being, holding all perfections. He seems to have assumed that existence is a predicate of a perfection. Thus, if the notion of God did not include existence, it would not be supremely perfect, as it would be lacking a perfection. Consequently, the notion of a supremely perfect God who does not exist, Descartes argues, is unintelligible. Therefore, according to his nature, God must exist.<sup>[25]</sup>

### Alvin Plantinga

Christian **Analytic philosopher Alvin Plantinga**<sup>[36]</sup> criticized Malcolm’s and Hartshorne’s arguments, and offered an alternative. He argued that, if Malcolm does prove the necessary existence of the greatest possible being, it follows that there is a being which exists in all worlds whose greatness in *some* worlds is not surpassed. It does not, he argued, demonstrate that such a being has unsurpassed greatness in this world.<sup>[37]</sup>

In an attempt to resolve this problem, Plantinga differentiated between “greatness” and “excellence”. A being’s excellence in a particular world depends only on its properties in that world; a being’s greatness depends on its properties in all worlds. Therefore, the greatest possible being must have maximal excellence in every possible world. Plantinga then restated Malcolm’s argument, using the concept of “maximal greatness”. He argued that it is possible for a being with maximal greatness to exist, so a being with maximal greatness exists in a possible world. If this is the case, then a being with maximal greatness exists in every world, and therefore in this world.<sup>[37]</sup>

The conclusion relies on a form of **modal axiom S5**, which states that if something is possibly true, then its possibility is necessary (it is possibly true in all worlds). Plantinga’s version of S5 suggests that “To say that p is possibly necessarily true is to say that, with regard to one world, it is true at all worlds; but in that case it is true at all worlds, and so it is simply necessary.”<sup>[38]</sup> A version of his argument is as follows:<sup>[5]</sup>

1. A being has *maximal excellence* in a given possible world *W* if and only if it is omnipotent, omniscient and wholly good in *W*; and
2. A being has *maximal greatness* if it has maximal excellence in every possible world.
3. It is possible that there is a being that has maximal greatness. (Premise)
4. Therefore, possibly, it is necessarily true that an omniscient, omnipotent, and perfectly good being exists.
5. Therefore, (by axiom S5) it is necessarily true that an omniscient, omnipotent and perfectly good being exists.
6. Therefore, an omniscient, omnipotent and perfectly good being exists.

Plantinga argued that, although the first premise is not rationally established, it is not contrary to reason. **Michael Martin** argued that, if certain components of perfection are contradictory, such as omnipotence and omniscience, then the first premise is contrary to reason. Martin also proposed parodies of the argument, suggesting that the existence of anything can be demonstrated with Plantinga’s argument, provided it is defined as perfect or special in every possible world.<sup>[39]</sup>

Another Christian apologist, **William Lane Craig**, characterizes Plantinga’s argument in a slightly different way:

1. It is possible that a maximally great being exists.
2. If it is possible that a maximally great being exists, then a maximally great being exists in some possible world.
3. If a maximally great being exists in some possible world, then it exists in every possible world.

4. If a maximally great being exists in every possible world, then it exists in the actual world.
5. If a maximally great being exists in the actual world, then a maximally great being exists.
6. Therefore, a maximally great being exists.

According to Craig, premises (2)-(5) are relatively uncontroversial among philosophers, but “the epistemic entertainability of premise (1) (or its denial) does not guarantee its metaphysical possibility.”<sup>[40]</sup> Furthermore, Richard M. Gale argued that premise three, the “possibility premise”, [begs the question](#). He stated that one only has the epistemic right to accept the premise if one understands the nested [modal operators](#), and that if one understands them within the system S5—without which the argument fails—then one understands that “possibly necessarily” is in essence the same as “necessarily”.<sup>[41]</sup> Thus the premise begs the question because the conclusion is embedded within it. On S5 systems in general, James Garson writes that “the words ‘necessarily’ and ‘possibly’, have many different uses. So the acceptability of axioms for modal logic depends on which of these uses we have in mind.”<sup>[42]</sup>

## ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (CRITICISMS)

### Gaunilo

One of the earliest recorded objections to Anselm’s argument was raised by one of Anselm’s contemporaries, [Gaunilo of Marmoutiers](#). He invited his reader to conceive an island “more excellent” than any other island. He suggested that, according to Anselm’s proof, this island must necessarily exist, as an island that exists would be more excellent.<sup>[45]</sup> Gaunilo’s criticism does not explicitly demonstrate a flaw in Anselm’s argument; rather, it argues that if Anselm’s argument is sound, so are many other arguments of the same [logical form](#), which cannot be accepted.<sup>[46]</sup> He offered a further criticism of Anselm’s ontological argument, suggesting that the notion of God cannot be conceived, as Anselm had asserted. He argued that many [theists](#) would accept that God, by nature, cannot be fully comprehended. Therefore, if humans cannot fully conceive of God, the ontological argument cannot work.<sup>[47]</sup>

Anselm responded to Gaunilo’s criticism by arguing that the argument applied only to concepts with [necessary existence](#). He suggested that only a being with necessary existence can fulfill the remit of “that than which nothing greater can be conceived”. Furthermore, a contingent object, such as an island, could always be improved and thus could never reach a state of perfection. For that reason, Anselm dismissed any argument that did not relate to a being with necessary existence.<sup>[45]</sup>

Other parodies have been presented, including the devil [corollary](#), the no devil corollary and the extreme no devil corollary. The devil corollary proposes that a being than which nothing worse can be conceived exists in the understanding (sometimes the term lesser is used in place of worse). Using Anselm’s logical form, the parody argues that if it exists in the understanding, a worse being would be one that exists in reality; thus, such a being exists. The no devil corollary is similar, but argues that a worse being would be one that does not exist in reality, so does not exist. The extreme no devil corollary advances on this, proposing that a worse being would be that which does not exist in the understanding, so such a being exists neither in reality nor in the understanding. [Timothy Chambers](#) argued that the devil corollary is more powerful than Gaunilo’s challenge because it withstands the challenges that may defeat Gaunilo’s parody. He also claimed that the no devil corollary is a strong challenge, as it “underwrites” the no devil corollary, which “threatens Anselm’s argument at its very foundations”.<sup>[48]</sup>

### Thomas Aquinas

[Thomas Aquinas](#), while proposing [five proofs](#) of God’s existence in his *Summa Theologica*, objected to Anselm’s argument. He suggested that people cannot know the nature of God and, therefore, cannot conceive of God in the way Anselm proposed.<sup>[49]</sup> The ontological argument would be meaningful only to someone who understands

the essence of God completely. Aquinas reasoned that, as only God can completely know His essence, only He could use the argument.<sup>[50]</sup> His rejection of the ontological argument caused other Catholic theologians to also reject the argument.<sup>[51]</sup>

## David Hume

David Hume reasoned that an ontological argument was not possible.

Scottish philosopher and empiricist [David Hume](#) argued that nothing can be proven to exist using only *a priori* reasoning.<sup>[52]</sup> In his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, the character Cleanthes proposes a criticism:

...there is an evident absurdity in pretending to demonstrate a matter of fact, or to prove it by any arguments *a priori*. Nothing is demonstrable, unless the contrary implies a contradiction. Nothing, that is distinctly conceivable, implies a contradiction. Whatever we conceive as existent, we can also conceive as non-existent. There is no being, therefore, whose non-existence implies a contradiction.

Consequently there is no being, whose existence is demonstrable.<sup>[53]</sup>

Hume also suggested that, as we have no abstract idea of existence (apart from as part of our ideas of other objects), we cannot claim that the idea of God implies his existence. He suggested that any conception of God we may have, we can conceive either of existing or of not existing. He believed that existence is not a quality (or perfection), so a completely perfect being need not exist. Thus, he claimed that it is not a contradiction to deny God's existence.<sup>[52]</sup> Although this criticism is directed against a [cosmological argument](#), similar to that of [Samuel Clarke](#) in his first [Boyle Lecture](#), it has been applied to ontological arguments as well.<sup>[54]</sup>

## Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant proposed that existence is not a predicate.

[Immanuel Kant](#) put forward an influential criticism of the ontological argument in his *Critique of Pure Reason*.<sup>[55]</sup> His criticism is primarily directed at Descartes, but also attacks Leibniz. It is shaped by his central distinction between [analytic and synthetic propositions](#). In an analytic proposition, the predicate concept is contained in its subject concept; in a synthetic proposition, the predicate concept is not contained in its subject concept.

Kant questions the intelligibility of the concept of a necessary being. He considers examples of necessary propositions, such as "a triangle has three angles", and rejects the transfer of this logic to the [existence of God](#). First, he argues that such necessary propositions are necessarily true only if such a being exists: *If a triangle exists, it must have three angles*. The necessary proposition, he argues, does not make the existence of a triangle necessary. Thus he argues that, if the proposition "X exists" is posited, it would follow that, *if X exists, it exists necessarily*; this does not mean that X exists in reality.<sup>[56]</sup> Second, he argues that contradictions arise only when the subject and predicate are maintained and, therefore, a judgement of non-existence cannot be a contradiction, as it denies the predicate.<sup>[55]</sup>

Kant then proposes that the statement "God exists" must be analytic or synthetic—the predicate must be inside or outside of the subject, respectively. If the proposition is analytic, as the ontological argument takes it to be, then the statement would be true only because of the meaning given to the words. Kant claims that this is merely a tautology and cannot say anything about reality. However, if the statement is synthetic, the ontological argument does not work, as the existence of God is not contained within the definition of God (and, as such, evidence for God would need to be found).<sup>[57]</sup>

Kant goes on to write, "'being' is evidently not a real predicate"<sup>[55]</sup> and cannot be part of the concept of something. He proposes that existence is not a predicate, or quality. This is because existence does not add to the essence of a being, but merely indicates its occurrence in reality. He states that by taking the subject of God with all its predicates and then asserting that God exists, "I add no new predicate to the conception of God". He argues that the ontological argument works only if existence is a predicate; if this is not so, he claims the ontological argument is invalidated, as it is then conceivable a completely perfect being doesn't exist.<sup>[22]</sup>

In addition, Kant claims that the concept of God is not of one a particular sense; rather, it is an “object of pure thought”.<sup>[55]</sup> He asserts that God exists outside the realm of experience and nature. Because we cannot experience God through experience, Kant argues that it is impossible to know how we would verify God’s existence. This is in contrast to material concepts, which can be verified by means of the senses.<sup>[58]</sup>

## Douglas Gasking

Australian philosopher [Douglas Gasking](#) (1911–1994) developed a version of the ontological argument meant to prove God’s non-existence. It was not intended to be serious; rather, its purpose was to illustrate the problems Gasking saw in the ontological argument.<sup>[59][60]</sup>

Gasking asserted that the creation of the world is the most marvellous achievement imaginable. The merit of such an achievement is the product of its quality and the creator’s disability: the greater the disability of the creator, the more impressive the achievement. Non-existence, Gasking asserts, would be the greatest handicap. Therefore, if the universe is the product of an existent creator, we could conceive of a greater being—one which does not exist. A non-existent creator is greater than one which exists, so God does not exist.<sup>[60]</sup> Gasking’s proposition that the greatest disability would be non-existence is a response to Anselm’s assumption that existence is a predicate and perfection. Gasking uses this logic to assume that non-existence must be a disability.<sup>[59]</sup>

Oppy criticized the argument, viewing it as a weak parody of the ontological argument. He stated that, although it may be accepted that it would be a greater achievement for a non-existent creator to create something than a creator who exists, there is no reason to assume that a non-existent creator would be a greater being. He continued by arguing that there is no reason to view the creation of the world as “the most marvellous achievement imaginable”. Finally, he stated that it may be inconceivable for a non-existent being to create anything at all.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Coherence of a maximally great being

In his development of the ontological argument, Leibniz attempted to demonstrate the coherence of a supremely perfect being.<sup>[5]</sup> C. D. Broad countered that if two characteristics necessary for God’s perfection are incompatible with a third, the notion of a supremely perfect being becomes incoherent. The ontological argument assumes the definition of God purported by [classical theism](#): that God is [omnipotent](#), [omniscient](#), and morally perfect.<sup>[22]</sup> Kenneth Einar Himma claimed that omniscience and omnipotence may be incompatible: if God is omnipotent, then he should be able to create a being with free will; if he is omniscient, then he should know exactly what such a being will do (thus rendering them without free will). This analysis would render the ontological argument incoherent, as the characteristics required of a maximally great being cannot coexist in one being, thus such a being could not exist.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Other criticisms

[Bertrand Russell](#), during his early [Hegelian](#) phase, accepted the argument; once exclaiming: “Great God in Boots!—the ontological argument is sound!”<sup>[61]</sup> However, he later criticized the argument, asserting that “the argument does not, to a modern mind, seem very convincing, but it is easier to feel convinced that it must be fallacious than it is to find out precisely where the fallacy lies.” He drew a distinction between existence and essence, arguing that the essence of a person can be described and their existence still remain in question.<sup>[62]</sup>

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# RENE DESCARTES--MEDITATIONS ON FIRST PHILOSOPHY (SYNOPSIS)

In the First Meditation I expound the grounds on which we may doubt in general of all things, and especially of material objects, so long at least, as we have no other foundations for the sciences than those we have hitherto possessed. Now, although the utility of a doubt so general may not be manifest at first sight, it is nevertheless of the greatest, since it delivers us from all prejudice, and affords the easiest pathway by which the mind may withdraw itself from the senses; and finally makes it impossible for us to doubt wherever we afterward discover truth.

In the Second, the mind which, in the exercise of the freedom peculiar to itself, supposes that no object is, of the existence of which it has even the slightest doubt, finds that, meanwhile, it must itself exist. And this point is likewise of the highest moment, for the mind is thus enabled easily to distinguish what pertains to itself, that is, to the intellectual nature, from what is to be referred to the body. But since some, perhaps, will expect, at this stage of our progress, a statement of the reasons which establish the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, I think it proper here to make such aware, that it was my aim to write nothing of which I could not give exact demonstration, and that I therefore felt myself obliged to adopt an order similar to that in use among the geometers, viz, to premise all upon which the proposition in question depends, before coming to any conclusion respecting it. Now, the first and chief prerequisite for the knowledge of the immortality of the soul is our being able to form the clearest possible conception [216] (*conceptus* — *concept*) of the soul itself, and such as shall be absolutely distinct from all our notions of body; and how this is to be accomplished is there shown. There is required, besides this, the assurance that all objects which we clearly and distinctly think are true (really exist) in that very mode in which we think them; and this could not be established previously to the Fourth Meditation. Farther, it is necessary, for the same purpose, that we possess a distinct conception of corporeal nature, which is given partly in the Second and partly in the Fifth and Sixth Meditations. And, finally, on these grounds, we are necessitated to conclude, that all those objects which are clearly and distinctly conceived to be diverse substances, as mind and body, are substances really reciprocally distinct; and this inference is made in the Sixth Meditation. The absolute distinction of mind and body is, besides, confirmed in this Second Meditation, by showing that we cannot conceive body unless as divisible; while, on the other hand, mind cannot be conceived unless as indivisible. For we are not able to conceive the half of a mind, as we can of any body, however small, so that the natures of these two substances are to be held, not only as diverse, but even in some measure as contraries. I have not, however, pursued this discussion further in the present treatise, as well for the reason that these considerations are sufficient to show that the destruction of the mind does not follow from the corruption of the body, and thus to afford to men the hope of a future life, as also because the premises from which it is competent for us to infer the immortality of the soul, involve an explication of the whole principles of Physics: in order to establish, in the first place, that generally all substances, that is, all things which can exist only in consequence of having been created by God, are in their own nature incorruptible, and can never cease to be, unless God himself, by refusing his concurrence to them, reduce them to nothing; and, in the second place, that body, taken generally, is a substance, and therefore can never perish, but that the human body, in as far as it differs from other bodies, is constituted only by a certain configuration of members, and by other accidents of this sort, while the human [217] mind is not made up of accidents, but is a pure substance. For although all the accidents of the mind be changed — although, for example, it think certain things, will others, and perceive others, the mind itself does not vary with these changes; while, on the contrary, the human body is no longer the same if a change take place in the form of any of its parts: from which it follows that the body may, indeed, without difficulty perish, but that the mind is in its own nature immortal.

In the Third Meditation, I have unfolded at sufficient length, as appears to me, my chief argument for the existence of God. But yet, since I was there desirous to avoid the use of comparisons taken from material objects, that I might withdraw, as far as possible, the minds of my readers from the senses, numerous obscurities perhaps remain, which, however, will, I trust, be afterward entirely removed in the Replies to the Objections: thus among other things, it may be difficult to understand how the idea of a being absolutely perfect, which is found in our minds, possesses so much objective reality [i. e., participates by representation in so many degrees of being and perfection] that it must be held to arise from a cause absolutely perfect. This is illustrated in the Replies by the comparison of a highly perfect machine, the idea of which exists in the mind of some workman; for as the

objective (i.e., representative) perfection of this idea must have some cause, viz, either the science of the workman, or of some other person from whom he has received the idea, in the same way the idea of God, which is found in us, demands God himself for its cause.

In the Fourth, it is shown that all which we clearly and distinctly perceive (apprehend) is true; and, at the same time, is explained wherein consists the nature of error; points that require to be known as well for confirming the preceding truths, as for the better understanding of those that are to follow. But, meanwhile, it must be observed, that I do not at all there treat of Sin, that is, of error committed in the pursuit of good and evil, but of that sort alone which arises in the determination of the true and the false. Nor do I refer to matters of faith, or to the conduct of life, but only to what regards speculative truths, and such as are known by means of the natural light alone.

In the Fifth, besides the illustration of corporeal nature, taken genetically, a new demonstration is given of the existence of God, not free, perhaps, any more than the former, from certain difficulties, but of these the solution will be found in the Replies to the Objections. I further show, in what sense it is true that the certitude of geometrical demonstrations themselves is dependent on the knowledge of God.

Finally, in the Sixth, the act of the understanding (intellectio) is distinguished from that of the imagination (imaginatio); the marks of this distinction are described; the human mind is shown to be really distinct from the body, and, nevertheless, to be so closely conjoined therewith, as together to form, as it were, a unity. The whole of the errors which arise from the senses are brought under review, while the means of avoiding them are pointed out; and, finally, all the grounds are adduced from which the existence of material objects may be inferred; not, however, because I deemed them of great utility in establishing what they prove, viz, that there is in reality a world, that men are possessed of bodies, and the like, the truth of which no one of sound mind ever seriously doubted; but because, from a close consideration of them, it is perceived that they are neither so strong nor clear as the reasonings which conduct us to the knowledge of our mind and of God; so that the latter are, of all which come under human knowledge, the most certain and manifest— a conclusion which it was my single aim in these Meditations to establish; on which account I here omit mention of the various other questions which, in the course of the discussion, I had occasion likewise to consider.

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## RENE DESCARTES--MEDITATIONS ON FIRST PHILOSOPHY (MEDITATIONS 1 AND 2)

### MEDITATION I: Of the Things on Which We May Doubt

Several years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted, even from my youth, many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterward based on such principles was highly doubtful; and from that time I was convinced of the necessity of undertaking once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew the work of building from the foundation, if I desired to establish a firm and abiding superstructure in the sciences. But as this enterprise appeared to me to be one of great magnitude, I waited until I had attained an age so mature as to leave me no hope that at any stage of life more advanced I should be better able to execute my design. On this account, I have delayed so long that I should henceforth consider I was doing wrong were I still to consume in deliberation any of the time that now remains for action. Today, then, since I have opportunely freed my mind from all cares [and am happily disturbed by no passions], and since I am in the secure possession of leisure in a peaceable retirement, I will at length apply myself earnestly and freely to the general [220] overthrow of all my former opinions. But, to this end, it will not be necessary for me to show that the whole of these are false—a point, perhaps, which I shall never reach; but as even now my reason convinces me that I ought not the less carefully to withhold belief from what is not entirely certain and indubitable, than from what is manifestly false, it will be sufficient to justify the rejection of the whole if I shall find in each some ground for doubt. Nor for this purpose will it be necessary even to deal with each belief individually, which would be truly an endless labor; but, as the removal from below of the foundation necessarily involves the

downfall of the whole edifice, I will at once approach the criticism of the principles on which all my former beliefs rested.

All that I have, up to this moment, accepted as possessed of the highest truth and certainty, I received either from or through the senses. I observed, however, that these sometimes misled us; and it is the part of prudence not to place absolute confidence in that by which we have even once been deceived.

But it may be said, perhaps, that, although the senses occasionally mislead us respecting minute objects, and such as are so far removed from us as to be beyond the reach of close observation, there are yet many other of their informations (presentations), of the truth of which it is manifestly impossible to doubt; as for example, that I am in this place, seated by the fire, clothed in a winter dressing gown, that I hold in my hands this piece of paper, with other intimations of the same nature. But how could I deny that I possess these hands and this body, and withal escape being classed with persons in a state of insanity, whose brains are so disordered: and clouded by dark bilious vapors as to cause them pertinaciously to assert that they are monarchs when they are in the greatest poverty; or clothed [in gold] and purple when destitute of any covering; or that their head is made of clay, their body of glass, or that they are gourds? I should certainly be not less insane than they, were I to regulate my procedure according to examples so extravagant.

Though this be true, I must nevertheless here consider that I am a man, and that, consequently, I am in the habit of sleeping, and representing to myself in dreams [221] those same things, or even sometimes others less probable, which the insane think are presented to them in their waking moments. How often have I dreamt that I was in these familiar circumstances, that I was dressed, and occupied this place by the fire, when I was lying undressed in bed? At the present moment, however, I certainly look upon this paper with eyes wide awake; the head which I now move is not asleep; I extend this hand consciously and with express purpose, and I perceive it; the occurrences in sleep are not so distinct as all this. But I cannot forget that, at other times I have been deceived in sleep by similar illusions; and, attentively considering those cases, I perceive so clearly that there exist no certain marks by which the state of waking can ever be distinguished from sleep, that I feel greatly astonished; and in amazement I almost persuade myself that I am now dreaming.

Let us suppose, then, that we are dreaming, and that all these particulars — namely, the opening of the eyes, the motion of the head, the forth-putting of the hands — are merely illusions; and even that we really possess neither an entire body nor hands such as we see. Nevertheless it must be admitted at least that the objects which appear to us in sleep are, as it were, painted representations which could not have been formed unless in the likeness of realities; and, therefore, that those general objects, at all events, namely, eyes, a head, hands, and an entire body, are not simply imaginary, but really existent. For, in truth, painters themselves, even when they study to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most fantastic and extraordinary, cannot bestow upon them natures absolutely new, but can only make a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if they chance to imagine something so novel that nothing at all similar has ever been seen before, and such as is, therefore, purely fictitious and absolutely false, it is at least certain that the colors of which this is composed are real.

And on the same principle, although these general objects, viz, [a body], eyes, a head, hands, and the like, be imaginary, we are nevertheless absolutely necessitated to admit the reality at least of some other objects still more simple and universal than these, of which, just as of certain real colors, all those images of things, whether [222] true and real, or false and fantastic, that are found in our consciousness (cogitatio), are formed.

To this class of objects seem to belong corporeal nature in general and its extension; the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude, and their number, as also the place in, and the time during, which they exist, and other things of the same sort. We will not, therefore, perhaps reason illegitimately if we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine, and all the other sciences that have for their end the consideration of composite objects, are indeed of a doubtful character; but that Arithmetic, Geometry, and the other sciences of the same class, which regard merely the simplest and most general objects, and scarcely inquire whether or not these are really existent, contain somewhat that is certain and indubitable: for whether I am awake or dreaming, it remains true that two and three make five, and that a square has but four sides; nor does it seem possible that truths so apparent can ever fall under a suspicion of falsity [or incertitude].

Nevertheless, the belief that there is a God who is all powerful, and who created me, such as I am, has, for a long time, obtained steady possession of my mind. How, then, do I know that he has not arranged that there should be neither earth, nor sky, nor any extended thing, nor figure, nor magnitude, nor place, providing at the same time, however, for [the rise in me of the perceptions of all these objects, and] the persuasion that these do not exist otherwise than as I perceive them? And further, as I sometimes think that others are in error respecting matters of which they believe themselves to possess a perfect knowledge, how do I know that I am not also deceived each

time I add together two and three, or number the sides of a square, or form some judgment still more simple, if more simple indeed can be imagined? But perhaps Deity has not been willing that I should be thus deceived, for he is said to be supremely good. If, however, it were repugnant to the goodness of Deity to have created me subject to constant deception, it would seem likewise to be contrary to his goodness to allow me to be occasionally deceived; and yet it is clear that this is permitted. Some, indeed, might perhaps [223] be found who would be disposed rather to deny the existence of a Being so powerful than to believe that there is nothing certain. But let us for the present refrain from opposing this opinion, and grant that all which is here said of a Deity is fabulous: nevertheless, in whatever way it be supposed that I reach the state in which I exist, whether by fate, or chance, or by an endless series of antecedents and consequents, or by any other means, it is clear (since to be deceived and to err is a certain defect) that the probability of my being so imperfect as to be the constant victim of deception, will be increased exactly in proportion as the power possessed by the cause, to which they assign my origin, is lessened. To these reasonings I have assuredly nothing to reply, but am constrained at last to avow that there is nothing of all that I formerly believed to be true of which it is impossible to doubt, and that not through thoughtlessness or levity, but from cogent and maturely considered reasons; so that henceforward, if I desire to discover anything certain, I ought not the less carefully to refrain from assenting to those same opinions than to what might be shown to be manifestly false.

But it is not sufficient to have made these observations; care must be taken likewise to keep them in remembrance. For those old and customary opinions perpetually recur—long and familiar usage giving them the right of occupying my mind, even almost against my will, and subduing my belief; nor will I lose the habit of deferring to them and confiding in them so long as I shall consider them to be what in truth they are, viz, opinions to some extent doubtful, as I have already shown, but still highly probable, and such as it is much more reasonable to believe than deny. It is for this reason I am persuaded that I shall not be doing wrong, if, taking an opposite judgment of deliberate design, I become my own deceiver, by supposing, for a time, that all those opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at length, having thus balanced my old by my new prejudices, my judgment shall no longer be turned aside by perverted usage from the path that may conduct to the perception of truth. For I am assured that, meanwhile, there will arise neither peril nor error from this course, and that I [224] cannot for the present yield too much to distrust, since the end I now seek is not action but knowledge.

I will suppose, then, not that Deity, who is sovereignly good and the fountain of truth, but that some malignant demon, who is at once exceedingly potent and deceitful, has employed all his artifice to deceive me; I will suppose that the sky, the air, the earth, colors, figures, sounds, and all external things, are nothing better than the illusions of dreams, by means of which this being has laid snares for my credulity; I will consider myself as without hands, eyes, flesh, blood, or any of the senses, and as falsely believing that I am possessed of these; I will continue resolutely fixed in this belief, and if indeed by this means it be not in my power to arrive at the knowledge of truth, I shall at least do what is in my power, viz [suspend my judgment], and guard with settled purpose against giving my assent to what is false, and being imposed upon by this deceiver, whatever be his power and artifice.

But this undertaking is arduous, and a certain indolence insensibly leads me back to my ordinary course of life; and just as the captive, who, perchance, was enjoying in his dreams an imaginary liberty, when he begins to suspect that it is but a vision, dreads awakening, and conspires with the agreeable illusions that the deception may be prolonged; so I, of my own accord, fall back into the train of my former beliefs, and fear to arouse myself from my slumber, lest the time of laborious wakefulness that would succeed this quiet rest, in place of bringing any light of day, should prove inadequate to dispel the darkness that will arise from the difficulties that have now been raised.

## MEDITATION II: Of the Nature of the Human Mind; and that It is More Easily Known than the Body

The Meditation of yesterday has filled my mind with so many doubts, that it is no longer in my power to forget them. Nor do I see, meanwhile, any principle on which they can be resolved; and, just as if I had fallen all of a [225] sudden into very deep water, I am so greatly disconcerted as to be unable either to plant my feet firmly on the bottom or sustain myself by swimming on the surface. I will, nevertheless, make an effort, and try anew the same path on which I had entered yesterday, that is, proceed by casting aside all that admits of the slightest doubt, not less than if I had discovered it to be absolutely false; and I will continue always in this track until I shall find something that is certain, or at least, if I can do nothing more, until I shall know with certainty that there is nothing certain. Archimedes, that he might transport the entire globe from the place it occupied to another, demanded only a point that was firm and immovable; so, also, I shall be entitled to entertain the highest expectations, if I am fortunate enough to discover only one thing that is certain and indubitable.

I suppose, accordingly, that all the things which I see are false (fictitious); I believe that none of those objects which my fallacious memory represents ever existed; I suppose that I possess no senses; I believe that body, figure, extension, motion, and place are merely fictions of my mind. What is there, then, that can be esteemed true? Perhaps this only, that there is absolutely nothing certain.

But how do I know that there is not something different altogether from the objects I have now enumerated, of which it is impossible to entertain the slightest doubt? Is there not a God, or some being, by whatever name I may designate him, who causes these thoughts, to arise in my mind? But why suppose such a being, for it may be I myself am capable of producing them? Am I, then, at least not something? But I before denied that I possessed senses or a body; I hesitate, however, for what follows from that? Am I so dependent on the body and the senses that without these I cannot exist? But I had the persuasion that there was absolutely nothing in the world, that there was no sky and no earth, neither minds nor bodies; was I not, therefore, at the same time, persuaded that I did not exist? Far from it; I assuredly existed, since I was persuaded. But there is I know not what being, who is possessed at once of the highest power and the deepest cunning, who is constantly employing all his ingenuity in deceiving me. [226] Doubtless, then, I exist, since I am deceived; and, let him deceive me as he may, he can never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I shall be conscious that I am something. So that it most, in fine, be maintained, all things being maturely and carefully considered, that this proposition (pronunciatum) I am, I exist, is necessarily true each time it is expressed by me, or conceived in my mind.

But I do not yet know with sufficient clearness what I am, though assured that I am; and hence, in the next place, I must take care, lest perchance I inconsiderately substitute some other object in room of what is properly myself, and thus wander from truth, even in that knowledge (cognition) which I hold to be of all others the most certain and evident. For this reason, I will now consider anew what I formerly believed myself to be, before I entered on the present train of thought; and of my previous opinion I will retrench all that can in the least be invalidated by the grounds of doubt I have adduced, in order that there may at length remain nothing but what is certain and indubitable. What then did I formerly think I was? Undoubtedly I judged that I was a man. But what is a man? Shall I say a rational animal? Assuredly not; for it would be necessary forthwith to inquire into what is meant by animal, and what by rational, and thus, from a single question, I should insensibly glide into others, and these more difficult than the first; nor do I now possess enough of leisure to warrant me in wasting my time amid subtleties of this sort. I prefer here to attend to the thoughts that sprung up of themselves in my mind, and were inspired by my own nature alone, when I applied myself to the consideration of what I was. In the first place, then, I thought that I possessed a countenance, hands, arms, and all the fabric of members that appears in a corpse, and which I called by the name of body. It further occurred to me that I was nourished, that I walked, perceived, and thought, and all those actions I referred to the soul; but what the soul itself was I either did not stay to consider, or, if I did, I imagined that it was something extremely rare and subtile, like wind, or flame, or ether, spread through my grosser parts. As regarded the body, I did not even doubt of its nature, but thought I distinctly knew it, and if I had wished to describe it according to the notions I then [227] entertained, I should have explained myself in this manner: By body I understand all that can be terminated by a certain figure; that can be comprised in a certain place, and so fill a certain space as therefrom to exclude every other body; that can be perceived either by touch, sight, hearing, taste, or smell; that can be moved in different ways, not indeed of itself, but by something foreign to it by which it is touched [and from which it receives the impression]; for the power of self-motion, as likewise that of perceiving and thinking, I held as by no means pertaining to the nature of body; on the contrary, I was somewhat astonished to find such faculties existing in some bodies.

But [as to myself, what can I now say that I am], since I suppose there exists an extremely powerful, and, if I may so speak, malignant being, whose whole endeavors are directed toward deceiving me? Can I affirm that I possess any one of all those attributes of which I have lately spoken as belonging to the nature of body? After attentively considering them in my own mind, I find none of them that can properly be said to belong to myself. To recount them were idle and tedious. Let us pass, then, to the attributes of the soul. The first mentioned were the powers of nutrition and walking; but, if it be true that I have no body, it is true likewise that I am capable neither of walking nor of being nourished. Perception is another attribute of the soul; but perception too is impossible without the body; besides, I have frequently, during sleep, believed that I perceived objects which I afterward observed I did not in reality perceive. Thinking is another attribute of the soul; and here I discover what properly belongs to myself. This alone is inseparable from me. I am — I exist: this is certain; but how often? As often as I think; for perhaps it would even happen, if I should wholly cease to think, that I should at the same time altogether cease to be. I now admit nothing that is not necessarily true. I am therefore, precisely speaking, only a thinking thing, that is, a mind (*mens sive animus*), understanding, or reason, terms whose signification was before unknown to me. I am, however, a real thing, and really existent; but what thing? The answer was, a thinking thing. The question now arises, am I aught besides? I will stimulate my imagination with [228] a view to discover whether I am not still something more than a thinking being. Now it in plain I am not the assemblage of members called the human body; I am not a thin and penetrating air diffused through all these members, or wind, or flame, or vapor, or

breath, or any of all the things I can imagine; for I supposed that all these were not, and, without changing the supposition, I find that I still feel assured of my existence.

But it is true, perhaps, that those very things which I suppose to be non-existent, because they are unknown to me, are not in truth different from myself whom I know. This is a point I cannot determine, and do not now enter into any dispute regarding it. I can only judge of things that are known to me: I am conscious that I exist, and I who know that I exist inquire into what I am. It is, however, perfectly certain that the knowledge of my existence, thus precisely taken, is not dependent on things, the existence of which is as yet unknown to me: and consequently it is not dependent on any of the things I can feign in imagination. Moreover, the phrase itself, I frame an image (*effingo*), reminds me of my error; for I should in truth frame one if I were to imagine myself to be anything, since to imagine is nothing more than to contemplate the figure or image of a corporeal thing; but I already know that I exist, and that it is possible at the same time that all those images, and in general all that relates to the nature of body, are merely dreams [or chimeras]. From this I discover that it is not more reasonable to say, I will excite my imagination that I may know more distinctly what I am, than to express myself as follows: I am now awake, and perceive something real; but because my perception is not sufficiently clear, I will of express purpose go to sleep that my dreams may represent to me the object of my perception with more truth and clearness. And, therefore, I know that nothing of all that I can embrace in imagination belongs to the knowledge which I have of myself, and that there is need to recall with the utmost care the mind from this mode of thinking, that it may be able to know its own nature with perfect distinctness.

But what, then, am I? A thinking thing, it has been said. But what is a thinking thing? It is a thing that [229] doubts, understands, [conceives], affirms, denies, wills, refuses; that imagines also, and perceives. Assuredly it is not little, if all these properties belong to my nature. But why should they not belong to it? Am I not that very being who now doubts of almost everything; who, for all that, understands and conceives certain things; who affirms one alone as true, and denies the others; who desires to know more of them, and does not wish to be deceived; who imagines many things, sometimes even despite his will; and is likewise percipient of many, as if through the medium of the senses. Is there nothing of all this as true as that I am, even although I should be always dreaming, and although he who gave me being employed all his ingenuity to deceive me? Is there also any one of these attributes that can be properly distinguished from my thought, or that can be said to be separate from myself? For it is of itself so evident that it is I who doubt, I who understand, and I who desire, that it is here unnecessary to add anything by way of rendering it more clear. And I am as certainly the same being who imagines; for although it maybe (as I before supposed) that nothing I imagine is true, still the power of imagination does not cease really to exist in me and to form part of my thought. In fine, I am the same being who perceives, that is, who apprehends certain objects as by the organs of sense, since, in truth, I see light, hear a noise, and feel heat. But it will be said that these presentations are false, and that I am dreaming. Let it be so. At all events it is certain that I seem to see light, hear a noise, and feel heat; this cannot be false, and this is what in me is properly called perceiving (*sentire*), which is nothing else than thinking. From this I begin to know what I am with somewhat greater clearness and distinctness than heretofore.

But, nevertheless, it still seems to me, and I cannot help believing, that corporeal things, whose images are formed by thought [which fall under the senses], and are examined by the same, are known with much greater distinctness than that I know not what part of myself which is not imaginable; although, in truth, it may seem strange to say that I know and comprehend with greater distinctness things whose existence appears to me doubtful, that are unknown, and do not belong to me, than [230] others of whose reality I am persuaded, that are known to me, and appertain to my proper nature; in a word, than myself. But I see clearly what is the state of the case. My mind is apt to wander, and will not yet submit to be restrained within the limits of truth. Let us therefore leave the mind to itself once more, and, according to it every kind of liberty [permit it to consider the objects that appear to it from without], in order that, having afterward withdrawn it from these gently and opportunely [and fixed it on the consideration of its being and the properties it finds in itself], it may then be the more easily controlled.

Let us now accordingly consider the objects that are commonly thought to be [the most easily, and likewise] the most distinctly known, viz, the bodies we touch and see; not, indeed, bodies in general, for these general notions are usually somewhat more confused, but one body in particular. Take, for example, this piece of wax; it is quite fresh, having been but recently taken from the beehive; it has not yet lost the sweetness of the honey it contained; it still retains somewhat of the odor of the flowers from which it was gathered; its color, figure, size, are apparent (to the sight); it is hard, cold, easily handled; and sounds when struck upon with the finger. In fine, all that contributes to make a body as distinctly known as possible, is found in the one before us. But, while I am speaking, let it be placed near the fire — what remained of the taste exhales, the smell evaporates, the color changes, its figure is destroyed, its size increases, it becomes liquid, it grows hot, it can hardly be handled, and, although struck upon, it emits no sound. Does the same wax still remain after this change? It must be admitted

that it does remain; no one doubts it, or judges otherwise. What, then, was it I knew with so much distinctness in the piece of wax? Assuredly, it could be nothing of all that I observed by means of the senses, since all the things that fell under taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing are changed, and yet the same wax remains. It was perhaps what I now think, viz, that this wax was neither the sweetness of honey, the pleasant odor of flowers, the whiteness, the figure, nor the sound, but only a body that a little before appeared to me conspicuous under these forms, and which is now [231] perceived under others. But, to speak precisely, what is it that I imagine when I think of it in this way? Let it be attentively considered, and, retrenching all that does not belong to the wax, let us see what remains. There certainly remains nothing, except something extended, flexible, and movable. But what is meant by flexible and movable? Is it not that I imagine that the piece of wax, being round, is capable of becoming square, or of passing from a square into a triangular figure? Assuredly such is not the case, because I conceive that it admits of an infinity of similar changes; and I am, moreover, unable to compass this infinity by imagination, and consequently this conception which I have of the wax is not the product of the faculty of imagination. But what now is this extension? Is it not also unknown? for it becomes greater when the wax is melted, greater when it is boiled, and greater still when the heat increases; and I should not conceive [clearly and] according to truth, the wax as it is, if I did not suppose that the piece we are considering admitted even of a wider variety of extension than I ever imagined. I must, therefore, admit that I cannot even comprehend by imagination what the piece of wax is, and that it is the mind alone (*wens*, Lat., *entendement*, F.) which perceives it. I speak of one piece in particular; for as to wax in general, this is still more evident. But what is the piece of wax that can be perceived only by the [understanding or] mind? It is certainly the same which I see, touch, imagine; and, in fine, it is the same which, from the beginning, I believed it to be. But (and this it is of moment to observe) the perception of it is neither an act of sight, of touch, nor of imagination, and never was either of these, though it might formerly seem so, but is simply an intuition (*inspectio*) of the mind, which may be imperfect and confused, as it formerly was, or very clear and distinct, as it is at present, according as the attention is more or less directed to the elements which it contains, and of which it is composed.

But, meanwhile, I feel greatly astonished when I observe [the weakness of my mind, and] its proneness to error. For although, without at all giving expression to what I think, I consider all this in my own mind, words yet occasionally impede my progress, and I am almost [232] led into error by the terms of ordinary language. We say, for example, that we see the same wax when it is before us, and not that we judge it to be the same from its retaining the same color and figure: whence I should forthwith be disposed to conclude that the wax is known by the act of sight, and not by the intuition of the mind alone, were it not for the analogous instance of human beings passing on in the street below, as observed from a window. In this case I do not fail to say that I see the men themselves, just as I say that I see the wax; and yet what do I see from the window beyond hats and cloaks that might cover artificial machines, whose motions might be determined by springs? But I judge that there are human beings from these appearances, and thus I comprehend, by the faculty of judgment alone which is in the mind, what I believed I saw with my eyes.

The man who makes it his aim to rise to knowledge superior to the common, ought to be ashamed to seek occasions of doubting from the vulgar forms of speech: instead, therefore, of doing this, I shall proceed with the matter in hand, and inquire whether I had a clearer and more perfect perception of the piece of wax when I first saw it, and when I thought I knew it by means of the external sense itself, or, at all events, by the common sense (*sensus communis*), as it is called, that is, by the imaginative faculty; or whether I rather apprehend it more clearly at present, after having examined with greater care, both what it is, and in what way it can be known. It would certainly be ridiculous to entertain any doubt on this point. For what, in that first perception, was there distinct? What did I perceive which any animal might not have perceived? But when I distinguish the wax from its exterior forms, and when, as if I had stripped it of its vestments, I consider it quite naked, it is certain, although some error may still be found in my judgment, that I cannot, nevertheless, thus apprehend it without possessing a human mind.

But, finally, what shall I say of the mind itself, that is, of myself? for as yet I do not admit that I am anything but mind. What, then! I who seem to possess so distinct an apprehension of the piece of wax, do I not know [233] myself, both with greater truth and certitude, and also much more distinctly and clearly? For if I judge that the wax exists because I see it, it assuredly follows, much more evidently, that I myself am or exist, for the same reason: for it is possible that what I see may not in truth be wax, and that I do not even possess eyes with which to see anything; but it cannot be that when I see, or, which comes to the same thing, when I think I see, I myself who think am nothing. So likewise, if I judge that the wax exists because I touch it, it will still also follow that I am; and if I determine that my imagination, or any other cause, whatever it be, persuades me of the existence of the wax, I will still draw the same conclusion. And what is here remarked of the piece of wax, is applicable to all the other things that are external to me. And further, if the [notion or] perception of wax appeared to me more precise and distinct, after that not only sight and touch, but many other causes besides, rendered it manifest to my apprehension, with how much greater distinctness must I now know myself, since all the reasons that contribute

to the knowledge of the nature of wax, or of any body whatever, manifest still better the nature of my mind? And there are besides so many other things in the mind itself that contribute to the illustration of its nature, that those dependent on the body, to which I have here referred, scarcely merit to be taken into account.

But, in conclusion, I find I have insensibly reverted to the point I desired; for, since it is now manifest to me that bodies themselves are not properly perceived by the senses nor by the faculty of imagination, but by the intellect alone; and since they are not perceived because they are seen and touched, but only because they are understood [or rightly comprehended by thought], I readily discover that there is nothing more Easily or clearly apprehended than my own mind. But because it is difficult to rid one's self so promptly of an opinion to which one has been long accustomed, it will be desirable to tarry for some time at this stage, that, by long continued meditation, I may more deeply impress upon my memory this new knowledge.

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## RENE DESCARTES--MEDITATIONS ON FIRST PHILOSOPHY ("MEDITATION 3")

### MEDITATION III: Of God: That He Exists.

I Will now close my eyes, I will stop my ears, I will turn away my senses from their objects, I will even efface from my consciousness all the images of corporeal things; or at least, because this can hardly be accomplished, I will consider them as empty and false; and thus, holding converse only with myself, and closely examining my nature, I will endeavor to obtain by degrees a more intimate and familiar knowledge of myself. I am a thinking (conscious) thing, that is, a being who doubts, affirms, denies, knows a few objects, and is ignorant of many, — [who loves, hates], wills, refuses, who imagines likewise, and perceives; for, as I before remarked, although the things which I perceive or imagine are perhaps nothing at all apart from me [and in themselves], I am nevertheless assured that those modes of consciousness which I call perceptions and imaginations, in as far only as they are modes of consciousness, exist in me. And in the little I have said I think I have summed up all that I really know, or at least all that up to this time I was aware I knew. Now, as I am endeavoring to extend my knowledge more widely, I will use circumspection, and consider with care whether I can still discover in myself anything further which I have not yet hitherto observed. I am certain that I am a thinking thing; but do I not therefore likewise know what is required to render me certain of a truth? In this first knowledge, doubtless, there is nothing that gives me assurance of its truth except the clear and distinct perception of what I affirm, which would not indeed be sufficient to give me the assurance that what I say is true, if it could ever happen that anything I thus clearly and distinctly perceived should prove false; and accordingly it seems to me that I may now take as a general rule, that all that is very clearly and distinctly apprehended (conceived) is true.

Nevertheless I before received and admitted many things as wholly certain and manifest, which yet I afterward found to be doubtful. What, then, were those? [235] They were the earth, the sky, the stars, and all the other objects which I was in the habit of perceiving by the senses. But what was it that I clearly [and distinctly] perceived in them? Nothing more than that the ideas and the thoughts of those objects were presented to my mind. And even now I do not deny that these ideas are found in my mind. But there was yet another thing which I affirmed, and which, from having been accustomed to believe it, I thought I clearly perceived, although, in truth, I did not perceive it at all; I mean the existence of objects external to me, from which those ideas proceeded, and to which they had a perfect resemblance; and it was here I was mistaken, or if I judged correctly, this assuredly was not to be traced to any knowledge I possessed (the force of my perception, Lat.).

But when I considered any matter in arithmetic and geometry, that was very simple and easy, as, for example, that two and three added together make five, and things of this sort, did I not view them with at least sufficient clearness to warrant me in affirming their truth? Indeed, if I afterward judged that we ought to doubt of these things, it was for no other reason than because it occurred to me that a God might perhaps have given me such a nature as that I should be deceived, even respecting the matters that appeared to me the most evidently true. But

as often as this preconceived opinion of the sovereign power of a God presents itself to my mind, I am constrained to admit that it is easy for him, if he wishes it, to cause me to err. even in matters where I think I possess the highest evidence; and, on the other hand, as often as I direct my attention to things which I think I apprehend with great clearness, I am so persuaded of their truth that I naturally break out into expressions such as these: Deceive me who may, no one will yet ever be able to bring it about that I am not, so long as I shall be conscious that I am, or at any future time cause it to be true that I have never been, it being now true that I am, or make two and three more or less than five, in supposing which, and other like absurdities, I discover a manifest contradiction.

And in truth, as I have no ground for believing that Deity is deceitful, and as, indeed, I have not even considered the reasons by which the existence of a Deity [236] of any kind is established, the ground of doubt that rests only on this supposition is very slight, and, so to speak, metaphysical. But, that I may be able wholly to remove it, I must inquire whether there is a God, as soon as an opportunity of doing so shall present itself; and if I find that there is a God, I must examine likewise whether he can be a deceiver; for, without the knowledge of these two truths, I do not see that I can ever be certain of anything. And that I may be enabled to examine this without interrupting the order of meditation I have proposed to myself [which is, to pass by degrees from the notions that I shall find first in my mind to those I shall afterward discover in it], it is necessary at this stage to divide all my thoughts into certain classes, and to consider in which of these classes truth and error are, strictly speaking, to be found.

Of my thoughts some are, as it were, images of things, and to these alone properly belongs the name idea; as when I think [represent to my mind] a man, a chimera, the sky, an angel or God. Others, again, have certain other forms; as when I will, fear, affirm, or deny, I always, indeed, apprehend something as the object of my thought, but I also embrace in thought something more than the representation of the object; and of this class of thoughts some are called volitions or affections, and others judgments.

Now, with respect to ideas, if these are considered only in themselves, and are not referred to any object beyond them, they cannot, properly speaking, be false; for, whether I imagine a goat or chimera, it is not less true that I imagine the one than the other. Nor need we fear that falsity may exist in the will or affections; for, although I may desire objects that are wrong, and even that never existed, it is still true that I desire them. There thus only remain our judgments, in which we must take diligent heed that we be not deceived. But the chief and most ordinary error that arises in them consists in judging that the ideas which are in us are like or conformed to the things that are external to us; for assuredly, if we but considered the ideas themselves as certain modes of our thought (consciousness), without referring them to anything beyond, they would hardly afford any occasion of error.

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But among these ideas, some appear to me to be innate, others adventitious, and others to be made by myself (factitious); for, as I have the power of conceiving what is called a thing, or a truth, or a thought, it seems to me that I hold this power from no other source than my own nature; but if I now hear a noise, if I see the sun, or if I feel heat, I have all along judged that these sensations proceeded from certain objects existing out of myself; and, in fine, it appears to me that sirens, hippogryphs, and the like, are inventions of my own mind. But I may even perhaps come to be of opinion that all my ideas are of the class which I call adventitious, or that they are all innate, or that they are all factitious; for I have not yet clearly discovered their true origin; and what I have here principally to do is to consider, with reference to those that appear to come from certain objects without me, what grounds there are for thinking them like these objects.

The first of these grounds is that it seems to me I am so taught by nature; and the second that I am conscious that those ideas are not dependent on my will, and therefore not on myself, for they are frequently presented to me against my will, as at present, whether I will or not, I feel heat; and I am thus persuaded that this sensation or idea (*sensum vel ideam*) of heat is produced in me by something different from myself, viz., by the heat of the fire by which I sit. And it is very reasonable to suppose that this object impresses me with its own likeness rather than any other thing.

But I must consider whether these reasons are sufficiently strong and convincing. When I speak of being taught by nature in this matter, I understand by the word nature only a certain spontaneous impetus that impels me to believe in a resemblance between ideas and their objects, and not a natural light that affords a knowledge of its truth. But these two things are widely different; for what the natural light shows to be true can be in no degree doubtful, as, for example, that I am because I doubt, and other truths of the like kind; inasmuch as I possess no other faculty whereby to distinguish truth from error, which can teach me the falsity of what the natural light declares to be true, and which is equally trustworthy; but with respect to [seemingly] natural [238] impulses, I have

observed, when the question related to the choice of right or wrong in action, that they frequently led me to take the worse part; nor do I see that I have any better ground for following them in what relates to truth and error. Then, with respect to the other reason, which is that because these ideas do not depend on my will, they must arise from objects existing without me, I do not find it more convincing than the former; for just as those natural impulses, of which I have lately spoken, are found in me, notwithstanding that they are not always in harmony with my will, so likewise it may be that I possess some power not sufficiently known to myself capable of producing ideas without the aid of external objects, and, indeed, it has always hitherto appeared to me that they are formed during sleep, by some power of this nature, without the aid of aught external. And, in fine, although I should grant that they proceeded from those objects, it is not a necessary consequence that they must be like them. On the contrary, I have observed, in a number of instances, that there was a great difference between the object and its idea. Thus, for example, I find in my mind two wholly diverse ideas of the sun; the one, by which it appears to me extremely small draws its origin from the senses, and should be placed in the class of adventitious ideas; the other, by which it seems to be many times larger than the whole earth, is taken up on astronomical grounds, that is, elicited from certain notions born with me, or is framed by myself in some other manner. These two ideas cannot certainly both resemble the same sun; and reason teaches me that the one which seems to have immediately emanated from it is the most unlike. And these things sufficiently prove that hitherto it has not been from a certain and deliberate judgment, but only from a sort of blind impulse, that I believed in the existence of certain things different from myself, which, by the organs of sense, or by whatever other means it might be conveyed their ideas or images into my mind [and impressed it with their likenesses].

But there is still another way of inquiring whether, of the objects whose ideas are in my mind, there are any that exist out of me. If ideas are taken in so far only as they are certain modes of consciousness, I do not remark [239] any difference or inequality among them, and all seem, in the same manner, to proceed from myself; but, considering them as images, of which one represents one thing and another a different, it is evident that a great diversity obtains among them. For, without doubt, those that represent substances are something more, and contain in themselves, so to speak, more objective reality [that is, participate by representation in higher degrees of being or perfection], than those that represent only modes or accidents; and again, the idea by which I conceive a God [sovereign], eternal, infinite, [immutable], all-knowing, all-powerful, and the creator of all things that are out of himself, this, I say, has certainly in it more objective reality than those ideas by which finite substances are represented.

Now, it is manifest by the natural light that there must at least be as much reality in the efficient and total cause as in its effect; for whence can the effect draw its reality if not from its cause? And how could the cause communicate to it this reality unless it possessed it in itself? And hence it follows, not only that what is cannot be produced by what is not, but likewise that the more perfect, in other words, that which contains in itself more reality, cannot be the effect of the less perfect; and this is not only evidently true of those effects, whose reality is actual or formal, but likewise of ideas, whose reality is only considered as objective. Thus, for example, the stone that is not yet in existence, not only cannot now commence to be, unless it be produced by that which possesses in itself, formally or eminently, all that enters into its composition, [in other words, by that which contains in itself the same properties that are in the stone, or others superior to them]; and heat can only be produced in a subject that was before devoid of it, by a cause that is of an order, [degree or kind], at least as perfect as heat; and so of the others. But further, even the idea of the heat, or of the stone, cannot exist in me unless it be put there by a cause that contains, at least, as much reality as I conceive existent in the heat or in the stone: for although that cause may not transmit into my idea anything of its actual or formal reality, we ought not on this account to imagine that it is less real; but we ought to consider that, [as every idea is a work of the mind], its nature is such as [240] of itself to demand no other formal reality than that which it borrows from our consciousness, of which it is but a mode [that is, a manner or way of thinking]. But in order that an idea may contain this objective reality rather than that, it must doubtless derive it from some cause in which is found at least as much formal reality as the idea contains of objective; for, if we suppose that there is found in an idea anything which was not in its cause, it must of course derive this from nothing. But, however imperfect may be the mode of existence by which a thing is objectively [or by representation] in the understanding by its idea, we certainly cannot, for all that, allege that this mode of existence is nothing, nor, consequently, that the idea owes its origin to nothing. Nor must it be imagined that, since the reality which is considered in these ideas is only objective, the same reality need not be formally (actually) in the causes of these ideas, but only objectively: for, just as the mode of existing objectively belongs to ideas by their peculiar nature, so likewise the mode of existing formally appertains to the causes of these ideas (at least to the first and principal), by their peculiar nature. And although an idea may give rise to another idea, this regress cannot, nevertheless, be infinite; we must in the end reach a first idea, the cause of which is, as it were, the archetype in which all the reality [or perfection] that is found objectively [or by representation] in these ideas is contained formally [and in act]. I am thus clearly taught by the natural light that ideas exist in me as pictures or images, which may, in truth, readily fall short of the perfection of the objects from which they are taken, but can never contain anything greater or more perfect.

And in proportion to the time and care with which I examine all those matters, the conviction of their truth brightens and becomes distinct. But, to sum up, what conclusion shall I draw from it all? It is this: if the objective reality [or perfection] of any one of my ideas be such as clearly to convince me, that this same reality exists in me neither formally nor eminently, and if, as follows from this, I myself cannot be the cause of it, it is a necessary consequence that I am not alone in the world, but that there is besides myself some other being who exists as the cause of that idea; while, on the contrary, [241] if no such idea be found in my mind, I shall have no sufficient ground of assurance of the existence of any other being besides myself; for, after a most careful search, I have, up to this moment, been unable to discover any other ground.

But, among these my ideas, besides that which represents myself, respecting which there can be here no difficulty, there is one that represents a God; others that represent corporeal and inanimate things; others angels; others animals; and, finally, there are some that represent men like myself. But with respect to the ideas that represent other men, or animals, or angels, I can easily suppose that they were formed by the mingling and composition of the other ideas which I have of myself, of corporeal things, and of God, although they were, apart from myself, neither men, animals, nor angels. And with regard to the ideas of corporeal objects, I never discovered in them anything so great or excellent which I myself did not appear capable of originating; for, by considering these ideas closely and scrutinizing them individually, in the same way that I yesterday examined the idea of wax, I find that there is but little in them that is clearly and distinctly perceived. As belonging to the class of things that are clearly apprehended, I recognize the following, viz, magnitude or extension in length, breadth, and depth; figure, which results from the termination of extension; situation, which bodies of diverse figures preserve with reference to each other; and motion or the change of situation; to which may be added substance, duration, and number. But with regard to light, colors, sounds, odors, tastes, heat, cold, and the other tactile qualities, they are thought with so much obscurity and confusion, that I cannot determine even whether they are true or false; in other words, whether or not the ideas I have of these qualities are in truth the ideas of real objects. For although I before remarked that it is only in judgments that formal falsity, or falsity properly so called, can be met with, there may nevertheless be found in ideas a certain material falsity, which arises when they represent what is nothing as if it were something. Thus, for example, the ideas I have of cold and heat are so far from being clear and distinct, that I am unable from them to discover whether cold is only the [242] privation of heat, or heat the privation of cold; or whether they are or are not real qualities: and since, ideas being as it were images there can be none that does not seem to us to represent some object, the idea which represents cold as something real and positive will not improperly be called false, if it be correct to say that cold is nothing but a privation of heat; and so in other cases. To ideas of this kind, indeed, it is not necessary that I should assign any author besides myself: for if they are false, that is, represent objects that are unreal, the natural light teaches me that they proceed from nothing; in other words, that they are in me only because something is wanting to the perfection of my nature; but if these ideas are true, yet because they exhibit to me so little reality that I cannot even distinguish the object represented from non-being, I do not see why I should not be the author of them.

With reference to those ideas of corporeal things that are clear and distinct, there are some which, as appears to me, might have been taken from the idea I have of myself, as those of substance, duration, number, and the like. For when I think that a stone is a substance, or a thing capable of existing of itself, and that I am likewise a substance, although I conceive that I am a thinking and non-extended thing, and that the stone, on the contrary, is extended and unconscious, there being thus the greatest diversity between the two concepts, yet these two ideas seem to have this in common that they both represent substances. In the same way, when I think of myself as now existing, and recollect besides that I existed some time ago, and when I am conscious of various thoughts whose number I know, I then acquire the ideas of duration and number, which I can afterward transfer to as many objects as I please. With respect to the other qualities that go to make up the ideas of corporeal objects, viz, extension, figure, situation, and motion, it is true that they are not formally in me, since I am merely a thinking being; but because they are only certain modes of substance, and because I myself am a substance, it seems possible that they may be contained in me eminently.

There only remains, therefore, the idea of God, in which I must consider whether there is anything that [243] cannot be supposed to originate with myself. By the name God, I understand a substance infinite, [eternal, immutable], independent, all-knowing, all-powerful, and by which I myself, and every other thing that exists, if any such there be, were created. But these properties are so great and excellent, that the more attentively I consider them the less I feel persuaded that the idea I have of them owes its origin to myself alone. And thus it is absolutely necessary to conclude, from all that I have before said, that God exists: for though the idea of substance be in my mind owing to this, that I myself am a substance, I should not, however, have the idea of an infinite substance, seeing I am a finite being, unless it were given me by some substance in reality infinite.

And I must not imagine that I do not apprehend the infinite by a true idea, but only by the negation of the finite, in the same way that I comprehend repose and darkness by the negation of motion and light: since, on the contrary,

I clearly perceive that there is more reality in the infinite substance than in the finite, and therefore that in some way I possess the perception (notion) of the infinite before that of the finite, that is, the perception of God before that of myself, for how could I know that I doubt, desire, or that something is wanting to me, and that I am not wholly perfect, if I possessed no idea of a being more perfect than myself, by comparison of which I knew the deficiencies of my nature?

And it cannot be said that this idea of God is perhaps materially false, and consequently that it may have arisen from nothing [in other words, that it may exist in me from my imperfection], as I before said of the ideas of heat and cold, and the like: for, on the contrary, as this idea is very clear and distinct, and contains in itself more objective reality than any other, there can be no one of itself more true, or less open to the suspicion of falsity.

The idea, I say, of a being supremely perfect, and infinite, is in the highest degree true; for although, perhaps, we may imagine that such a being does not exist, we cannot, nevertheless, suppose that his idea represents nothing real, as I have already said of the idea of cold. It is likewise clear and distinct in the highest degree, since whatever the mind clearly and distinctly conceives as real or true, and as implying any perfection, is contained [244] entire in this idea. And this is true, nevertheless, although I do not comprehend the infinite, and although there may be in God an infinity of things that I cannot comprehend, nor perhaps even compass by thought in any way; for it is of the nature of the infinite that it should not be comprehended by the finite; and it is enough that I rightly understand this, and judge that all which I clearly perceive, and in which I know there is some perfection, and perhaps also an infinity of properties of which I am ignorant, are formally or eminently in God, in order that the idea I have of him may become the most true, clear, and distinct of all the ideas in my mind.

But perhaps I am something more than I suppose myself to be, and it may be that all those perfections which I attribute to God, in some way exist potentially in me, although they do not yet show themselves, and are not reduced to act. Indeed, I am already conscious that my knowledge is being increased [and perfected] by degrees; and I see nothing to prevent it from thus gradually increasing to infinity, nor any reason why, after such increase and perfection, I should not be able thereby to acquire all the other perfections of the Divine nature; nor, in fine, why the power I possess of acquiring those perfections, if it really now exist in me, should not be sufficient to produce the ideas of them. Yet, on looking more closely into the matter, I discover that this cannot be; for, in the first place, although it were true that my knowledge daily acquired new degrees of perfection, and although there were potentially in my nature much that was not as yet actually in it, still all these excellences make not the slightest approach to the idea I have of the Deity, in whom there is no perfection merely potentially [but all actually] existent; for it is even an unmistakable token of imperfection in my knowledge, that it is augmented by degrees. Further, although my knowledge increase more and more, nevertheless I am not, therefore, induced to think that it will ever be actually infinite, since it can never reach that point beyond which it shall be incapable of further increase. But I conceive God as actually infinite, so that nothing can be added to his perfection. And, in fine, I readily perceive that the objective being of an idea cannot be produced [245] by a being that is merely potentially existent, which, properly speaking, is nothing, but only by a being existing formally or actually.

And, truly, I see nothing in all that I have now said which it is not easy for any one, who shall carefully consider it, to discern by the natural light; but when I allow my attention in some degree to relax, the vision of my mind being obscured, and, as it were, blinded by the images of sensible objects, I do not readily remember the reason why the idea of a being more perfect than myself, must of necessity have proceeded from a being in reality more perfect. On this account I am here desirous to inquire further, whether I, who possess this idea of God, could exist supposing there were no God. And I ask, from whom could I, in that case, derive my existence? Perhaps from myself, or from my parents, or from some other causes less perfect than God; for anything more perfect, or even equal to God, cannot be thought or imagined. But if I [were independent of every other existence, and] were myself the author of my being, I should doubt of nothing, I should desire nothing, and, in fine, no perfection would be wanting to me; for I should have bestowed upon myself every perfection of which I possess the idea, and I should thus be God. And it must not be imagined that what is now wanting to me is perhaps of more difficult acquisition than that of which I am already possessed; for, on the contrary, it is quite manifest that it was a matter of much higher difficulty that I, a thinking being, should arise from nothing, than it would be for me to acquire the knowledge of many things of which I am ignorant, and which are merely the accidents of a thinking substance; and certainly, if I possessed of myself the greater perfection of which I have now spoken [in other words, if I were the author of my own existence], I would not at least have denied to myself things that may be more easily obtained [as that infinite variety of knowledge of which I am at present destitute]. I could not, indeed, have denied to myself any property which I perceive is contained in the idea of God, because there is none of these that seems to me to be more difficult to make or acquire; and if there were any that should happen to be more difficult to acquire, they would certainly appear so [246] to me (supposing that I myself were the source of the other things I possess), because I should discover in them a limit to my power. And though I were to suppose that I always was as I now am, I should not, on this ground, escape the force of these reasonings, since it would not follow,

even on this supposition, that no author of my existence needed to be sought after. For the whole time of my life may be divided into an infinity of parts, each of which is in no way dependent on any other; and, accordingly, because I was in existence a short time ago, it does not follow that I must now exist, unless in this moment some cause create me anew as it were, that is, conserve me. In truth, it is perfectly clear and evident to all who will attentively consider the nature of duration, that the conservation of a substance, in each moment of its duration, requires the same power and act that would be necessary to create it, supposing it were not yet in existence; so that it is manifestly a dictate of the natural light that conservation and creation differ merely in respect of our mode of thinking [and not in reality]. All that is here required, therefore, is that I interrogate myself to discover whether I possess any power by means of which I can bring it about that I, who now am, shall exist a moment afterward: for, since I am merely a thinking thing (or since, at least, the precise question, in the meantime, is only of that part of myself), if such a power resided in me, I should, without doubt, be conscious of it; but I am conscious of no such power, and thereby I manifestly know that I am dependent upon some being different from myself.

But perhaps the being upon whom I am dependent is not God, and I have been produced either by my parents, or by some causes less perfect than Deity. This cannot be: for, as I before said, it is perfectly evident that there must at least be as much reality in the cause as in its effect; and accordingly, since I am a thinking thing and possess in myself an idea of God, whatever in the end be the cause of my existence, it must of necessity be admitted that it is likewise a thinking being, and that it possesses in itself the idea and all the perfections I attribute to Deity. Then it may again be inquired whether this cause owes its origin and existence to itself, [247] or to some other cause. For if it be self-existent, it follows, from what I have before laid down, that this cause is God; for, since it possesses the perfection of self-existence, it must likewise, without doubt, have the power of actually possessing every perfection of which it has the idea — in other words, all the perfections I conceive to belong to God. But if it owe its existence to another cause than, itself, we demand again, for a similar reason, whether this second cause exists of itself or through some other, until, from stage to stage, we at length arrive at an ultimate cause, which will be God. And it is quite manifest that in this matter there can be no infinite regress of causes, seeing that the question raised respects not so much the cause which once produced me, as that by which I am at this present moment conserved.

Nor can it be supposed that several causes concurred in my production, and that from one I received the idea of one of the perfections I attribute to Deity, and from another the idea of some other, and thus that all those perfections are indeed found somewhere in the universe, but do not all exist together in a single being who is God; for, on the contrary, the unity, the simplicity, or inseparability of all the properties of Deity, is one of the chief perfections I conceive him to possess; and the idea of this unity of all the perfections of Deity could certainly not be put into my mind by any cause from which I did not likewise receive the ideas of all the other perfections; for no power could enable me to embrace them in an inseparable unity, without at the same time giving me the knowledge of what they were [and of their existence in a particular mode].

Finally, with regard to my parents [from whom it appears I sprung], although all that I believed respecting them be true, it does not, nevertheless, follow that I am conserved by them, or even that I was produced by them, in so far as I am a thinking being. All that, at the most, they contributed to my origin was the giving of certain dispositions (modifications) to the matter in which I have hitherto judged that I or my mind, which is what alone I now consider to be myself, is inclosed; and thus there can here be no difficulty with respect to them, and it is absolutely necessary to conclude from this alone [248] that I am, and possess the idea of a being absolutely perfect, that is, of God, that his existence is most clearly demonstrated.

There remains only the inquiry as to the way in which I received this idea from God; for I have not drawn it from the senses, nor is it even presented to me unexpectedly, as is usual with the ideas of sensible objects, when these are presented or appear to be presented to the external organs of the senses; it is not even a pure production or fiction of my mind, for it is not in my power to take from or add to it; and consequently there but remains the alternative that it is innate, in the same way as is the idea of myself. And, in truth, it is not to be wondered at that God, at my creation, implanted this idea in me, that it might serve, as it were, for the mark of the workman impressed on his work; and it is not also necessary that the mark should be something different from the work itself; but considering only that God is my creator, it is highly probable that he in some way fashioned me after his own image and likeness, and that I perceive this likeness, in which is contained the idea of God, by the same faculty by which I apprehend myself, in other words, when I make myself the object of reflection, I not only find that I am an incomplete, [imperfect] and dependent being, and one who unceasingly aspires after something better and greater than he is; but, at the same time, I am assured likewise that he upon whom I am dependent possesses in himself all the goods after which I aspire [and the ideas of which I find in my mind], and that not merely indefinitely and potentially, but infinitely and actually, and that he is thus God. And the whole force of the argument of which I have here availed myself to establish the existence of God, consists in this, that I perceive I could not possibly be of such a nature as I am, and yet have in my mind the idea of a God, if God did not in reality

exist—this same God. I say, whose idea is in my mind—that is, a being who possesses all those lofty perfections, of which the mind may have some slight conception, without, however, being able fully to comprehend them, and who is wholly superior to all defect [and has nothing that marks imperfection]: whence it is sufficiently manifest that he cannot be a deceiver, since [249] it is a dictate of the natural light that all fraud and deception spring from some defect.

But before I examine this with more attention, and pass on to the consideration of other truths that may be evolved out of it, I think it proper to remain here for some time in the contemplation of God himself—that I may ponder at leisure his marvelous attributes—and behold, admire, and adore the beauty of this light so unspeakably great, as far, at least, as the strength of my mind, which is to some degree dazzled by the sight, will permit. For just as we learn by faith that the supreme felicity of another life consists in the contemplation of the Divine majesty alone, so even now we learn from experience that a like meditation, though incomparably less perfect, is the source of the highest satisfaction of which we are susceptible in this life. ?★

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## COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (OVERVIEW)

In **natural theology**, a **cosmological argument** is an **argument** in which the existence of a unique being, generally seen as some kind of **god** or **demiurge** is **deduced** or **inferred** from facts or alleged facts concerning causation, change, motion, contingency, or finitude in respect of the universe as a whole or processes within it.<sup>[1][2]</sup> It is traditionally known as an **argument from universal causation**, an **argument from first cause**, or the **causal argument**. Whichever term is employed, there are three basic variants of the argument, each with subtle yet important distinctions: the arguments from *in causa* (**causality**), *in esse* (**essentiality**), and *in fieri* (**becoming**).

The basic premise of all of these is the concept of **causality** and of a **first cause**. The history of this argument goes back to **Aristotle** or earlier, was developed in **Neoplatonism** and **early Christianity** and later in medieval **Islamic theology** during the 9th to 12th centuries, and re-introduced to medieval Christian theology in the 13th century by **Thomas Aquinas**. The cosmological argument is closely related to the **principle of sufficient reason** as addressed by **Gottfried Leibniz** and **Samuel Clarke**, itself a modern exposition of the claim that “**nothing comes from nothing**” attributed to **Parmenides**.

**Contemporary** defenders of cosmological arguments include **William Lane Craig**,<sup>[3]</sup> **Robert Koons**,<sup>[4]</sup> **Alexander Pruss**,<sup>[5]</sup> and **William L. Rowe**.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Argument from contingency

In the **scholastic** era, **Aquinas** formulated the “argument from **contingency**“, following **Aristotle** in claiming that there must be something to explain why the Universe exists. Since the Universe could, under different circumstances, conceivably *not* exist (contingency), its existence must have a cause – not merely another contingent thing, but something that exists by **necessity** (something that *must* exist in order for anything else to exist).<sup>[14]</sup> In other words, even if the Universe has always existed, it still owes its existence to an **Uncaused Cause**,<sup>[15]</sup> Aquinas further said: “...and this we understand to be God.”<sup>[16]</sup>

Aquinas’s argument from contingency allows for the possibility of a Universe that has no beginning in time. It is a form of argument from universal **causation**. Aquinas observed that, in nature, there were things with contingent existences. Since it is possible for such things not to exist, there must be some time at which these things did not in fact exist. Thus, according to Aquinas, there must have been a time when nothing existed. If this is so, there would exist nothing that could bring anything into existence. Contingent beings, therefore, are insufficient to account for the existence of contingent beings: there must exist a **necessary** being whose non-existence is an impossibility, and from which the existence of all contingent beings is derived.

The German philosopher [Gottfried Leibniz](#) made a similar argument with his [principle of sufficient reason](#) in 1714. “There can be found no fact that is true or existent, or any true proposition,” he wrote, “without there being a sufficient reason for its being so and not otherwise, although we cannot know these reasons in most cases.” He formulated the cosmological argument succinctly: “Why is there something rather than nothing? The sufficient reason [...] is found in a substance which [...] is a necessary being bearing the reason for its existence within itself.”<sup>[17]</sup>

## *In esse* and *in fieri*

The difference between the arguments from causation *in fieri* and *in esse* is a fairly important one. *In fieri* is generally translated as “becoming”, while *in esse* is generally translated as “in essence”. *In fieri*, the process of becoming, is similar to building a house. Once it is built, the builder walks away, and it stands on its own accord. (It may require occasional maintenance, but that is beyond the scope of the first cause argument.)

*In esse* (essence) is more akin to the light from a candle or the liquid in a vessel. George Hayward Joyce, [SJ](#), explained that “...where the light of the candle is dependent on the candle’s continued existence, not only does a candle produce light in a room in the first instance, but its continued presence is necessary if the illumination is to continue. If it is removed, the light ceases. Again, a liquid receives its shape from the vessel in which it is contained; but were the pressure of the containing sides withdrawn, it would not retain its form for an instant.” This form of the argument is far more difficult to separate from a purely first cause argument than is the example of the house’s maintenance above, because here the First Cause is insufficient without the candle’s or vessel’s continued existence.<sup>[18]</sup>

Thus, [Leibniz](#)’ argument is *in fieri*, while [Aquinas](#)’ argument is both *in fieri* and *in esse*. This distinction is an excellent example of the difference between a [deistic](#) view (Leibniz) and a [theistic](#) view (Aquinas). As a general trend, the modern slants on the cosmological argument, including the [Kalam argument](#), tend to lean very strongly towards an *in fieri* argument.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

## Kalām cosmological argument

William Lane Craig gives this argument in the following general form:<sup>[19]</sup>

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
2. The Universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the Universe had a cause.

Craig explains, by nature of the event (the Universe coming into existence), attributes unique to (the concept of) god must also be attributed to the cause of this event, including but not limited to: omnipotence, Creator, being eternal and absolute self-sufficiency. Since these attributes are unique to god, anything with these attributes must be god. Something does have these attributes: the cause; hence, the cause is god, the cause exists; hence, god exists.

Craig defends the second premise, that the Universe had a beginning starting with [Al-Ghazali](#)’s proof that an [actual infinite](#) is impossible. However, If the universe never had a beginning then there indeed **would** be an actual infinite, an infinite amount of cause and effect events. Hence, the Universe had a beginning.

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# COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (OBJECTIONS AND COUNTERARGUMENTS)

## What caused the First Cause?

Secondly, it is argued that the premise of [causality](#) has been arrived at via *a posteriori* ([inductive](#)) reasoning, which is dependent on experience. [David Hume](#) highlighted this [problem of induction](#) and argued that [causal relations](#) were not true *a priori*. However, as to whether inductive or deductive reasoning is more valuable still remains a matter of debate, with the general conclusion being that neither is prominent.<sup>[22]</sup> Opponents of the argument tend to argue that it is unwise to draw conclusions from an extrapolation of causality beyond experience.<sup>[1]</sup> One objection to the argument is that it leaves open the question of why the First Cause is unique in that it does not require any causes. Proponents argue that the First Cause is exempt from having a cause, while opponents argue that this is [special pleading](#) or otherwise untrue.<sup>[1]</sup> Critics often press that arguing for the First Cause's exemption raises the question of why the First Cause is indeed exempt,<sup>[20]</sup> whereas defenders maintain that this question has been answered by the various arguments, emphasizing that none of its major forms rests on the premise that everything has a cause.<sup>[21]</sup>

## Identity of a First Cause

The basic cosmological argument merely establishes that a First Cause exists, not that it has the attributes of a [theistic](#) god, such as [omniscience](#), [omnipotence](#), and [omnibenevolence](#).<sup>[23]</sup> This is why the argument is often expanded to show that at least some of these attributes are necessarily true, for instance in the modern Kalam argument given above.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Existence of causal loops

A causal loop is a form of [predestination paradox](#) arising where traveling backwards in time is deemed a possibility. A sufficiently powerful entity in such a world would have the capacity to travel backwards in time to a point before its own existence, and to then create itself, thereby initiating everything which [follows from](#) it.

The usual reason which is given to refute the possibility of a causal loop is it requires that the loop as a whole be its own cause. [Richard Hanley](#) argues that causal loops are not logically, physically, or epistemically impossible: “[In timed systems,] the only possibly objectionable feature that all causal loops share is that coincidence is required to explain them.”<sup>[24]</sup>

## Existence of infinite causal chains

[David Hume](#) and later [Paul Edwards](#) have invoked a similar principle in their criticisms of the cosmological argument. Rowe has called the principle the Hume-Edwards principle:<sup>[25]</sup>

If the existence of every member of a set is explained, the existence of that set is thereby explained.

Nevertheless, [David White](#) argues that the notion of an [infinite causal regress](#) providing a proper explanation is fallacious.<sup>[26]</sup> Furthermore, [Demea](#) states that even if the succession of causes is infinite, the whole chain still requires a cause.<sup>[27]</sup> To explain this, suppose there exists a causal chain of infinite contingent beings. If one asks the question, “Why are there any contingent beings at all?”, it won’t help to be told that “There are contingent beings because other contingent beings caused them.” That answer would just presuppose additional contingent

beings. An adequate explanation of why some contingent beings exist would invoke a different sort of being, a necessary being that is *not* contingent.<sup>[28]</sup> A response might suppose each individual is contingent but the infinite chain as a whole is not; or the whole infinite causal chain to be its own cause.

Severinsen argues that there is an “infinite” and complex causal structure.<sup>[29]</sup> White tried to introduce an argument “without appeal to the principle of sufficient reason and without denying the possibility of an infinite causal regress”.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Big Bang cosmology

Some cosmologists and physicists argue that a challenge to the cosmological argument is the nature of time: “One finds that time just disappears from the [Wheeler–DeWitt equation](#)”<sup>[31]</sup> (Carlo Rovelli). The [Big Bang theory](#) states that it is the point in which all [dimensions](#) came into existence, the start of both [space](#) and [time](#).<sup>[32]</sup> Then, the question “What was there before the Universe?” makes no sense; the concept of “before” becomes meaningless when considering a situation without time.<sup>[32]</sup> This has been put forward by J. Richard Gott III, James E. Gunn, David N. Schramm, and [Beatrice Tinsley](#), who said that asking what occurred before the Big Bang is like asking what is north of the [North Pole](#).<sup>[32]</sup> However, some cosmologists and physicists do attempt to investigate causes for the Big Bang, using such scenarios as the collision of [membranes](#).<sup>[33]</sup>

Philosopher [Edward Feser](#) states that classical philosophers’ arguments for the existence of God do not care about the Big Bang or whether the universe had a beginning. The question is not about what got things started or how long they have been going, but rather what keeps them going.<sup>[34]</sup>

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# TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (OVERVIEW)

The teleological or physico-theological argument, also known as the argument from design, or intelligent design argument is an argument for the [existence of God](#) or, more generally, for an intelligent creator “based on perceived evidence of [deliberate design](#) in the natural or physical world”.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> It is an argument in [natural theology](#).

The earliest recorded versions of this argument are associated with [Socrates](#) in ancient Greece, although it has been argued that he was taking up an older argument.<sup>[4][5]</sup> Plato, his student, and Aristotle, Plato’s student, developed complex approaches to the proposal that the cosmos has an intelligent cause, but it was the [Stoics](#) who, under their influence, “developed the battery of creationist arguments broadly known under the label ‘The Argument from Design’”.<sup>[6]</sup>

Socratic philosophy influenced the development of the [Abrahamic religions](#) in many ways, and the teleological argument has a long association with them. In the Middle Ages, Islamic theologians such as [Al-Ghazali](#) used the argument, although it was rejected as unnecessary by [Quranic](#) literalists, and as unconvincing by many Islamic philosophers. Later, the teleological argument was accepted by [Saint Thomas Aquinas](#) and included as the fifth of his “[Five Ways](#)” of proving the existence of God. In early modern England clergymen such as [William Turner](#) and [John Ray](#) were well-known proponents. In the early 18th century, [William Derham](#) published his *Physico-Theology*, which gave his “demonstration of the being and attributes of God from his works of creation”.<sup>[7]</sup> Later, [William Paley](#), in his 1802 *Natural Theology or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity* published a prominent presentation of the design argument with his version of the [watchmaker analogy](#) and the first use of the phrase “argument from design”.<sup>[8]</sup>

From the beginning, there have been numerous criticisms of the different versions of the teleological argument, and responses to its challenge to the claims against non-teleological natural science. Especially important were the general logical arguments made by [David Hume](#) in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, published 1779, and the explanation of biological complexity given in [Charles Darwin's](#) *Origin of Species*, published in 1859.<sup>[9]</sup> Since the 1960s, Paley's arguments, including the words "intelligent design", have been influential in the development of a [creation science](#) movement, especially the form known as the [intelligent design movement](#), which not only uses the teleological argument to argue against the modern Darwinian understanding of [evolution](#), but also makes the philosophical claim that it can provide a basis for scientific proof of the divine origin of biological species.<sup>[10]</sup>

Also starting already in classical Greece, two approaches to the teleological argument developed, distinguished by their understanding of whether the natural order was literally created or not. The non-creationist approach starts most clearly with Aristotle, although many thinkers, such as the [Neoplatonists](#), believed it was already intended by Plato. This approach is not creationist in a simple sense, because while it agrees that a cosmic intelligence is responsible for the natural order, it rejects the proposal that this requires a "creator" to physically make and maintain this order. The Neoplatonists did not find the teleological argument convincing, and in this they were followed by medieval philosophers such as [Al-Farabi](#) and [Avicenna](#). Later, [Averroes](#) and Thomas Aquinas considered the argument acceptable, but not necessarily the best argument.

In contrast to the approach of such philosophers and theologians, the intelligent design movement makes a creationist claim for an intelligence that intervenes in the natural order to make certain changes occur in nature.

## TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS (RECENT FORMULATIONS)

### Probabilistic arguments

In 1928 and 1930, FR. Tennant published his *Philosophical Theology*, which was a "bold endeavour to combine scientific and theological thinking".<sup>[84]</sup> He proposed a version of the teleological argument based on the accumulation of the probabilities of each individual biological adaptation. "Tennant concedes that naturalistic accounts such as evolutionary theory may explain each of the individual adaptations he cites, but he insists that in this case the whole exceeds the sum of its parts: naturalism can explain each adaptation but not their totality."<sup>[85]</sup> The *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* notes that "Critics have insisted on focusing on the cogency of each piece of theistic evidence – reminding us that, in the end, ten leaky buckets hold no more water than one." Also, "Some critics, such as [John Hick](#) and D.H. Mellor, have objected to Tennant's particular use of probability theory and have challenged the relevance of any kind of probabilistic reasoning to theistic belief."<sup>[85]</sup>

[Richard Swinburne's](#) "contributions to philosophical theology have sought to apply more sophisticated versions of probability theory to the question of God's existence, a methodological improvement on Tennant's work but squarely in the same spirit."<sup>[85]</sup> He uses [Bayesian probability](#) "taking account not only of the order and functioning of nature but also of the 'fit' between human intelligence and the universe, whereby one can understand its workings, as well as human aesthetic, moral, and religious experience."<sup>[86]</sup> Swinburne writes: "the existence of order in the world confirms the existence of God if and only if the existence of this order in the world is more probable if there is a God than if there is not. ... the probability of order of the right kind is very much greater if there is a God, and so that the existence of such order adds greatly to the probability that there is a God."<sup>[87]</sup> Swinburne acknowledges that his argument by itself may not give a reason to believe in the existence of God, but in combination with other arguments such as [cosmological arguments](#) and evidence from [mystical experience](#), he thinks it can.

While discussing Hume's arguments, [Alvin Plantinga](#) offered a probability version of the teleological argument in his book *God and Other Minds*:

Every *contingent* object such that we know whether or not it was the product of intelligent design, was the product of intelligent design.

The universe is a contingent object.

So probably the universe is designed.<sup>[88]</sup>

Following Plantinga, Georges Dicker produced a slightly different version in his book about [Bishop Berkeley](#):

- A. The world ... shows amazing teleological order.
- B. All Objects exhibiting such order ... are products of intelligent design.
- C. Probably the world is a result of intelligent design.
- D. Probably, God exists and created the world.<sup>[89]</sup>

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* has the following criticism of such arguments:

It can of course be said that any form in which the universe might be is statistically enormously improbable as it is only one of a virtual infinity of possible forms. But its actual form is no more improbable, in this sense, than innumerable others. It is only the fact that humans are part of it that makes it seem so special, requiring a transcendent explanation.<sup>[86]</sup>

## Fine-tuned Universe

A modern variation of the teleological argument is built upon the concept of the [fine-tuned Universe](#): According to the website *Biologos*: "Fine-tuning refers to the surprising precision of nature's physical constants, and the beginning state of the Universe. To explain the present state of the universe, even the best scientific theories require that the physical constants of nature and the beginning state of the Universe have extremely precise values."<sup>[90]</sup> Also, the fine-tuning of the Universe is the apparent delicate balance of conditions necessary for human life. In this view, speculation about a vast range of possible conditions in which life cannot exist is used to explore the probability of conditions in which life can and does exist. For example, it can be argued that if the force of the [Big Bang](#) explosion had been different by 1/1060 or the [strong interaction force](#) was only 5% different, life would be impossible.<sup>[91]</sup> In terms of a teleological argument, the intuition in relation to a fine-tuned universe would be that God must have been responsible, if achieving such perfect conditions is so improbable.<sup>[90][91]</sup> However, in regard to fine-tuning, Kenneth Himma writes: "The mere fact that it is enormously improbable that an event occurred... by itself, gives us no reason to think that it occurred by design... As intuitively tempting as it may be..."<sup>[91]</sup> Himma attributes the "Argument from Suspicious Improbabilities", a formalization of "the fine-tuning intuition" to [George N. Schlesinger](#):

To understand Schlesinger's argument, consider your reaction to two different events. If John wins a 1-in-1,000,000,000 lottery game, you would not immediately be tempted to think that John (or someone acting on his behalf) cheated. If, however, John won three consecutive 1-in-1,000 lotteries, you would immediately be tempted to think that John (or someone acting on his behalf) cheated. Schlesinger believes that the intuitive reaction to these two scenarios is epistemically justified. The structure of the latter event is such that it... justifies a belief that intelligent design is the cause... Despite the fact that the probability of winning three consecutive 1-in-1,000 games is exactly the same as the probability of winning one 1-in-1,000,000,000 game, the former event... warrants an inference of intelligent design.

Himma considers Schlesinger's argument to be subject to the same vulnerabilities he noted in other versions of the design argument:

While Schlesinger is undoubtedly correct in thinking that we are justified in suspecting design in the case [of winning] three consecutive lotteries, it is because—and only because—we know two related

empirical facts about such events. First, we already know that there exist intelligent agents who have the right motivations and causal abilities to deliberately bring about such events. Second, we know from past experience with such events that they are usually explained by the deliberate agency of one or more of these agents. Without at least one of these two pieces of information, we are not obviously justified in seeing design in such cases... [T]he problem for the fine-tuning argument is that we lack both of the pieces that are needed to justify an inference of design. First, the very point of the argument is to establish the fact that there exists an intelligent agency that has the right causal abilities and motivations to bring the existence of a universe capable of sustaining life. Second, and more obviously, we do not have any past experience with the genesis of worlds and are hence not in a position to know whether the existence of fine-tuned universes are usually explained by the deliberate agency of some intelligent agency. Because we lack this essential background information, we are not justified in inferring that there exists an intelligent Deity who deliberately created a universe capable of sustaining life.<sup>[91]</sup>

[Antony Flew](#), who spent most of his life as an atheist, converted to [deism](#) late in life, and postulated “an intelligent being as involved in some way in the design of conditions that would allow life to arise and evolve.”<sup>[92]</sup> He concluded that the fine-tuning of the universe was too precise to be the result of chance, so accepted the existence of God. He said that his commitment to “go where the evidence leads” meant that he ended up accepting the existence of God.<sup>[93]</sup> Flew proposed the view, held earlier by [Fred Hoyle](#), that the universe is too young for life to have developed purely by chance and that, therefore, an intelligent being must exist which was involved in designing the conditions required for life to evolve.<sup>[92]</sup>

Would you not say to yourself, “Some super-calculating intellect must have designed the properties of the carbon atom, otherwise the chance of my finding such an atom through the blind forces of nature would be utterly minuscule.” Of course you would... A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.<sup>[94]</sup>  
— [Fred Hoyle](#), *Engineering and Science, The Universe: Past and Present Reflections*

## Creation Science and intelligent design

A version of the argument from design is central to both [creation science](#) and [Intelligent design](#),<sup>[10]</sup> but unlike Paley’s openness to [deistic](#) design through God-given laws, proponents seek scientific confirmation of repeated miraculous interventions in the history of life, and argue that their [theistic science](#) should be taught in science classrooms.<sup>[95]</sup>

The teaching of [evolution](#) was effectively barred from United States public school curricula by the outcome of the 1925 [Scopes Trial](#), but in the 1960s the [National Defense Education Act](#) led to the [Biological Sciences Curriculum Study](#) reintroducing the teaching of evolution. In response, there was a resurgence of [creationism](#), now presented as “creation science”, based on biblical literalism but with Bible quotes optional. (“Explicit references to the Bible were optional: Morris’s 1974 book *Scientific Creationism* came in two versions, one with Bible quotes, and one without.”<sup>[10]</sup>)

A 1989 survey found that virtually all literature promoting creation science presented the design argument, with [John D. Morris](#) saying “any living thing gives such strong evidence for design by an intelligent designer that only a willful ignorance of the data (II Peter 3:5) could lead one to assign such intricacy to chance.” Such publications introduced concepts central to intelligent design, including [irreducible complexity](#) (a variant of the watchmaker analogy) and [specified complexity](#) (closely resembling a fine-tuning argument). The [United States Supreme Court](#) ruling on [Edwards v. Aguillard](#) barred the teaching of “Creation Science” in public schools because it breached the [separation of church and state](#), and a group of creationists rebranded Creation Science as “intelligent design” which was presented as a scientific theory rather than as a religious argument.<sup>[10]</sup>

Scientists disagreed with the assertion that intelligent design is scientific, and its introduction into the science curriculum of a [Pennsylvania](#) school district led to the 2005 [Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District](#) trial, which ruled that the “intelligent design” arguments are essentially religious in nature and not science.<sup>[96]</sup> The court took evidence from theologian [John F. Haught](#), and ruled that “ID is not a new scientific [argument](#), but is rather an old

religious argument for the existence of God. He traced this argument back to at least Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, who framed the argument as a syllogism: Wherever complex design exists, there must have been a designer; nature is complex; therefore nature must have had an intelligent designer.” “This argument for the existence of God was advanced early in the 19th century by Reverend Paley”: “The only apparent difference between the argument made by Paley and the argument for ID, as expressed by defense expert witnesses Behe and Minnich, is that ID’s ‘official position’ does not acknowledge that the designer is God.”<sup>[97]</sup>

Proponents of the [intelligent design movement](#) such as [Cornelius G. Hunter](#), have asserted that the methodological [naturalism](#) upon which science is based is religious in nature.<sup>[98]</sup> They commonly refer to it as ‘scientific materialism’ or as ‘methodological materialism’ and conflate it with ‘metaphysical naturalism’.<sup>[99]</sup> They use this assertion to support their claim that modern science is atheistic, and contrast it with their preferred approach of a revived [natural philosophy](#) which welcomes supernatural explanations for natural phenomena and supports [theistic science](#). This ignores the distinction between science and religion, established in Ancient Greece, in which science can not use supernatural explanations.<sup>[96]</sup>

Intelligent design advocate [Michael Behe](#) proposed a development of Paley’s watch analogy in which he argued in favour of intelligent design. Unlike Paley, Behe only attempts to prove the existence of an intelligent designer, rather than the God of classical theism. Behe uses the analogy of a mousetrap to propose [irreducible complexity](#): he argues that if a mousetrap loses just one of its parts, it can no longer function as a mousetrap. He argues that irreducible complexity in an object guarantees the presence of intelligent design. Behe claims that there are instances of irreducible complexity in the natural world and that parts of the world must have been designed.<sup>[100]</sup> This negative argument against step by step evolution ignores longstanding evidence that evolution proceeds through [changes of function](#) from preceding systems. The specific examples Behe proposes have been shown to have simpler [homologues](#) which could act as precursors with different functions. His arguments have been rebutted, both in general and in specific cases by numerous scientific papers. In response, Behe and others, “ironically, given the absence of any detail in their own explanation, complain that the proffered explanations lack sufficient detail to be empirically tested.”<sup>[10]</sup>

## “Third way” proposal

[University of Chicago geneticist James A. Shapiro](#), writing in the [Boston Review](#), states that advancements in genetics and molecular biology, and “the growing realization that cells have molecular computing networks which process information about internal operations and about the external environment to make decisions controlling growth, movement, and differentiation”, have implications for the teleological argument. Shapiro states that these “[natural genetic engineering](#)” systems, can produce radical reorganizations of the “genetic apparatus within a single cell generation”.<sup>[101]</sup> Shapiro suggests what he calls a ‘Third Way’; a non-creationist, non-Darwinian type of evolution:

What significance does an emerging interface between biology and information science hold for thinking about evolution? It opens up the possibility of addressing scientifically rather than ideologically the central issue so hotly contested by fundamentalists on both sides of the Creationist-Darwinist debate: Is there any guiding intelligence at work in the origin of species displaying exquisite adaptations ...”<sup>[101]</sup>

In his book, *Evolution: A View from the 21st Century*, Shapiro refers to this concept of “natural genetic engineering”, which he says, has proved troublesome, because many scientists feel that it supports the intelligent design argument. He suggests that “function-oriented capacities [can] be attributed to cells”, even though this is “the kind of teleological thinking that scientists have been taught to avoid at all costs.”<sup>[102]</sup>

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# TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (CRITICISMS)

## Classical

The original development of the argument from design was in reaction to atomistic, explicitly non-teleological, understandings of nature. Socrates, as reported by Plato and Xenophon, was reacting to such natural philosophers. While less has survived from the debates of the Hellenistic and Roman eras, it is clear from sources such as Cicero and Lucretius, that debate continued for generations, and several of the striking metaphors used to still today such as the unseen watchmaker, and the infinite monkey theorem, have their roots in this period. While the Stoics became the most well-known proponents of the argument from design, the atomistic counter arguments were refined most famously by the Epicureans. On the one hand they criticized the evidence for there being evidence of an intelligent design to nature, and the logic of the Stoics. On the defensive side, they were faced with the challenge of explaining how un-directed chance can cause something which appears to be a rational order. Much this defence revolved around arguments such as the infinite monkey metaphor. Democritus, had already apparently used such arguments in the time of Socrates, saying that there will be infinite planets, and only some having an order like the planet we know. But the Epicureans refined this argument, by proposing that the actual number of types of atoms in nature is small, not infinite, making it less coincidental that after a long period of time, certain orderly outcomes will result.<sup>[13]</sup>

These were not the only positions held in classical times. A more complex position also continued to be held by some schools, such as the Neoplatonists, who, like Plato and Aristotle, insisted that Nature did indeed have a rational order, but were concerned about how to describe the way in which this rational order is caused. According to Plotinus for example, Plato's metaphor of a craftsman should be seen only as a metaphor, and Plato should be understood as agreeing with Aristotle that the rational order in nature works through a form of causation unlike everyday causation. In fact, according to this proposal each thing already has its own nature, fitting into a rational order, whereby the thing itself is "in need of, and directed towards, what is higher or better".<sup>[103]</sup>

## David Hume

David Hume outlined his criticisms of the teleological argument in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*.

Louis Loeb writes that David Hume, in his *Enquiry*, "insists that inductive inference cannot justify belief in extended objects." Loeb also quotes Hume as writing:

It is only when two species of objects are found to be constantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other . . . If experience and observation and analogy be, indeed, the only guides which we can reasonably follow in inference of this nature; both the effect and cause must bear a similarity and resemblance to other effects and causes . . . which we have found, in many instances, to be conjoined with another . . . [The proponents of the argument] always suppose the universe, an effect quite singular and unparalleled, to be the proof of a Deity, a cause no less singular and unparalleled.

Loeb notes that "we observe neither God nor other universes, and hence no conjunction involving them. There is no observed conjunction to ground an inference either to extended objects or to God, as unobserved causes."<sup>[104]</sup>

Hume also presented a criticism of the argument in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The character *Philo*, a religious sceptic, voices Hume's criticisms of the argument. He argues that the design argument is built upon a faulty analogy as, unlike with man-made objects, we have not witnessed the design of a universe, so do not know whether the universe was the result of design. Moreover, the size of the universe makes the analogy problematic: although our experience of the universe is of order, there may be chaos in other parts of the universe.<sup>[105]</sup> Philo argues:

A very small part of this great system, during a very short time, is very imperfectly discovered to us; and do we thence pronounce decisively concerning the origin of the whole?

— David Hume, *Dialogues 2*<sup>[105]</sup>

Philo also proposes that the order in nature may be due to nature alone. If nature contains a principle of order within it, the need for a designer is removed. Philo argues that even if the universe is indeed designed, it is unreasonable to justify the conclusion that the designer must be an omnipotent, omniscient, benevolent God – the God of classical theism.<sup>[105]</sup> It is impossible, he argues, to infer the perfect nature of a creator from the nature of its creation. Philo argues that the designer may have been defective or otherwise imperfect, suggesting that the universe may have been a poor first attempt at design.<sup>[106]</sup> Hume also pointed out that the argument does not necessarily lead to the existence of one God: “why may not several deities combine in contriving and framing the world?” (p. 108).<sup>[67]</sup>

[Wesley C. Salmon](#) developed Hume’s insights, arguing that all things in the universe which exhibit order are, to our knowledge, created by material, imperfect, finite beings or forces. He also argued that there are no known instances of an immaterial, perfect, infinite being creating anything. Using the probability calculus of [Bayes Theorem](#), Salmon concludes that it is very improbable that the universe was created by the type of intelligent being theists argue for.<sup>[107]</sup>

[Nancy Cartwright](#) accuses Salmon of [begging the question](#). One piece of evidence he uses in his probabilistic argument – that atoms and molecules are not caused by design – is equivalent to the conclusion he draws, that the universe is probably not caused by design. The atoms and molecules are what the universe is made up of and whose origins are at issue. Therefore, they cannot be used as evidence against the theistic conclusion.<sup>[108]</sup>

## Immanuel Kant

Referring to it as the physico-theological proof, [Immanuel Kant](#) discussed the teleological argument in his [Critique of Pure Reason](#). Even though he referred to it as “the oldest, clearest and most appropriate to human reason”, he nevertheless rejected it, heading section VI with the words, “On the impossibility of a physico-theological proof”.<sup>[109][110]</sup> In accepting some of Hume’s criticisms, Kant wrote that the argument “proves at most intelligence only in the arrangement of the ‘matter’ of the universe, and hence the existence not of a ‘Supreme Being’, but of an ‘Architect’.” Using the argument to try to prove the existence of God required “a concealed appeal to the [Ontological argument](#).”<sup>[111]</sup>

## Does not prove the existence of God

[Voltaire](#) argued that, at best, the teleological argument could only indicate the existence of a powerful, but not necessarily all-powerful or all-knowing, intelligence.

In his *Traité de métaphysique* [Voltaire](#) observed that, even if the argument from design could prove the existence of a powerful intelligent designer, it would not prove that this designer is God.<sup>[112]</sup>

... from this sole argument I cannot conclude anything further than that it is probable that an intelligent and superior being has skillfully prepared and fashioned the matter. I cannot conclude from that alone that this being has made matter out of nothing and that he is infinite in every sense.

— [Voltaire](#), *Traité de métaphysique*<sup>[112]</sup>

[Søren Kierkegaard](#) questioned the existence of God, rejecting all rational arguments for God’s existence (including the teleological argument) on the grounds that reason is inevitably accompanied by doubt.<sup>[113]</sup> He proposed that the argument from design does not take into consideration future events which may serve to undermine the proof of God’s existence: the argument would never finish proving God’s existence.<sup>[114]</sup> In the *Philosophical Fragments*, Kierkegaard writes:

The works of God are such that only God can perform them. Just so, but where then are the works of the God? The works from which I would deduce his existence are not directly and immediately given. The wisdom in nature, the goodness, the wisdom in the governance of the world — are all these manifest, perhaps, upon the very face of things? Are we not here confronted with the most terrible

temptations to doubt, and is it not impossible finally to dispose of all these doubts? But from such an order of things I will surely not attempt to prove God's existence; and even if I began I would never finish, and would in addition have to live constantly in suspense, lest something so terrible should suddenly happen that my bit of proof would be demolished.

— Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*<sup>[114]</sup>

## Argument from improbability

Richard Dawkins is harshly critical of theology, creationism and intelligent design in his book *The God Delusion*. In this book, he contends that an appeal to intelligent design can provide no explanation for biology because it not only [begs the question](#) of the designer's own origin but raises additional questions: an intelligent designer must itself be far more complex and difficult to explain than anything it is capable of designing.<sup>[115]</sup> He believes the chances of life arising on a planet like the Earth are many orders of magnitude less probable than most people would think, but the [anthropic principle](#) effectively counters skepticism with regard to improbability. For example, Fred Hoyle suggested that potential for life on Earth was no more probable than a Boeing 747 being assembled by a hurricane from the scrapyard. Dawkins argues that a one-time event is indeed subject to improbability but once under way, natural selection itself is nothing like random chance. Furthermore, he refers to his counter argument to the argument from improbability by that same name:<sup>[115]</sup>

The argument from improbability is the big one. In the traditional guise of the argument from design, it is easily today's most popular argument offered in favour of the existence of God and it is seen, by an amazingly large number of theists, as completely and utterly convincing. It is indeed a very strong and, I suspect, unanswerable argument—but in precisely the opposite direction from the theist's intention. The argument from improbability, properly deployed, comes close to proving that God does *not* exist. My name for the statistical demonstration that God almost certainly does not exist is the Ultimate Boeing 747 gambit.

The creationist misappropriation of the argument from improbability always takes the same general form, and it doesn't make any difference... [if called] 'intelligent design' (ID). Some observed phenomenon—often a living creature or one of its more complex organs, but it could be anything from a molecule up to the universe itself—is correctly extolled as statistically improbable. Sometimes the language of information theory is used: the Darwinian is challenged to explain the source all the information in living matter, in the technical sense of information content as a measure of improbability or 'surprise value'... However statistically improbable the entity you seek to explain by invoking a designer, the designer himself has got to be at least as improbable. God is the Ultimate Boeing 747.

...The whole argument turns on the familiar question 'Who made God?'... A designer God cannot be used to explain organized complexity because any God capable of designing anything would have to be complex enough to demand the same kind of explanation in his own right. God presents an infinite regress from which he cannot help us to escape. This argument... demonstrates that God, though not technically disprovable, is very very improbable indeed.<sup>[115]</sup>

— Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*

Dawkins considered the argument from improbability to be "much more powerful" than the teleological argument, or argument from design, although he sometimes implies the terms are used interchangeably. He paraphrases St. Thomas' teleological argument as follows: "Things in the world, especially living things, look as though they have been designed. Nothing that we know looks designed unless it is designed. Therefore there must have been a designer, and we call him God." <sup>[115]</sup>

Philosopher Edward Feser has accused Dawkins of misunderstanding the teleological argument, particularly Aquinas' version.<sup>[116][117]</sup>

## A flawed argument

George H. Smith, in his book *Atheism: The Case Against God*, points out what he considers to be a flaw in the argument from design:

Now consider the idea that nature itself is the product of design. How could this be demonstrated? Nature... provides the basis of comparison by which we distinguish between designed objects and natural objects. We are able to infer the presence of design only to the extent that the characteristics of an object differ from natural characteristics. Therefore, to claim that nature as a whole was designed is to destroy the basis by which we differentiate between artifacts and natural objects.<sup>[118]</sup>

## Perception of purpose in biology

The [philosopher of biology Michael Ruse](#) has argued that Darwin treated the structure of organisms as if they had a purpose: “the organism-as-if-it-were-designed-by God picture was absolutely central to Darwin’s thinking in 1862, as it always had been.”<sup>[119]</sup> He refers to this as “the metaphor of design ... Organisms give the appearance of being designed, and thanks to Charles Darwin’s discovery of natural selection we know why this is true.” In his review of Ruse’s book, R.J. Richards writes, “Biologists quite routinely refer to the design of organisms and their traits, but properly speaking it’s *apparent* design to which they refer – an “as if” design.”<sup>[120]</sup> [Robert Foley](#) refers to this as “the illusion of purpose, design, and progress.” He adds, “there is no purpose in a fundamentally causative manner in evolution but that the processes of selection and adaptation give the illusion of purpose through the utter functionality and designed nature of the biological world.”<sup>[121]</sup>

Richard Dawkins suggests that while biology can at first seem to be purposeful and ordered, upon closer inspection its true function becomes questionable. Dawkins rejects the claim that biology serves any designed function, claiming rather that biology only mimics such purpose. In his book *The Blind Watchmaker*, Dawkins states that animals are the most complex things in the known universe: “Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose.” He argues that natural selection should suffice as an explanation of biological complexity without recourse to divine provenance.<sup>[122]</sup>

However, theologian [Alister McGrath](#) has pointed out that the fine-tuning of carbon is even responsible for nature’s ability to tune itself to any degree.

[The entire biological] evolutionary process depends upon the unusual chemistry of carbon, which allows it to bond to itself, as well as other elements, creating highly complex molecules that are stable over prevailing terrestrial temperatures, and are capable of conveying genetic information (especially DNA). [...] Whereas it might be argued that nature creates its own fine-tuning, this can only be done if the primordial constituents of the universe are such that an evolutionary process can be initiated. The unique chemistry of carbon is the ultimate foundation of the capacity of nature to tune itself.<sup>[90][123]</sup>

Proponents of [intelligent design](#) creationism, such as [William A. Dembski](#) question the philosophical assumptions made by critics with regard to what a designer would or would not do. Dembski claims that such arguments are not merely beyond the purview of science: often they are tacitly or overtly theological while failing to provide a serious analysis of the hypothetical objective’s relative merit. Some critics, such as [Stephen Jay Gould](#) suggest that any purported ‘cosmic’ designer would only produce optimal designs, while there are numerous biological criticisms to demonstrate that such an ideal is manifestly untenable. Against these ideas, Dembski characterizes both Dawkins’ and Gould’s argument as a rhetorical [straw man](#).<sup>[124]</sup> He suggests a principle of [constrained optimization](#) more realistically describes the best any designer could hope to achieve:

Not knowing the objectives of the designer, Gould was in no position to say whether the designer proposed a faulty compromise among those objectives... In criticizing design, biologists tend to place a premium on functionalities of individual organisms and see design as optimal to the degree that those individual functionalities are maximized. But higher-order designs of entire ecosystems might require lower-order designs of individual organisms to fall short of maximal function.<sup>[124]</sup>  
— [William A. Dembski](#), *The Design Revolution: Answering the Toughest Questions About Intelligent Design*

## Other criticisms

The teleological argument assumes that one can infer the existence of intelligent design merely by examination, and because life is reminiscent of something a human might design, it too must have been designed. However,

considering “snowflakes and crystals of certain salts”, “[i]n no case do we find intelligence”. “There are other ways that order and design can come about” such as by “purely physical forces”. [125]

The design claim can be challenged as an [argument from analogy](#). Supporters of design suggest that natural objects and man-made objects have many similar properties, and man-made objects have a designer. Therefore, it is probable that natural objects must be designed as well. However, proponents must demonstrate that all the available evidence has been taken into account. [126] Eric Rust argues that, when speaking of familiar objects such as watches, “we have a basis to make an inference from such an object to its designer”. However, the “universe is a unique and isolated case” and we have nothing to compare it with, so “we have no basis for making an inference such as we can with individual objects. ... We have no basis for applying to the whole universe what may hold of constituent elements in the universe.” [127]

Most professional biologists [support](#) the [modern evolutionary synthesis](#), not merely as an alternative explanation for the complexity of life but a better explanation with more supporting evidence. [128] Living organisms obey the same physical laws as inanimate objects. Over [very long periods of time](#) self-replicating structures arose and later formed [DNA](#). [129]

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## ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF GOD (OVERVIEW)

Each of the arguments below aims to show that a particular set of gods does not exist—by demonstrating them to be inherently meaningless, [contradictory](#), or at odds with known [scientific](#) or [historical](#) facts—or that there is insufficient proof to say that they do exist.

### Empirical arguments

Empirical arguments depend on knowledge acquired by means of observation or experimentation to prove their conclusions.

- The [argument from inconsistent revelations](#) contests the existence of the deity called God as described in [scriptures](#)—such as the Hindu [Vedas](#), the Jewish [Tanakh](#), the Christian [Bible](#), the [Muslim](#) Qur’an, the Book of Mormon or the [Baha’i Aqdas](#)—by identifying apparent contradictions between different scriptures, within a single scripture, or between scripture and known facts.
- The [problem of evil](#) contests the existence of a god who is both omnipotent and [omnibenevolent](#) by arguing that such a god should not permit the existence of [evil](#) or [suffering](#). The theist responses are called [theodicies](#).
- The [destiny of the unevangelized](#), by which persons who have never even heard of a particular revelation might be harshly punished for not following its dictates.
- The [argument from poor design](#) contests the idea that God created life on the basis that lifeforms, including humans, seem to exhibit poor design.
- The [argument from nonbelief](#) contests the existence of an omnipotent God who wants humans to believe in him by arguing that such a god would do a better job of gathering believers.
- The argument from [parsimony](#) (using [Occam’s razor](#)) contends that since natural (non-supernatural) theories adequately explain the [development of religion](#) and belief in gods, [53] the actual existence of such supernatural agents is superfluous and may be dismissed unless otherwise proven to be required to explain the phenomenon.
- The analogy of [Russell’s teapot](#) argues that the [burden of proof](#) for the existence of God lies with the theist rather than the atheist. The Russell’s teapot analogy can be considered an extension of Occam’s Razor.

- Stephen Hawking and co-author Leonard Mlodinow state in their book *The Grand Design* that it is reasonable to ask who or what created the universe, but if the answer is God, then the question has merely been deflected to that of who created God. Both authors claim that it is possible to answer these questions purely within the realm of science, and without invoking any divine beings.<sup>[54]</sup> Some Christian philosophers disagree.<sup>[55]</sup>

## Deductive arguments

Deductive arguments attempt to prove their conclusions by deductive reasoning from true premises.

- The [Ultimate Boeing 747 gambit](#) is a counter-argument to the [argument from design](#). The argument from design claims that a complex or ordered structure must be designed. However, a god that is responsible for the creation of a universe would be at least as complicated as the universe that it creates. Therefore, it too must require a designer. And its designer would require a designer also, [ad infinitum](#). The argument for the existence of God is then a logical fallacy with or without the use of [special pleading](#). The Ultimate 747 gambit states that God does not provide an origin of complexity, it simply assumes that complexity always existed. It also states that design fails to account for complexity, which [natural selection](#) can explain.
- The [omnipotence paradox](#) suggests that the concept of an [omnipotent](#) entity is logically contradictory, from considering a question like: “Can God create a rock so big that He cannot move it?” or “If God is all powerful, could God create a being more powerful than Himself?”
- The omniscience paradox contests further problems between omnipotence and omniscience, such as a lack of ability to create something unknown to God.
- The [problem of hell](#) is the idea that eternal damnation for actions committed in a finite existence contradicts God’s omnibenevolence or [omnipresence](#).
- The [argument from free will](#) contests the existence of an omniscient god who has [free will](#)—or has allotted the same freedom to his creations—by arguing that the two properties are contradictory. According to the argument, if God already knows the future, then humanity is destined to corroborate with his knowledge of the future and not have true free will to deviate from it. Therefore, our free will contradicts an omniscient god. Another argument attacks the existence of an [omniscient](#) god who has free will directly in arguing that the will of God himself would be bound to follow whatever God foreknows himself doing throughout eternity.
- A counter-argument against the Cosmological argument (“chicken or the egg”) takes its assumption that things cannot exist without creators and applies it to God, setting up an infinite regress. This attacks the premise that the universe is the second cause (after God, who is claimed to be the first cause).
- Theological noncognitivism, as used in literature, usually seeks to disprove the god-concept by showing that it is unverifiable by scientific tests.
- The anthropic argument states that if God is omniscient, omnipotent, and morally perfect, He would have created other morally perfect beings instead of imperfect humans.

## Inductive arguments

Inductive arguments argue their conclusions through inductive reasoning.

- The [atheist-existential](#) argument for the [non-existence](#) of a perfect sentient being states that if [existence precedes essence](#), it [follows from](#) the meaning of the term *sentient* that a sentient being cannot be complete or perfect. It is touched upon by [Jean-Paul Sartre](#) in *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre’s phrasing is that God would be a *pour-soi* [a being-for-itself; a consciousness] who is also an *en-soi* [a being-in-itself; a thing]: which is a contradiction in terms. The argument is echoed thus in [Salman Rushdie](#)’s novel *Grimus*: “That which is complete is also dead.”
- The “no reason” argument tries to show that an omnipotent and omniscient being would not have any reason to act in any way, specifically by creating the universe, because it would have no needs, wants, or desires since these very concepts are subjectively human. Since the universe exists, there is a contradiction, and therefore, an omnipotent god cannot exist. This argument is expounded upon by [Scott Adams](#) in the book *God’s Debris*, which puts forward a form of [Pandeism](#) as its fundamental theological model. A similar argument is put forward in [Ludwig von Mises](#)’s “Human Action”. He referred to it as the “praxeological argument” and claimed that a perfect being would have long ago satisfied all its wants and desires and would no longer be able to take action in the present without proving that it had been unable to achieve its wants faster—showing it imperfect.

- The “historical induction” argument concludes that since most theistic religions throughout history (e.g. [ancient Egyptian religion](#), [ancient Greek religion](#)) and their gods ultimately come to be regarded as untrue or incorrect, all theistic religions, including contemporary ones, are therefore most likely untrue/incorrect by induction. It is implied as part of Stephen F. Roberts’ popular quotation:

I contend that we are both atheists. I just believe in one fewer god than you do. When you understand why you dismiss all the other possible gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours.

## Subjective arguments

See also: [Anecdotal evidence](#)

Similar to the [subjective](#) arguments for the existence of God, subjective arguments against the supernatural mainly rely on the testimony or experience of witnesses, or the propositions of a revealed religion in general.

- The witness argument gives credibility to personal witnesses, contemporary and from the past, who disbelieve or strongly doubt the existence of God.
- The conflicted religions argument notes that many religions give differing accounts as to what God is and what God wants; since all the contradictory accounts cannot be correct, many if not all religions must be incorrect.
- The disappointment argument claims that if, when asked for, there is no visible help from God, there is no reason to believe that there is a God.

## Hindu arguments

[Atheistic Hindu doctrines](#) cite various arguments for rejecting a creator God or *Ishvara*. The [Sāṃkhya](#) *Sūtra* of the [Samkhya](#) school states that there is no philosophical place for a creator God in this system. It is also argued in this text that the existence of Ishvara (God) cannot be proved and hence cannot be admitted to exist.<sup>[56]</sup> Classical Samkhya argues against the existence of God on metaphysical grounds. For instance, it argues that an unchanging God cannot be the source of an ever-changing world. It says God is a necessary metaphysical assumption demanded by circumstances.<sup>[57]</sup> The Sutras of Samkhya endeavor to prove that the idea of God is inconceivable and self-contradictory, and some<sup>[which?]</sup> commentaries speak plainly on this subject. The *Sankhya-tattva-kaumudi*, commenting on Karika 57, argues that a perfect God can have no need to create a world, and if God’s motive is kindness, Samkhya questions whether it is reasonable to call into existence beings who while non-existent had no suffering. Samkhya postulates that a benevolent deity ought to create only happy creatures, not an imperfect world like the real world.<sup>[58]</sup>

Proponents of the school of [Mimamsa](#), which is based on [rituals](#) and [orthopraxy](#), decided that the evidence allegedly proving the existence of God is insufficient. They argue that there is no need to postulate a maker for the world, just as there is no need for an author to compose the Vedas or a god to validate the rituals.<sup>[59]</sup> Mimamsa argues that the gods named in the Vedas have no existence apart from the [mantras](#) that speak their names. In that regard, the power of the mantras is what is seen as the power of gods.<sup>[60]</sup>

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# DAVID HUME: DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION (PARTS 4-6)

## PART 4

It seems strange to me, said CLEANTHES, that you, DEMEA, who are so sincere in the cause of religion, should still maintain the mysterious, incomprehensible nature of the Deity, and should insist so strenuously that he has no manner of likeness or resemblance to human creatures. The Deity, I can readily allow, possesses many powers and attributes of which we can have no comprehension: But if our ideas, so far as they go, be not just, and adequate, and correspondent to his real nature, I know not what there is in this subject worth insisting on. Is the name, without any meaning, of such mighty importance? Or how do you mystics, who maintain the absolute incomprehensibility of the Deity, differ from Sceptics or Atheists, who assert, that the first cause of all is unknown and unintelligible? Their temerity must be very great, if, after rejecting the production by a mind, I mean a mind resembling the human, (for I know of no other,) they pretend to assign, with certainty, any other specific intelligible cause: And their conscience must be very scrupulous indeed, if they refuse to call the universal unknown cause a God or Deity; and to bestow on him as many sublime eulogies and unmeaning epithets as you shall please to require of them.

Who could imagine, replied DEMEA, that CLEANTHES, the calm philosophical CLEANTHES, would attempt to refute his antagonists by affixing a nickname to them; and, like the common bigots and inquisitors of the age, have recourse to invective and declamation, instead of reasoning? Or does he not perceive, that these topics are easily retorted, and that Anthropomorphite is an appellation as invidious, and implies as dangerous consequences, as the epithet of Mystic, with which he has honoured us? In reality, CLEANTHES, consider what it is you assert when you represent the Deity as similar to a human mind and understanding. What is the soul of man? A composition of various faculties, passions, sentiments, ideas; united, indeed, into one self or person, but still distinct from each other. When it reasons, the ideas, which are the parts of its discourse, arrange themselves in a certain form or order; which is not preserved entire for a moment, but immediately gives place to another arrangement. New opinions, new passions, new affections, new feelings arise, which continually diversify the mental scene, and produce in it the greatest variety and most rapid succession imaginable. How is this compatible with that perfect immutability and simplicity which all true Theists ascribe to the Deity? By the same act, say they, he sees past, present, and future: His love and hatred, his mercy and justice, are one individual operation: He is entire in every point of space; and complete in every instant of duration. No succession, no change, no acquisition, no diminution. What he is implies not in it any shadow of distinction or diversity. And what he is this moment he ever has been, and ever will be, without any new judgement, sentiment, or operation. He stands fixed in one simple, perfect state: nor can you ever say, with any propriety, that this act of his is different from that other; or that this judgement or idea has been lately formed, and will give place, by succession, to any different judgement or idea.

I can readily allow, said CLEANTHES, that those who maintain the perfect simplicity of the Supreme Being, to the extent in which you have explained it, are complete Mystics, and chargeable with all the consequences which I have drawn from their opinion. They are, in a word, Atheists, without knowing it. For though it be allowed, that the Deity possesses attributes of which we have no comprehension, yet ought we never to ascribe to him any attributes which are absolutely incompatible with that intelligent nature essential to him. A mind, whose acts and sentiments and ideas are not distinct and successive; one, that is wholly simple, and totally immutable, is a mind which has no thought, no reason, no will, no sentiment, no love, no hatred; or, in a word, is no mind at all. It is an abuse of terms to give it that appellation; and we may as well speak of limited extension without figure, or of number without composition.

Pray consider, said PHILO, whom you are at present inveighing against. You are honouring with the appellation of Atheist all the sound, orthodox divines, almost, who have treated of this subject; and you will at last be, yourself, found, according to your reckoning, the only sound Theist in the world. But if idolaters be Atheists, as, I think, may justly be asserted, and Christian Theologians the same, what becomes of the argument, so much celebrated, derived from the universal consent of mankind?

But because I know you are not much swayed by names and authorities, I shall endeavour to show you, a little more distinctly, the inconveniences of that Anthropomorphism, which you have embraced; and shall prove, that there is no ground to suppose a plan of the world to be formed in the Divine mind, consisting of distinct ideas, differently arranged, in the same manner as an architect forms in his head the plan of a house which he intends to execute.

It is not easy, I own, to see what is gained by this supposition, whether we judge of the matter by Reason or by Experience. We are still obliged to mount higher, in order to find the cause of this cause, which you had assigned as satisfactory and conclusive.

If Reason (I mean abstract reason, derived from inquiries a priori) be not alike mute with regard to all questions concerning cause and effect, this sentence at least it will venture to pronounce, That a mental world, or universe of ideas, requires a cause as much, as does a material world, or universe of objects; and, if similar in its arrangement, must require a similar cause. For what is there in this subject, which should occasion a different conclusion or inference? In an abstract view, they are entirely alike; and no difficulty attends the one supposition, which is not common to both of them.

Again, when we will needs force Experience to pronounce some sentence, even on these subjects which lie beyond her sphere, neither can she perceive any material difference in this particular, between these two kinds of worlds; but finds them to be governed by similar principles, and to depend upon an equal variety of causes in their operations. We have specimens in miniature of both of them. Our own mind resembles the one; a vegetable or animal body the other. Let experience, therefore, judge from these samples. Nothing seems more delicate, with regard to its causes, than thought; and as these causes never operate in two persons after the same manner, so we never find two persons who think exactly alike. Nor indeed does the same person think exactly alike at any two different periods of time. A difference of age, of the disposition of his body, of weather, of food, of company, of books, of passions; any of these particulars, or others more minute, are sufficient to alter the curious machinery of thought, and communicate to it very different movements and operations. As far as we can judge, vegetables and animal bodies are not more delicate in their motions, nor depend upon a greater variety or more curious adjustment of springs and principles.

How, therefore, shall we satisfy ourselves concerning the cause of that Being whom you suppose the Author of Nature, or, according to your system of Anthropomorphism, the ideal world, into which you trace the material? Have we not the same reason to trace that ideal world into another ideal world, or new intelligent principle? But if we stop, and go no further; why go so far? why not stop at the material world? How can we satisfy ourselves without going on in infinitum? And, after all, what satisfaction is there in that infinite progression? Let us remember the story of the Indian philosopher and his elephant. It was never more applicable than to the present subject. If the material world rests upon a similar ideal world, this ideal world must rest upon some other; and so on, without end. It were better, therefore, never to look beyond the present material world. By supposing it to contain the principle of its order within itself, we really assert it to be God; and the sooner we arrive at that Divine Being, so much the better. When you go one step beyond the mundane system, you only excite an inquisitive humour which it is impossible ever to satisfy.

To say, that the different ideas which compose the reason of the Supreme Being, fall into order of themselves, and by their own nature, is really to talk without any precise meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know, why it is not as good sense to say, that the parts of the material world fall into order of themselves and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible, while the other is not so?

We have, indeed, experience of ideas which fall into order of themselves, and without any known cause. But, I am sure, we have a much larger experience of matter which does the same; as, in all instances of generation and vegetation, where the accurate analysis of the cause exceeds all human comprehension. We have also experience of particular systems of thought and of matter which have no order; of the first in madness, of the second in corruption. Why, then, should we think, that order is more essential to one than the other? And if it requires a cause in both, what do we gain by your system, in tracing the universe of objects into a similar universe of ideas? The first step which we make leads us on for ever. It were, therefore, wise in us to limit all our inquiries to the present world, without looking further. No satisfaction can ever be attained by these speculations, which so far exceed the narrow bounds of human understanding.

It was usual with the PERIPATETICS, you know, CLEANTHES, when the cause of any phenomenon was demanded, to have recourse to their faculties or occult qualities; and to say, for instance, that bread nourished by its nutritive faculty, and senna purged by its purgative. But it has been discovered, that this subterfuge was nothing but the disguise of ignorance; and that these philosophers, though less ingenuous, really said the same

thing with the sceptics or the vulgar, who fairly confessed that they knew not the cause of these phenomena. In like manner, when it is asked, what cause produces order in the ideas of the Supreme Being; can any other reason be assigned by you, Anthropomorphites, than that it is a rational faculty, and that such is the nature of the Deity? But why a similar answer will not be equally satisfactory in accounting for the order of the world, without having recourse to any such intelligent creator as you insist on, may be difficult to determine. It is only to say, that such is the nature of material objects, and that they are all originally possessed of a faculty of order and proportion. These are only more learned and elaborate ways of confessing our ignorance; nor has the one hypothesis any real advantage above the other, except in its greater conformity to vulgar prejudices.

You have displayed this argument with great emphasis, replied CLEANTHES: You seem not sensible how easy it is to answer it. Even in common life, if I assign a cause for any event, is it any objection, PHILO, that I cannot assign the cause of that cause, and answer every new question which may incessantly be started? And what philosophers could possibly submit to so rigid a rule? philosophers, who confess ultimate causes to be totally unknown; and are sensible, that the most refined principles into which they trace the phenomena, are still to them as inexplicable as these phenomena themselves are to the vulgar. The order and arrangement of nature, the curious adjustment of final causes, the plain use and intention of every part and organ; all these bespeak in the clearest language an intelligent cause or author. The heavens and the earth join in the same testimony: The whole chorus of Nature raises one hymn to the praises of its Creator. You alone, or almost alone, disturb this general harmony. You start abstruse doubts, cavils, and objections: You ask me, what is the cause of this cause? I know not; I care not; that concerns not me. I have found a Deity; and here I stop my inquiry. Let those go further, who are wiser or more enterprising.

I pretend to be neither, replied PHILO: And for that very reason, I should never perhaps have attempted to go so far; especially when I am sensible, that I must at last be contented to sit down with the same answer, which, without further trouble, might have satisfied me from the beginning. If I am still to remain in utter ignorance of causes, and can absolutely give an explication of nothing, I shall never esteem it any advantage to shove off for a moment a difficulty, which, you acknowledge, must immediately, in its full force, recur upon me. Naturalists indeed very justly explain particular effects by more general causes, though these general causes themselves should remain in the end totally inexplicable; but they never surely thought it satisfactory to explain a particular effect by a particular cause, which was no more to be accounted for than the effect itself. An ideal system, arranged of itself, without a precedent design, is not a whit more explicable than a material one, which attains its order in a like manner; nor is there any more difficulty in the latter supposition than in the former.

## PART 5

But to show you still more inconveniences, continued PHILO, in your Anthropomorphism, please to take a new survey of your principles. Like effects prove like causes. This is the experimental argument; and this, you say too, is the sole theological argument. Now, it is certain, that the liker the effects are which are seen, and the liker the causes which are inferred, the stronger is the argument. Every departure on either side diminishes the probability, and renders the experiment less conclusive. You cannot doubt of the principle; neither ought you to reject its consequences.

All the new discoveries in astronomy, which prove the immense grandeur and magnificence of the works of Nature, are so many additional arguments for a Deity, according to the true system of Theism; but, according to your hypothesis of experimental Theism, they become so many objections, by removing the effect still further from all resemblance to the effects of human art and contrivance. For, if LUCRETIVS [Lib. II. 1094], even following the old system of the world, could exclaim,

Quis regere immensi summam, quis habere profundi  
Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas?  
Quis pariter coelos omnes convertere? et omnes  
Ignibus aetheriis terras suffire feraces?  
Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore praesto?

If TULLY [De. nat. Deor. Lib. I] esteemed this reasoning so natural, as to put it into the mouth of his EPICUREAN:

“Quibus enim oculis animi intueri potuit vester Plato fabricam illam tanti operis, qua construi a Deo atque aedificari mundum facit? quae molitio? quae ferramenta? qui vectes? quae machinae? qui ministri tanti muneris fuerunt? quemadmodum autem obedire et parere voluntati architecti aer, ignis, aqua, terra potuerunt?”

If this argument, I say, had any force in former ages, how much greater must it have at present, when the bounds of Nature are so infinitely enlarged, and such a magnificent scene is opened to us? It is still more unreasonable to form our idea of so unlimited a cause from our experience of the narrow productions of human design and invention.

The discoveries by microscopes, as they open a new universe in miniature, are still objections, according to you, arguments, according to me. The further we push our researches of this kind, we are still led to infer the universal cause of all to be vastly different from mankind, or from any object of human experience and observation.

And what say you to the discoveries in anatomy, chemistry, botany?... These surely are no objections, replied CLEANTHES; they only discover new instances of art and contrivance. It is still the image of mind reflected on us from innumerable objects. Add, a mind like the human, said PHILO. I know of no other, replied CLEANTHES. And the liker the better, insisted PHILO. To be sure, said CLEANTHES.

Now, CLEANTHES, said PHILO, with an air of alacrity and triumph, mark the consequences. First, By this method of reasoning, you renounce all claim to infinity in any of the attributes of the Deity. For, as the cause ought only to be proportioned to the effect, and the effect, so far as it falls under our cognisance, is not infinite; what pretensions have we, upon your suppositions, to ascribe that attribute to the Divine Being? You will still insist, that, by removing him so much from all similarity to human creatures, we give in to the most arbitrary hypothesis, and at the same time weaken all proofs of his existence.

Secondly, You have no reason, on your theory, for ascribing perfection to the Deity, even in his finite capacity, or for supposing him free from every error, mistake, or incoherence, in his undertakings. There are many inexplicable difficulties in the works of Nature, which, if we allow a perfect author to be proved a priori, are easily solved, and become only seeming difficulties, from the narrow capacity of man, who cannot trace infinite relations. But according to your method of reasoning, these difficulties become all real; and perhaps will be insisted on, as new instances of likeness to human art and contrivance. At least, you must acknowledge, that it is impossible for us to tell, from our limited views, whether this system contains any great faults, or deserves any considerable praise, if compared to other possible, and even real systems. Could a peasant, if the Aeneid were read to him, pronounce that poem to be absolutely faultless, or even assign to it its proper rank among the productions of human wit, he, who had never seen any other production?

But were this world ever so perfect a production, it must still remain uncertain, whether all the excellences of the work can justly be ascribed to the workman. If we survey a ship, what an exalted idea must we form of the ingenuity of the carpenter who framed so complicated, useful, and beautiful a machine? And what surprise must we feel, when we find him a stupid mechanic, who imitated others, and copied an art, which, through a long succession of ages, after multiplied trials, mistakes, corrections, deliberations, and controversies, had been gradually improving? Many worlds might have been botched and bungled, throughout an eternity, ere this system was struck out; much labour lost, many fruitless trials made; and a slow, but continued improvement carried on during infinite ages in the art of world-making. In such subjects, who can determine, where the truth; nay, who can conjecture where the probability lies, amidst a great number of hypotheses which may be proposed, and a still greater which may be imagined?

And what shadow of an argument, continued PHILO, can you produce, from your hypothesis, to prove the unity of the Deity? A great number of men join in building a house or ship, in rearing a city, in framing a commonwealth; why may not several deities combine in contriving and framing a world? This is only so much greater similarity to human affairs. By sharing the work among several, we may so much further limit the attributes of each, and get rid of that extensive power and knowledge, which must be supposed in one deity, and which, according to you, can only serve to weaken the proof of his existence. And if such foolish, such vicious creatures as man, can yet often unite in framing and executing one plan, how much more those deities or demons, whom we may suppose several degrees more perfect!

To multiply causes without necessity, is indeed contrary to true philosophy: but this principle applies not to the present case. Were one deity antecedently proved by your theory, who were possessed of every attribute requisite to the production of the universe; it would be needless, I own, (though not absurd,) to suppose any other deity existent. But while it is still a question, Whether all these attributes are united in one subject, or dispersed among several independent beings, by what phenomena in nature can we pretend to decide the controversy? Where we see a body raised in a scale, we are sure that there is in the opposite scale, however concealed from sight, some counterpoising weight equal to it; but it is still allowed to doubt, whether that weight be an aggregate of several distinct bodies, or one uniform united mass. And if the weight requisite very much exceeds any thing which we have ever seen conjoined in any single body, the former supposition becomes still more probable and

natural. An intelligent being of such vast power and capacity as is necessary to produce the universe, or, to speak in the language of ancient philosophy, so prodigious an animal exceeds all analogy, and even comprehension.

But further, CLEANTHES: men are mortal, and renew their species by generation; and this is common to all living creatures. The two great sexes of male and female, says MILTON, animate the world. Why must this circumstance, so universal, so essential, be excluded from those numerous and limited deities? Behold, then, the theogony of ancient times brought back upon us.

And why not become a perfect Anthropomorphite? Why not assert the deity or deities to be corporeal, and to have eyes, a nose, mouth, ears, &c.? EPICURUS maintained, that no man had ever seen reason but in a human figure; therefore the gods must have a human figure. And this argument, which is deservedly so much ridiculed by CICERO, becomes, according to you, solid and philosophical.

In a word, CLEANTHES, a man who follows your hypothesis is able perhaps to assert, or conjecture, that the universe, sometime, arose from something like design: but beyond that position he cannot ascertain one single circumstance; and is left afterwards to fix every point of his theology by the utmost license of fancy and hypothesis. This world, for aught he knows, is very faulty and imperfect, compared to a superior standard; and was only the first rude essay of some infant deity, who afterwards abandoned it, ashamed of his lame performance: it is the work only of some dependent, inferior deity; and is the object of derision to his superiors: it is the production of old age and dotage in some superannuated deity; and ever since his death, has run on at adventures, from the first impulse and active force which it received from him. You justly give signs of horror, DEMA, at these strange suppositions; but these, and a thousand more of the same kind, are CLEANTHES's suppositions, not mine. From the moment the attributes of the Deity are supposed finite, all these have place. And I cannot, for my part, think that so wild and unsettled a system of theology is, in any respect, preferable to none at all.

These suppositions I absolutely disown, cried CLEANTHES: they strike me, however, with no horror, especially when proposed in that rambling way in which they drop from you. On the contrary, they give me pleasure, when I see, that, by the utmost indulgence of your imagination, you never get rid of the hypothesis of design in the universe, but are obliged at every turn to have recourse to it. To this concession I adhere steadily; and this I regard as a sufficient foundation for religion.

## PART 6

It must be a slight fabric, indeed, said DEMA, which can be erected on so tottering a foundation. While we are uncertain whether there is one deity or many; whether the deity or deities, to whom we owe our existence, be perfect or imperfect, subordinate or supreme, dead or alive, what trust or confidence can we repose in them? What devotion or worship address to them? What veneration or obedience pay them? To all the purposes of life the theory of religion becomes altogether useless: and even with regard to speculative consequences, its uncertainty, according to you, must render it totally precarious and unsatisfactory.

To render it still more unsatisfactory, said PHILO, there occurs to me another hypothesis, which must acquire an air of probability from the method of reasoning so much insisted on by CLEANTHES. That like effects arise from like causes: this principle he supposes the foundation of all religion. But there is another principle of the same kind, no less certain, and derived from the same source of experience; that where several known circumstances are observed to be similar, the unknown will also be found similar. Thus, if we see the limbs of a human body, we conclude that it is also attended with a human head, though hid from us. Thus, if we see, through a chink in a wall, a small part of the sun, we conclude, that, were the wall removed, we should see the whole body. In short, this method of reasoning is so obvious and familiar, that no scruple can ever be made with regard to its solidity.

Now, if we survey the universe, so far as it falls under our knowledge, it bears a great resemblance to an animal or organised body, and seems actuated with a like principle of life and motion. A continual circulation of matter in it produces no disorder: a continual waste in every part is incessantly repaired: the closest sympathy is perceived throughout the entire system: and each part or member, in performing its proper offices, operates both to its own preservation and to that of the whole. The world, therefore, I infer, is an animal; and the Deity is the SOUL of the world, actuating it, and actuated by it.

You have too much learning, CLEANTHES, to be at all surprised at this opinion, which, you know, was maintained by almost all the Theists of antiquity, and chiefly prevails in their discourses and reasonings. For though, sometimes, the ancient philosophers reason from final causes, as if they thought the world the

workmanship of God; yet it appears rather their favourite notion to consider it as his body, whose organisation renders it subservient to him. And it must be confessed, that, as the universe resembles more a human body than it does the works of human art and contrivance, if our limited analogy could ever, with any propriety, be extended to the whole of nature, the inference seems juster in favour of the ancient than the modern theory.

There are many other advantages, too, in the former theory, which recommended it to the ancient theologians. Nothing more repugnant to all their notions, because nothing more repugnant to common experience, than mind without body; a mere spiritual substance, which fell not under their senses nor comprehension, and of which they had not observed one single instance throughout all nature. Mind and body they knew, because they felt both: an order, arrangement, organisation, or internal machinery, in both, they likewise knew, after the same manner: and it could not but seem reasonable to transfer this experience to the universe; and to suppose the divine mind and body to be also coeval, and to have, both of them, order and arrangement naturally inherent in them, and inseparable from them.

Here, therefore, is a new species of Anthropomorphism, CLEANTHES, on which you may deliberate; and a theory which seems not liable to any considerable difficulties. You are too much superior, surely, to systematical prejudices, to find any more difficulty in supposing an animal body to be, originally, of itself, or from unknown causes, possessed of order and organisation, than in supposing a similar order to belong to mind. But the vulgar prejudice, that body and mind ought always to accompany each other, ought not, one should think, to be entirely neglected; since it is founded on vulgar experience, the only guide which you profess to follow in all these theological inquiries. And if you assert, that our limited experience is an unequal standard, by which to judge of the unlimited extent of nature; you entirely abandon your own hypothesis, and must thenceforward adopt our Mysticism, as you call it, and admit of the absolute incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature.

This theory, I own, replied CLEANTHES, has never before occurred to me, though a pretty natural one; and I cannot readily, upon so short an examination and reflection, deliver any opinion with regard to it. You are very scrupulous, indeed, said PHILO: were I to examine any system of yours, I should not have acted with half that caution and reserve, in starting objections and difficulties to it. However, if any thing occur to you, you will oblige us by proposing it.

Why then, replied CLEANTHES, it seems to me, that, though the world does, in many circumstances, resemble an animal body; yet is the analogy also defective in many circumstances the most material: no organs of sense; no seat of thought or reason; no one precise origin of motion and action. In short, it seems to bear a stronger resemblance to a vegetable than to an animal, and your inference would be so far inconclusive in favour of the soul of the world.

But, in the next place, your theory seems to imply the eternity of the world; and that is a principle, which, I think, can be refuted by the strongest reasons and probabilities. I shall suggest an argument to this purpose, which, I believe, has not been insisted on by any writer. Those, who reason from the late origin of arts and sciences, though their inference wants not force, may perhaps be refuted by considerations derived from the nature of human society, which is in continual revolution, between ignorance and knowledge, liberty and slavery, riches and poverty; so that it is impossible for us, from our limited experience, to foretell with assurance what events may or may not be expected. Ancient learning and history seem to have been in great danger of entirely perishing after the inundation of the barbarous nations; and had these convulsions continued a little longer, or been a little more violent, we should not probably have now known what passed in the world a few centuries before us. Nay, were it not for the superstition of the Popes, who preserved a little jargon of Latin, in order to support the appearance of an ancient and universal church, that tongue must have been utterly lost; in which case, the Western world, being totally barbarous, would not have been in a fit disposition for receiving the GREEK language and learning, which was conveyed to them after the sacking of CONSTANTINOPLE. When learning and books had been extinguished, even the mechanical arts would have fallen considerably to decay; and it is easily imagined, that fable or tradition might ascribe to them a much later origin than the true one. This vulgar argument, therefore, against the eternity of the world, seems a little precarious.

But here appears to be the foundation of a better argument. LUCULLUS was the first that brought cherry-trees from ASIA to EUROPE; though that tree thrives so well in many EUROPEAN climates, that it grows in the woods without any culture. Is it possible, that throughout a whole eternity, no EUROPEAN had ever passed into ASIA, and thought of transplanting so delicious a fruit into his own country? Or if the tree was once transplanted and propagated, how could it ever afterwards perish? Empires may rise and fall, liberty and slavery succeed alternately, ignorance and knowledge give place to each other; but the cherry-tree will still remain in the woods of GREECE, SPAIN, and ITALY, and will never be affected by the revolutions of human society.

It is not two thousand years since vines were transplanted into FRANCE, though there is no climate in the world more favourable to them. It is not three centuries since horses, cows, sheep, swine, dogs, corn, were known in AMERICA. Is it possible, that during the revolutions of a whole eternity, there never arose a COLUMBUS, who might open the communication between EUROPE and that continent? We may as well imagine, that all men would wear stockings for ten thousand years, and never have the sense to think of garters to tie them. All these seem convincing proofs of the youth, or rather infancy, of the world; as being founded on the operation of principles more constant and steady than those by which human society is governed and directed. Nothing less than a total convulsion of the elements will ever destroy all the EUROPEAN animals and vegetables which are now to be found in the Western world.

And what argument have you against such convulsions? replied PHILO. Strong and almost incontestable proofs may be traced over the whole earth, that every part of this globe has continued for many ages entirely covered with water. And though order were supposed inseparable from matter, and inherent in it; yet may matter be susceptible of many and great revolutions, through the endless periods of eternal duration. The incessant changes, to which every part of it is subject, seem to intimate some such general transformations; though, at the same time, it is observable, that all the changes and corruptions of which we have ever had experience, are but passages from one state of order to another; nor can matter ever rest in total deformity and confusion. What we see in the parts, we may infer in the whole; at least, that is the method of reasoning on which you rest your whole theory. And were I obliged to defend any particular system of this nature, which I never willingly should do, I esteem none more plausible than that which ascribes an eternal inherent principle of order to the world, though attended with great and continual revolutions and alterations. This at once solves all difficulties; and if the solution, by being so general, is not entirely complete and satisfactory, it is at least a theory that we must sooner or later have recourse to, whatever system we embrace. How could things have been as they are, were there not an original inherent principle of order somewhere, in thought or in matter? And it is very indifferent to which of these we give the preference. Chance has no place, on any hypothesis, sceptical or religious. Every thing is surely governed by steady, inviolable laws. And were the inmost essence of things laid open to us, we should then discover a scene, of which, at present, we can have no idea. Instead of admiring the order of natural beings, we should clearly see that it was absolutely impossible for them, in the smallest article, ever to admit of any other disposition.

Were any one inclined to revive the ancient Pagan Theology, which maintained, as we learn from HESIOD, that this globe was governed by 30,000 deities, who arose from the unknown powers of nature: you would naturally object, CLEANTHES, that nothing is gained by this hypothesis; and that it is as easy to suppose all men animals, beings more numerous, but less perfect, to have sprung immediately from a like origin. Push the same inference a step further, and you will find a numerous society of deities as explicable as one universal deity, who possesses within himself the powers and perfections of the whole society. All these systems, then, of Scepticism, Polytheism, and Theism, you must allow, on your principles, to be on a like footing, and that no one of them has any advantage over the others. You may thence learn the fallacy of your principles.

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## DAVID HUME: DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION (PARTS 1-3)

### PAMPHILUS TO HERMIPPUS

It has been remarked, my HERMIPPUS, that though the ancient philosophers conveyed most of their instruction in the form of dialogue, this method of composition has been little practised in later ages, and has seldom succeeded in the hands of those who have attempted it. Accurate and regular argument, indeed, such as is now expected of philosophical inquirers, naturally throws a man into the methodical and didactic manner; where he can immediately, without preparation, explain the point at which he aims; and thence proceed, without interruption, to deduce the proofs on which it is established. To deliver a SYSTEM in conversation, scarcely

appears natural; and while the dialogue-writer desires, by departing from the direct style of composition, to give a freer air to his performance, and avoid the appearance of Author and Reader, he is apt to run into a worse inconvenience, and convey the image of Pedagogue and Pupil. Or, if he carries on the dispute in the natural spirit of good company, by throwing in a variety of topics, and preserving a proper balance among the speakers, he often loses so much time in preparations and transitions, that the reader will scarcely think himself compensated, by all the graces of dialogue, for the order, brevity, and precision, which are sacrificed to them.

There are some subjects, however, to which dialogue-writing is peculiarly adapted, and where it is still preferable to the direct and simple method of composition.

Any point of doctrine, which is so obvious that it scarcely admits of dispute, but at the same time so important that it cannot be too often inculcated, seems to require some such method of handling it; where the novelty of the manner may compensate the triteness of the subject; where the vivacity of conversation may enforce the precept; and where the variety of lights, presented by various personages and characters, may appear neither tedious nor redundant.

Any question of philosophy, on the other hand, which is so OBSCURE and UNCERTAIN, that human reason can reach no fixed determination with regard to it; if it should be treated at all, seems to lead us naturally into the style of dialogue and conversation. Reasonable men may be allowed to differ, where no one can reasonably be positive. Opposite sentiments, even without any decision, afford an agreeable amusement; and if the subject be curious and interesting, the book carries us, in a manner, into company; and unites the two greatest and purest pleasures of human life, study and society.

Happily, these circumstances are all to be found in the subject of NATURAL RELIGION. What truth so obvious, so certain, as the being of a God, which the most ignorant ages have acknowledged, for which the most refined geniuses have ambitiously striven to produce new proofs and arguments? What truth so important as this, which is the ground of all our hopes, the surest foundation of morality, the firmest support of society, and the only principle which ought never to be a moment absent from our thoughts and meditations? But, in treating of this obvious and important truth, what obscure questions occur concerning the nature of that Divine Being, his attributes, his decrees, his plan of providence? These have been always subjected to the disputations of men; concerning these human reason has not reached any certain determination. But these are topics so interesting, that we cannot restrain our restless inquiry with regard to them; though nothing but doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction, have as yet been the result of our most accurate researches.

This I had lately occasion to observe, while I passed, as usual, part of the summer season with CLEANTHES, and was present at those conversations of his with PHILO and DEMEA, of which I gave you lately some imperfect account. Your curiosity, you then told me, was so excited, that I must, of necessity, enter into a more exact detail of their reasonings, and display those various systems which they advanced with regard to so delicate a subject as that of natural religion. The remarkable contrast in their characters still further raised your expectations; while you opposed the accurate philosophical turn of CLEANTHES to the careless scepticism of PHILO, or compared either of their dispositions with the rigid inflexible orthodoxy of DEMEA. My youth rendered me a mere auditor of their disputes; and that curiosity, natural to the early season of life, has so deeply imprinted in my memory the whole chain and connection of their arguments, that, I hope, I shall not omit or confound any considerable part of them in the recital.

## PART 1

After I joined the company, whom I found sitting in CLEANTHES's library, DEMEA paid CLEANTHES some compliments on the great care which he took of my education, and on his unwearied perseverance and constancy in all his friendships. The father of PAMPHILUS, said he, was your intimate friend: The son is your pupil; and may indeed be regarded as your adopted son, were we to judge by the pains which you bestow in conveying to him every useful branch of literature and science. You are no more wanting, I am persuaded, in prudence, than in industry. I shall, therefore, communicate to you a maxim, which I have observed with regard to my own children, that I may learn how far it agrees with your practice. The method I follow in their education is founded on the saying of an ancient, "That students of philosophy ought first to learn logics, then ethics, next physics, last of all the nature of the gods." [Chrysippus apud Plut: de repug: Stoicorum] This science of natural theology, according to him, being the most profound and abstruse of any, required the maturest judgement in its students; and none but a mind enriched with all the other sciences, can safely be entrusted with it.

Are you so late, says PHILO, in teaching your children the principles of religion? Is there no danger of their neglecting, or rejecting altogether those opinions of which they have heard so little during the whole course of their education? It is only as a science, replied DEMEA, subjected to human reasoning and disputation, that I postpone the study of Natural Theology. To season their minds with early piety, is my chief care; and by continual precept and instruction, and I hope too by example, I imprint deeply on their tender minds an habitual reverence for all the principles of religion. While they pass through every other science, I still remark the uncertainty of each part; the eternal disputations of men; the obscurity of all philosophy; and the strange, ridiculous conclusions, which some of the greatest geniuses have derived from the principles of mere human reason. Having thus tamed their mind to a proper submission and self-diffidence, I have no longer any scruple of opening to them the greatest mysteries of religion; nor apprehend any danger from that assuming arrogance of philosophy, which may lead them to reject the most established doctrines and opinions.

Your precaution, says PHILO, of seasoning your children's minds early with piety, is certainly very reasonable; and no more than is requisite in this profane and irreligious age. But what I chiefly admire in your plan of education, is your method of drawing advantage from the very principles of philosophy and learning, which, by inspiring pride and self-sufficiency, have commonly, in all ages, been found so destructive to the principles of religion. The vulgar, indeed, we may remark, who are unacquainted with science and profound inquiry, observing the endless disputes of the learned, have commonly a thorough contempt for philosophy; and rivet themselves the faster, by that means, in the great points of theology which have been taught them. Those who enter a little into study and inquiry, finding many appearances of evidence in doctrines the newest and most extraordinary, think nothing too difficult for human reason; and, presumptuously breaking through all fences, profane the inmost sanctuaries of the temple. But CLEANTHES will, I hope, agree with me, that, after we have abandoned ignorance, the surest remedy, there is still one expedient left to prevent this profane liberty. Let DEMEA's principles be improved and cultivated: Let us become thoroughly sensible of the weakness, blindness, and narrow limits of human reason: Let us duly consider its uncertainty and endless contrarieties, even in subjects of common life and practice: Let the errors and deceits of our very senses be set before us; the insuperable difficulties which attend first principles in all systems; the contradictions which adhere to the very ideas of matter, cause and effect, extension, space, time, motion; and in a word, quantity of all kinds, the object of the only science that can fairly pretend to any certainty or evidence. When these topics are displayed in their full light, as they are by some philosophers and almost all divines; who can retain such confidence in this frail faculty of reason as to pay any regard to its determinations in points so sublime, so abstruse, so remote from common life and experience? When the coherence of the parts of a stone, or even that composition of parts which renders it extended; when these familiar objects, I say, are so inexplicable, and contain circumstances so repugnant and contradictory; with what assurance can we decide concerning the origin of worlds, or trace their history from eternity to eternity?

While PHILO pronounced these words, I could observe a smile in the countenance both of DEMEA and CLEANTHES. That of DEMEA seemed to imply an unreserved satisfaction in the doctrines delivered: But, in CLEANTHES's features, I could distinguish an air of finesse; as if he perceived some raillery or artificial malice in the reasonings of PHILO.

You propose then, PHILO, said CLEANTHES, to erect religious faith on philosophical scepticism; and you think, that if certainty or evidence be expelled from every other subject of inquiry, it will all retire to these theological doctrines, and there acquire a superior force and authority. Whether your scepticism be as absolute and sincere as you pretend, we shall learn by and by, when the company breaks up: We shall then see, whether you go out at the door or the window; and whether you really doubt if your body has gravity, or can be injured by its fall; according to popular opinion, derived from our fallacious senses, and more fallacious experience. And this consideration, DEMEA, may, I think, fairly serve to abate our ill-will to this humorous sect of the sceptics. If they be thoroughly in earnest, they will not long trouble the world with their doubts, cavils, and disputes: If they be only in jest, they are, perhaps, bad railers; but can never be very dangerous, either to the state, to philosophy, or to religion.

In reality, PHILO, continued he, it seems certain, that though a man, in a flush of humour, after intense reflection on the many contradictions and imperfections of human reason, may entirely renounce all belief and opinion, it is impossible for him to persevere in this total scepticism, or make it appear in his conduct for a few hours. External objects press in upon him; passions solicit him; his philosophical melancholy dissipates; and even the utmost violence upon his own temper will not be able, during any time, to preserve the poor appearance of scepticism. And for what reason impose on himself such a violence? This is a point in which it will be impossible for him ever to satisfy himself, consistently with his sceptical principles. So that, upon the whole, nothing could be more ridiculous than the principles of the ancient PYRRHONIANS; if in reality they endeavoured, as is pretended, to extend, throughout, the same scepticism which they had learned from the declamations of their schools, and which they ought to have confined to them.

In this view, there appears a great resemblance between the sects of the STOICS and PYRRHONIANS, though perpetual antagonists; and both of them seem founded on this erroneous maxim, That what a man can perform sometimes, and in some dispositions, he can perform always, and in every disposition. When the mind, by Stoical reflections, is elevated into a sublime enthusiasm of virtue, and strongly smit with any species of honour or public good, the utmost bodily pain and sufferings will not prevail over such a high sense of duty; and it is possible, perhaps, by its means, even to smile and exult in the midst of tortures. If this sometimes may be the case in fact and reality, much more may a philosopher, in his school, or even in his closet, work himself up to such an enthusiasm, and support in imagination the acutest pain or most calamitous event which he can possibly conceive. But how shall he support this enthusiasm itself? The bent of his mind relaxes, and cannot be recalled at pleasure; avocations lead him astray; misfortunes attack him unawares; and the philosopher sinks by degrees into the plebeian.

I allow of your comparison between the STOICS and SKEPTICS, replied PHILO. But you may observe, at the same time, that though the mind cannot, in Stoicism, support the highest flights of philosophy, yet, even when it sinks lower, it still retains somewhat of its former disposition; and the effects of the Stoic's reasoning will appear in his conduct in common life, and through the whole tenor of his actions. The ancient schools, particularly that of ZENO, produced examples of virtue and constancy which seem astonishing to present times.

Vain Wisdom all and false Philosophy.  
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm  
Pain, for a while, or anguish; and excite  
Fallacious Hope, or arm the obdurate breast  
With stubborn Patience, as with triple steel.

In like manner, if a man has accustomed himself to sceptical considerations on the uncertainty and narrow limits of reason, he will not entirely forget them when he turns his reflection on other subjects; but in all his philosophical principles and reasoning, I dare not say in his common conduct, he will be found different from those, who either never formed any opinions in the case, or have entertained sentiments more favourable to human reason.

To whatever length any one may push his speculative principles of scepticism, he must act, I own, and live, and converse, like other men; and for this conduct he is not obliged to give any other reason, than the absolute necessity he lies under of so doing. If he ever carries his speculations further than this necessity constrains him, and philosophises either on natural or moral subjects, he is allured by a certain pleasure and satisfaction which he finds in employing himself after that manner. He considers besides, that every one, even in common life, is constrained to have more or less of this philosophy; that from our earliest infancy we make continual advances in forming more general principles of conduct and reasoning; that the larger experience we acquire, and the stronger reason we are endued with, we always render our principles the more general and comprehensive; and that what we call philosophy is nothing but a more regular and methodical operation of the same kind. To philosophise on such subjects, is nothing essentially different from reasoning on common life; and we may only expect greater stability, if not greater truth, from our philosophy, on account of its exacter and more scrupulous method of proceeding.

But when we look beyond human affairs and the properties of the surrounding bodies: when we carry our speculations into the two eternities, before and after the present state of things; into the creation and formation of the universe; the existence and properties of spirits; the powers and operations of one universal Spirit existing without beginning and without end; omnipotent, omniscient, immutable, infinite, and incomprehensible: We must be far removed from the smallest tendency to scepticism not to be apprehensive, that we have here got quite beyond the reach of our faculties. So long as we confine our speculations to trade, or morals, or politics, or criticism, we make appeals, every moment, to common sense and experience, which strengthen our philosophical conclusions, and remove, at least in part, the suspicion which we so justly entertain with regard to every reasoning that is very subtle and refined. But, in theological reasonings, we have not this advantage; while, at the same time, we are employed upon objects, which, we must be sensible, are too large for our grasp, and of all others, require most to be familiarised to our apprehension. We are like foreigners in a strange country, to whom every thing must seem suspicious, and who are in danger every moment of transgressing against the laws and customs of the people with whom they live and converse. We know not how far we ought to trust our vulgar methods of reasoning in such a subject; since, even in common life, and in that province which is peculiarly appropriated to them, we cannot account for them, and are entirely guided by a kind of instinct or necessity in employing them.

All sceptics pretend, that, if reason be considered in an abstract view, it furnishes invincible arguments against itself; and that we could never retain any conviction or assurance, on any subject, were not the sceptical

reasonings so refined and subtle, that they are not able to counterpoise the more solid and more natural arguments derived from the senses and experience. But it is evident, whenever our arguments lose this advantage, and run wide of common life, that the most refined scepticism comes to be upon a footing with them, and is able to oppose and counterbalance them. The one has no more weight than the other. The mind must remain in suspense between them; and it is that very suspense or balance, which is the triumph of scepticism.

But I observe, says CLEANTHES, with regard to you, PHILO, and all speculative sceptics, that your doctrine and practice are as much at variance in the most abstruse points of theory as in the conduct of common life. Wherever evidence discovers itself, you adhere to it, notwithstanding your pretended scepticism; and I can observe, too, some of your sect to be as decisive as those who make greater professions of certainty and assurance. In reality, would not a man be ridiculous, who pretended to reject NEWTON's explication of the wonderful phenomenon of the rainbow, because that explication gives a minute anatomy of the rays of light; a subject, forsooth, too refined for human comprehension? And what would you say to one, who, having nothing particular to object to the arguments of COPERNICUS and GALILEO for the motion of the earth, should withhold his assent, on that general principle, that these subjects were too magnificent and remote to be explained by the narrow and fallacious reason of mankind?

There is indeed a kind of brutish and ignorant scepticism, as you well observed, which gives the vulgar a general prejudice against what they do not easily understand, and makes them reject every principle which requires elaborate reasoning to prove and establish it. This species of scepticism is fatal to knowledge, not to religion; since we find, that those who make greatest profession of it, give often their assent, not only to the great truths of Theism and natural theology, but even to the most absurd tenets which a traditional superstition has recommended to them. They firmly believe in witches, though they will not believe nor attend to the most simple proposition of Euclid. But the refined and philosophical sceptics fall into an inconsistency of an opposite nature. They push their researches into the most abstruse corners of science; and their assent attends them in every step, proportioned to the evidence which they meet with. They are even obliged to acknowledge, that the most abstruse and remote objects are those which are best explained by philosophy. Light is in reality anatomised. The true system of the heavenly bodies is discovered and ascertained. But the nourishment of bodies by food is still an inexplicable mystery. The cohesion of the parts of matter is still incomprehensible. These sceptics, therefore, are obliged, in every question, to consider each particular evidence apart, and proportion their assent to the precise degree of evidence which occurs. This is their practice in all natural, mathematical, moral, and political science. And why not the same, I ask, in the theological and religious? Why must conclusions of this nature be alone rejected on the general presumption of the insufficiency of human reason, without any particular discussion of the evidence? Is not such an unequal conduct a plain proof of prejudice and passion?

Our senses, you say, are fallacious; our understanding erroneous; our ideas, even of the most familiar objects, extension, duration, motion, full of absurdities and contradictions. You defy me to solve the difficulties, or reconcile the repugnancies which you discover in them. I have not capacity for so great an undertaking: I have not leisure for it: I perceive it to be superfluous. Your own conduct, in every circumstance, refutes your principles, and shows the firmest reliance on all the received maxims of science, morals, prudence, and behaviour.

I shall never assent to so harsh an opinion as that of a celebrated writer [L'Arte de penser], who says, that the Sceptics are not a sect of philosophers: They are only a sect of liars. I may, however, affirm (I hope without offence), that they are a sect of jesters or railers. But for my part, whenever I find myself disposed to mirth and amusement, I shall certainly choose my entertainment of a less perplexing and abstruse nature. A comedy, a novel, or at most a history, seems a more natural recreation than such metaphysical subtleties and abstractions.

In vain would the sceptic make a distinction between science and common life, or between one science and another. The arguments employed in all, if just, are of a similar nature, and contain the same force and evidence. Or if there be any difference among them, the advantage lies entirely on the side of theology and natural religion. Many principles of mechanics are founded on very abstruse reasoning; yet no man who has any pretensions to science, even no speculative sceptic, pretends to entertain the least doubt with regard to them. The COPERNICAN system contains the most surprising paradox, and the most contrary to our natural conceptions, to appearances, and to our very senses: yet even monks and inquisitors are now constrained to withdraw their opposition to it. And shall PHILO, a man of so liberal a genius and extensive knowledge, entertain any general undistinguished scruples with regard to the religious hypothesis, which is founded on the simplest and most obvious arguments, and, unless it meets with artificial obstacles, has such easy access and admission into the mind of man?

And here we may observe, continued he, turning himself towards DEMEA, a pretty curious circumstance in the history of the sciences. After the union of philosophy with the popular religion, upon the first establishment of

Christianity, nothing was more usual, among all religious teachers, than declamations against reason, against the senses, against every principle derived merely from human research and inquiry. All the topics of the ancient academics were adopted by the fathers; and thence propagated for several ages in every school and pulpit throughout Christendom. The Reformers embraced the same principles of reasoning, or rather declamation; and all panegyrics on the excellency of faith, were sure to be interlarded with some severe strokes of satire against natural reason. A celebrated prelate [Monsr. Huet] too, of the Romish communion, a man of the most extensive learning, who wrote a demonstration of Christianity, has also composed a treatise, which contains all the cavils of the boldest and most determined PYRRHONISM. LOCKE seems to have been the first Christian who ventured openly to assert, that faith was nothing but a species of reason; that religion was only a branch of philosophy; and that a chain of arguments, similar to that which established any truth in morals, politics, or physics, was always employed in discovering all the principles of theology, natural and revealed. The ill use which BAYLE and other libertines made of the philosophical scepticism of the fathers and first reformers, still further propagated the judicious sentiment of Mr. LOCKE: And it is now in a manner avowed, by all pretenders to reasoning and philosophy, that Atheist and Sceptic are almost synonymous. And as it is certain that no man is in earnest when he professes the latter principle, I would fain hope that there are as few who seriously maintain the former.

Don't you remember, said PHILO, the excellent saying of LORD BACON on this head? That a little philosophy, replied CLEANTHES, makes a man an Atheist: A great deal converts him to religion. That is a very judicious remark too, said PHILO. But what I have in my eye is another passage, where, having mentioned DAVID's fool, who said in his heart there is no God, this great philosopher observes, that the Atheists nowadays have a double share of folly; for they are not contented to say in their hearts there is no God, but they also utter that impiety with their lips, and are thereby guilty of multiplied indiscretion and imprudence. Such people, though they were ever so much in earnest, cannot, methinks, be very formidable.

But though you should rank me in this class of fools, I cannot forbear communicating a remark that occurs to me, from the history of the religious and irreligious scepticism with which you have entertained us. It appears to me, that there are strong symptoms of priestcraft in the whole progress of this affair. During ignorant ages, such as those which followed the dissolution of the ancient schools, the priests perceived, that Atheism, Deism, or heresy of any kind, could only proceed from the presumptuous questioning of received opinions, and from a belief that human reason was equal to every thing. Education had then a mighty influence over the minds of men, and was almost equal in force to those suggestions of the senses and common understanding, by which the most determined sceptic must allow himself to be governed. But at present, when the influence of education is much diminished, and men, from a more open commerce of the world, have learned to compare the popular principles of different nations and ages, our sagacious divines have changed their whole system of philosophy, and talk the language of STOICS, PLATONISTS, and PERIPATETICS, not that of PYRRHONIANS and ACADEMICS. If we distrust human reason, we have now no other principle to lead us into religion. Thus, sceptics in one age, dogmatists in another; whichever system best suits the purpose of these reverend gentlemen, in giving them an ascendant over mankind, they are sure to make it their favourite principle, and established tenet.

It is very natural, said CLEANTHES, for men to embrace those principles, by which they find they can best defend their doctrines; nor need we have any recourse to priestcraft to account for so reasonable an expedient. And, surely nothing can afford a stronger presumption, that any set of principles are true, and ought to be embraced, than to observe that they tend to the confirmation of true religion, and serve to confound the cavils of Atheists, Libertines, and Freethinkers of all denominations.

## PART 2

I must own, CLEANTHES, said DEMEA, that nothing can more surprise me, than the light in which you have all along put this argument. By the whole tenor of your discourse, one would imagine that you were maintaining the Being of a God, against the cavils of Atheists and Infidels; and were necessitated to become a champion for that fundamental principle of all religion. But this, I hope, is not by any means a question among us. No man, no man at least of common sense, I am persuaded, ever entertained a serious doubt with regard to a truth so certain and self-evident. The question is not concerning the being, but the nature of God. This, I affirm, from the infirmities of human understanding, to be altogether incomprehensible and unknown to us. The essence of that supreme Mind, his attributes, the manner of his existence, the very nature of his duration; these, and every particular which regards so divine a Being, are mysterious to men. Finite, weak, and blind creatures, we ought to humble ourselves in his august presence; and, conscious of our frailties, adore in silence his infinite perfections, which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. They are covered in a deep cloud from human curiosity. It is profaneness to attempt penetrating through these sacred obscurities.

And, next to the impiety of denying his existence, is the temerity of prying into his nature and essence, decrees and attributes.

But lest you should think that my piety has here got the better of my philosophy, I shall support my opinion, if it needs any support, by a very great authority. I might cite all the divines, almost, from the foundation of Christianity, who have ever treated of this or any other theological subject: But I shall confine myself, at present, to one equally celebrated for piety and philosophy. It is Father MALEBRANCHE, who, I remember, thus expresses himself [Recherche de la Verite. Liv. 3. Chap.9]. "One ought not so much," says he, "to call God a spirit, in order to express positively what he is, as in order to signify that he is not matter. He is a Being infinitely perfect: Of this we cannot doubt. But in the same manner as we ought not to imagine, even supposing him corporeal, that he is clothed with a human body, as the ANTHROPOMORPHITES asserted, under colour that that figure was the most perfect of any; so, neither ought we to imagine that the spirit of God has human ideas, or bears any resemblance to our spirit, under colour that we know nothing more perfect than a human mind. We ought rather to believe, that as he comprehends the perfections of matter without being material.... he comprehends also the perfections of created spirits without being spirit, in the manner we conceive spirit: That his true name is, He that is; or, in other words, Being without restriction, All Being, the Being infinite and universal."

After so great an authority, DEMEA, replied PHILO, as that which you have produced, and a thousand more which you might produce, it would appear ridiculous in me to add my sentiment, or express my approbation of your doctrine. But surely, where reasonable men treat these subjects, the question can never be concerning the Being, but only the Nature, of the Deity. The former truth, as you well observe, is unquestionable and self-evident. Nothing exists without a cause; and the original cause of this universe (whatever it be) we call God; and piously ascribe to him every species of perfection. Whoever scruples this fundamental truth, deserves every punishment which can be inflicted among philosophers, to wit, the greatest ridicule, contempt, and disapprobation. But as all perfection is entirely relative, we ought never to imagine that we comprehend the attributes of this divine Being, or to suppose that his perfections have any analogy or likeness to the perfections of a human creature. Wisdom, Thought, Design, Knowledge; these we justly ascribe to him; because these words are honourable among men, and we have no other language or other conceptions by which we can express our adoration of him. But let us beware, lest we think that our ideas anywise correspond to his perfections, or that his attributes have any resemblance to these qualities among men. He is infinitely superior to our limited view and comprehension; and is more the object of worship in the temple, than of disputation in the schools.

In reality, CLEANTHES, continued he, there is no need of having recourse to that affected scepticism so displeasing to you, in order to come at this determination. Our ideas reach no further than our experience. We have no experience of divine attributes and operations. I need not conclude my syllogism. You can draw the inference yourself. And it is a pleasure to me (and I hope to you too) that just reasoning and sound piety here concur in the same conclusion, and both of them establish the adorably mysterious and incomprehensible nature of the Supreme Being.

Not to lose any time in circumlocutions, said CLEANTHES, addressing himself to DEMEA, much less in replying to the pious declamations of PHILO; I shall briefly explain how I conceive this matter. Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: You will find it to be nothing but one great machine, subdivided into an infinite number of lesser machines, which again admit of subdivisions to a degree beyond what human senses and faculties can trace and explain. All these various machines, and even their most minute parts, are adjusted to each other with an accuracy which ravishes into admiration all men who have ever contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, resembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human designs, thought, wisdom, and intelligence. Since, therefore, the effects resemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the causes also resemble; and that the Author of Nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man, though possessed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed. By this argument a posteriori, and by this argument alone, do we prove at once the existence of a Deity, and his similarity to human mind and intelligence.

I shall be so free, CLEANTHES, said DEMEA, as to tell you, that from the beginning, I could not approve of your conclusion concerning the similarity of the Deity to men; still less can I approve of the mediums by which you endeavour to establish it. What! No demonstration of the Being of God! No abstract arguments! No proofs a priori! Are these, which have hitherto been so much insisted on by philosophers, all fallacy, all sophism? Can we reach no further in this subject than experience and probability? I will not say that this is betraying the cause of a Deity: But surely, by this affected candour, you give advantages to Atheists, which they never could obtain by the mere dint of argument and reasoning.

What I chiefly scruple in this subject, said PHILO, is not so much that all religious arguments are by CLEANTHES reduced to experience, as that they appear not to be even the most certain and irrefragable of that inferior kind. That a stone will fall, that fire will burn, that the earth has solidity, we have observed a thousand and a thousand times; and when any new instance of this nature is presented, we draw without hesitation the accustomed inference. The exact similarity of the cases gives us a perfect assurance of a similar event; and a stronger evidence is never desired nor sought after. But wherever you depart, in the least, from the similarity of the cases, you diminish proportionably the evidence; and may at last bring it to a very weak analogy, which is confessedly liable to error and uncertainty. After having experienced the circulation of the blood in human creatures, we make no doubt that it takes place in TITIUS and MAEVIUS. But from its circulation in frogs and fishes, it is only a presumption, though a strong one, from analogy, that it takes place in men and other animals. The analogical reasoning is much weaker, when we infer the circulation of the sap in vegetables from our experience that the blood circulates in animals; and those, who hastily followed that imperfect analogy, are found, by more accurate experiments, to have been mistaken.

If we see a house, CLEANTHES, we conclude, with the greatest certainty, that it had an architect or builder; because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause. But surely you will not affirm, that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house, that we can with the same certainty infer a similar cause, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The dissimilitude is so striking, that the utmost you can here pretend to is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption concerning a similar cause; and how that pretension will be received in the world, I leave you to consider.

It would surely be very ill received, replied CLEANTHES; and I should be deservedly blamed and detested, did I allow, that the proofs of a Deity amounted to no more than a guess or conjecture. But is the whole adjustment of means to ends in a house and in the universe so slight a resemblance? The economy of final causes? The order, proportion, and arrangement of every part? Steps of a stair are plainly contrived, that human legs may use them in mounting; and this inference is certain and infallible. Human legs are also contrived for walking and mounting; and this inference, I allow, is not altogether so certain, because of the dissimilarity which you remark; but does it, therefore, deserve the name only of presumption or conjecture?

Good God! cried DEMEA, interrupting him, where are we? Zealous defenders of religion allow, that the proofs of a Deity fall short of perfect evidence! And you, PHILO, on whose assistance I depended in proving the adorable mysteriousness of the Divine Nature, do you assent to all these extravagant opinions of CLEANTHES? For what other name can I give them? or, why spare my censure, when such principles are advanced, supported by such an authority, before so young a man as PAMPHILUS?

You seem not to apprehend, replied PHILO, that I argue with CLEANTHES in his own way; and, by showing him the dangerous consequences of his tenets, hope at last to reduce him to our opinion. But what sticks most with you, I observe, is the representation which CLEANTHES has made of the argument a posteriori; and finding that that argument is likely to escape your hold and vanish into air, you think it so disguised, that you can scarcely believe it to be set in its true light. Now, however much I may dissent, in other respects, from the dangerous principles of CLEANTHES, I must allow that he has fairly represented that argument; and I shall endeavour so to state the matter to you, that you will entertain no further scruples with regard to it.

Were a man to abstract from every thing which he knows or has seen, he would be altogether incapable, merely from his own ideas, to determine what kind of scene the universe must be, or to give the preference to one state or situation of things above another. For as nothing which he clearly conceives could be esteemed impossible or implying a contradiction, every chimera of his fancy would be upon an equal footing; nor could he assign any just reason why he adheres to one idea or system, and rejects the others which are equally possible.

Again; after he opens his eyes, and contemplates the world as it really is, it would be impossible for him at first to assign the cause of any one event, much less of the whole of things, or of the universe. He might set his fancy a rambling; and she might bring him in an infinite variety of reports and representations. These would all be possible; but being all equally possible, he would never of himself give a satisfactory account for his preferring one of them to the rest. Experience alone can point out to him the true cause of any phenomenon.

Now, according to this method of reasoning, DEMEA, it follows, (and is, indeed, tacitly allowed by CLEANTHES himself,) that order, arrangement, or the adjustment of final causes, is not of itself any proof of design; but only so far as it has been experienced to proceed from that principle. For aught we can know a priori, matter may contain the source or spring of order originally within itself, as well as mind does; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving, that the several elements, from an internal unknown cause, may fall into the most exquisite arrangement, than to conceive that their ideas, in the great universal mind, from a like internal unknown cause,

fall into that arrangement. The equal possibility of both these suppositions is allowed. But, by experience, we find, (according to CLEANTHES), that there is a difference between them. Throw several pieces of steel together, without shape or form; they will never arrange themselves so as to compose a watch. Stone, and mortar, and wood, without an architect, never erect a house. But the ideas in a human mind, we see, by an unknown, inexplicable economy, arrange themselves so as to form the plan of a watch or house. Experience, therefore, proves, that there is an original principle of order in mind, not in matter. From similar effects we infer similar causes. The adjustment of means to ends is alike in the universe, as in a machine of human contrivance. The causes, therefore, must be resembling.

I was from the beginning scandalised, I must own, with this resemblance, which is asserted, between the Deity and human creatures; and must conceive it to imply such a degradation of the Supreme Being as no sound Theist could endure. With your assistance, therefore, DEMA, I shall endeavour to defend what you justly call the adorable mysteriousness of the Divine Nature, and shall refute this reasoning of CLEANTHES, provided he allows that I have made a fair representation of it.

When CLEANTHES had assented, PHILO, after a short pause, proceeded in the following manner.

That all inferences, CLEANTHES, concerning fact, are founded on experience; and that all experimental reasonings are founded on the supposition that similar causes prove similar effects, and similar effects similar causes; I shall not at present much dispute with you. But observe, I entreat you, with what extreme caution all just reasoners proceed in the transferring of experiments to similar cases. Unless the cases be exactly similar, they repose no perfect confidence in applying their past observation to any particular phenomenon. Every alteration of circumstances occasions a doubt concerning the event; and it requires new experiments to prove certainly, that the new circumstances are of no moment or importance. A change in bulk, situation, arrangement, age, disposition of the air, or surrounding bodies; any of these particulars may be attended with the most unexpected consequences: And unless the objects be quite familiar to us, it is the highest temerity to expect with assurance, after any of these changes, an event similar to that which before fell under our observation. The slow and deliberate steps of philosophers here, if any where, are distinguished from the precipitate march of the vulgar, who, hurried on by the smallest similitude, are incapable of all discernment or consideration.

But can you think, CLEANTHES, that your usual phlegm and philosophy have been preserved in so wide a step as you have taken, when you compared to the universe houses, ships, furniture, machines, and, from their similarity in some circumstances, inferred a similarity in their causes? Thought, design, intelligence, such as we discover in men and other animals, is no more than one of the springs and principles of the universe, as well as heat or cold, attraction or repulsion, and a hundred others, which fall under daily observation. It is an active cause, by which some particular parts of nature, we find, produce alterations on other parts. But can a conclusion, with any propriety, be transferred from parts to the whole? Does not the great disproportion bar all comparison and inference? From observing the growth of a hair, can we learn any thing concerning the generation of a man? Would the manner of a leaf's blowing, even though perfectly known, afford us any instruction concerning the vegetation of a tree?

But, allowing that we were to take the operations of one part of nature upon another, for the foundation of our judgement concerning the origin of the whole, (which never can be admitted,) yet why select so minute, so weak, so bounded a principle, as the reason and design of animals is found to be upon this planet? What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call thought, that we must thus make it the model of the whole universe? Our partiality in our own favour does indeed present it on all occasions; but sound philosophy ought carefully to guard against so natural an illusion.

So far from admitting, continued PHILO, that the operations of a part can afford us any just conclusion concerning the origin of the whole, I will not allow any one part to form a rule for another part, if the latter be very remote from the former. Is there any reasonable ground to conclude, that the inhabitants of other planets possess thought, intelligence, reason, or any thing similar to these faculties in men? When nature has so extremely diversified her manner of operation in this small globe, can we imagine that she incessantly copies herself throughout so immense a universe? And if thought, as we may well suppose, be confined merely to this narrow corner, and has even there so limited a sphere of action, with what propriety can we assign it for the original cause of all things? The narrow views of a peasant, who makes his domestic economy the rule for the government of kingdoms, is in comparison a pardonable sophism.

But were we ever so much assured, that a thought and reason, resembling the human, were to be found throughout the whole universe, and were its activity elsewhere vastly greater and more commanding than it appears in this globe; yet I cannot see, why the operations of a world constituted, arranged, adjusted, can with

any propriety be extended to a world which is in its embryo state, and is advancing towards that constitution and arrangement. By observation, we know somewhat of the economy, action, and nourishment of a finished animal; but we must transfer with great caution that observation to the growth of a foetus in the womb, and still more to the formation of an animalcule in the loins of its male parent. Nature, we find, even from our limited experience, possesses an infinite number of springs and principles, which incessantly discover themselves on every change of her position and situation. And what new and unknown principles would actuate her in so new and unknown a situation as that of the formation of a universe, we cannot, without the utmost temerity, pretend to determine.

A very small part of this great system, during a very short time, is very imperfectly discovered to us; and do we thence pronounce decisively concerning the origin of the whole?

Admirable conclusion! Stone, wood, brick, iron, brass, have not, at this time, in this minute globe of earth, an order or arrangement without human art and contrivance; therefore the universe could not originally attain its order and arrangement, without something similar to human art. But is a part of nature a rule for another part very wide of the former? Is it a rule for the whole? Is a very small part a rule for the universe? Is nature in one situation, a certain rule for nature in another situation vastly different from the former?

And can you blame me, CLEANTHES, if I here imitate the prudent reserve of SIMONIDES, who, according to the noted story, being asked by HIERO, What God was? desired a day to think of it, and then two days more; and after that manner continually prolonged the term, without ever bringing in his definition or description? Could you even blame me, if I had answered at first, that I did not know, and was sensible that this subject lay vastly beyond the reach of my faculties? You might cry out sceptic and railler, as much as you pleased: but having found, in so many other subjects much more familiar, the imperfections and even contradictions of human reason, I never should expect any success from its feeble conjectures, in a subject so sublime, and so remote from the sphere of our observation. When two species of objects have always been observed to be conjoined together, I can infer, by custom, the existence of one wherever I see the existence of the other; and this I call an argument from experience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects, as in the present case, are single, individual, without parallel, or specific resemblance, may be difficult to explain. And will any man tell me with a serious countenance, that an orderly universe must arise from some thought and art like the human, because we have experience of it? To ascertain this reasoning, it were requisite that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not sufficient, surely, that we have seen ships and cities arise from human art and contrivance...

PHILO was proceeding in this vehement manner, somewhat between jest and earnest, as it appeared to me, when he observed some signs of impatience in CLEANTHES, and then immediately stopped short. What I had to suggest, said CLEANTHES, is only that you would not abuse terms, or make use of popular expressions to subvert philosophical reasonings. You know, that the vulgar often distinguish reason from experience, even where the question relates only to matter of fact and existence; though it is found, where that reason is properly analysed, that it is nothing but a species of experience. To prove by experience the origin of the universe from mind, is not more contrary to common speech, than to prove the motion of the earth from the same principle. And a caviller might raise all the same objections to the Copernican system, which you have urged against my reasonings. Have you other earths, might he say, which you have seen to move? Have...

Yes! cried PHILO, interrupting him, we have other earths. Is not the moon another earth, which we see to turn round its centre? Is not Venus another earth, where we observe the same phenomenon? Are not the revolutions of the sun also a confirmation, from analogy, of the same theory? All the planets, are they not earths, which revolve about the sun? Are not the satellites moons, which move round Jupiter and Saturn, and along with these primary planets round the sun? These analogies and resemblances, with others which I have not mentioned, are the sole proofs of the COPERNICAN system; and to you it belongs to consider, whether you have any analogies of the same kind to support your theory.

In reality, CLEANTHES, continued he, the modern system of astronomy is now so much received by all inquirers, and has become so essential a part even of our earliest education, that we are not commonly very scrupulous in examining the reasons upon which it is founded. It is now become a matter of mere curiosity to study the first writers on that subject, who had the full force of prejudice to encounter, and were obliged to turn their arguments on every side in order to render them popular and convincing. But if we peruse GALILEO's famous Dialogues concerning the system of the world, we shall find, that that great genius, one of the sublimest that ever existed, first bent all his endeavours to prove, that there was no foundation for the distinction commonly made between elementary and celestial substances. The schools, proceeding from the illusions of sense, had carried this distinction very far; and had established the latter substances to be ingenerable, incorruptible, unalterable, impassable; and had assigned all the opposite qualities to the former. But GALILEO, beginning with the moon, proved its similarity in every particular to the earth; its convex figure, its natural darkness when not illuminated, its

density, its distinction into solid and liquid, the variations of its phases, the mutual illuminations of the earth and moon, their mutual eclipses, the inequalities of the lunar surface, &c. After many instances of this kind, with regard to all the planets, men plainly saw that these bodies became proper objects of experience; and that the similarity of their nature enabled us to extend the same arguments and phenomena from one to the other.

In this cautious proceeding of the astronomers, you may read your own condemnation, CLEANTHES; or rather may see, that the subject in which you are engaged exceeds all human reason and inquiry. Can you pretend to show any such similarity between the fabric of a house, and the generation of a universe? Have you ever seen nature in any such situation as resembles the first arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your eye; and have you had leisure to observe the whole progress of the phenomenon, from the first appearance of order to its final consummation? If you have, then cite your experience, and deliver your theory.

### PART 3

How the most absurd argument, replied CLEANTHES, in the hands of a man of ingenuity and invention, may acquire an air of probability! Are you not aware, PHILO, that it became necessary for Copernicus and his first disciples to prove the similarity of the terrestrial and celestial matter; because several philosophers, blinded by old systems, and supported by some sensible appearances, had denied this similarity? but that it is by no means necessary, that Theists should prove the similarity of the works of Nature to those of Art; because this similarity is self-evident and undeniable? The same matter, a like form; what more is requisite to show an analogy between their causes, and to ascertain the origin of all things from a divine purpose and intention? Your objections, I must freely tell you, are no better than the abstruse cavils of those philosophers who denied motion; and ought to be refuted in the same manner, by illustrations, examples, and instances, rather than by serious argument and philosophy.

Suppose, therefore, that an articulate voice were heard in the clouds, much louder and more melodious than any which human art could ever reach: Suppose, that this voice were extended in the same instant over all nations, and spoke to each nation in its own language and dialect: Suppose, that the words delivered not only contain a just sense and meaning, but convey some instruction altogether worthy of a benevolent Being, superior to mankind: Could you possibly hesitate a moment concerning the cause of this voice? and must you not instantly ascribe it to some design or purpose? Yet I cannot see but all the same objections (if they merit that appellation) which lie against the system of Theism, may also be produced against this inference.

Might you not say, that all conclusions concerning fact were founded on experience: that when we hear an articulate voice in the dark, and thence infer a man, it is only the resemblance of the effects which leads us to conclude that there is a like resemblance in the cause: but that this extraordinary voice, by its loudness, extent, and flexibility to all languages, bears so little analogy to any human voice, that we have no reason to suppose any analogy in their causes: and consequently, that a rational, wise, coherent speech proceeded, you know not whence, from some accidental whistling of the winds, not from any divine reason or intelligence? You see clearly your own objections in these cavils, and I hope too you see clearly, that they cannot possibly have more force in the one case than in the other.

But to bring the case still nearer the present one of the universe, I shall make two suppositions, which imply not any absurdity or impossibility. Suppose that there is a natural, universal, invariable language, common to every individual of human race; and that books are natural productions, which perpetuate themselves in the same manner with animals and vegetables, by descent and propagation. Several expressions of our passions contain a universal language: all brute animals have a natural speech, which, however limited, is very intelligible to their own species. And as there are infinitely fewer parts and less contrivance in the finest composition of eloquence, than in the coarsest organised body, the propagation of an Iliad or Aeneid is an easier supposition than that of any plant or animal.

Suppose, therefore, that you enter into your library, thus peopled by natural volumes, containing the most refined reason and most exquisite beauty; could you possibly open one of them, and doubt, that its original cause bore the strongest analogy to mind and intelligence? When it reasons and discourses; when it expostulates, argues, and enforces its views and topics; when it applies sometimes to the pure intellect, sometimes to the affections; when it collects, disposes, and adorns every consideration suited to the subject; could you persist in asserting, that all this, at the bottom, had really no meaning; and that the first formation of this volume in the loins of its original parent proceeded not from thought and design? Your obstinacy, I know, reaches not that degree of firmness: even your sceptical play and wantonness would be abashed at so glaring an absurdity.

But if there be any difference, PHILO, between this supposed case and the real one of the universe, it is all to the advantage of the latter. The anatomy of an animal affords many stronger instances of design than the perusal of LIVY or TACITUS; and any objection which you start in the former case, by carrying me back to so unusual and extraordinary a scene as the first formation of worlds, the same objection has place on the supposition of our vegetating library. Choose, then, your party, PHILO, without ambiguity or evasion; assert either that a rational volume is no proof of a rational cause, or admit of a similar cause to all the works of nature.

Let me here observe too, continued CLEANTHES, that this religious argument, instead of being weakened by that scepticism so much affected by you, rather acquires force from it, and becomes more firm and undisputed. To exclude all argument or reasoning of every kind, is either affectation or madness. The declared profession of every reasonable sceptic is only to reject abstruse, remote, and refined arguments; to adhere to common sense and the plain instincts of nature; and to assent, wherever any reasons strike him with so full a force that he cannot, without the greatest violence, prevent it. Now the arguments for Natural Religion are plainly of this kind; and nothing but the most perverse, obstinate metaphysics can reject them. Consider, anatomise the eye; survey its structure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of sensation. The most obvious conclusion, surely, is in favour of design; and it requires time, reflection, and study, to summon up those frivolous, though abstruse objections, which can support Infidelity. Who can behold the male and female of each species, the correspondence of their parts and instincts, their passions, and whole course of life before and after generation, but must be sensible, that the propagation of the species is intended by Nature? Millions and millions of such instances present themselves through every part of the universe; and no language can convey a more intelligible irresistible meaning, than the curious adjustment of final causes. To what degree, therefore, of blind dogmatism must one have attained, to reject such natural and such convincing arguments?

Some beauties in writing we may meet with, which seem contrary to rules, and which gain the affections, and animate the imagination, in opposition to all the precepts of criticism, and to the authority of the established masters of art. And if the argument for Theism be, as you pretend, contradictory to the principles of logic; its universal, its irresistible influence proves clearly, that there may be arguments of a like irregular nature. Whatever cavils may be urged, an orderly world, as well as a coherent, articulate speech, will still be received as an incontestable proof of design and intention.

It sometimes happens, I own, that the religious arguments have not their due influence on an ignorant savage and barbarian; not because they are obscure and difficult, but because he never asks himself any question with regard to them. Whence arises the curious structure of an animal? From the copulation of its parents. And these whence? From their parents? A few removes set the objects at such a distance, that to him they are lost in darkness and confusion; nor is he actuated by any curiosity to trace them further. But this is neither dogmatism nor scepticism, but stupidity: a state of mind very different from your sifting, inquisitive disposition, my ingenious friend. You can trace causes from effects: You can compare the most distant and remote objects: and your greatest errors proceed not from barrenness of thought and invention, but from too luxuriant a fertility, which suppresses your natural good sense, by a profusion of unnecessary scruples and objections.

Here I could observe, HERMIPPUS, that PHILO was a little embarrassed and confounded: But while he hesitated in delivering an answer, luckily for him, DEMA broke in upon the discourse, and saved his countenance.

Your instance, CLEANTHES, said he, drawn from books and language, being familiar, has, I confess, so much more force on that account: but is there not some danger too in this very circumstance; and may it not render us presumptuous, by making us imagine we comprehend the Deity, and have some adequate idea of his nature and attributes? When I read a volume, I enter into the mind and intention of the author: I become him, in a manner, for the instant; and have an immediate feeling and conception of those ideas which revolved in his imagination while employed in that composition. But so near an approach we never surely can make to the Deity. His ways are not our ways. His attributes are perfect, but incomprehensible. And this volume of nature contains a great and inexplicable riddle, more than any intelligible discourse or reasoning.

The ancient PLATONISTS, you know, were the most religious and devout of all the Pagan philosophers; yet many of them, particularly PLOTINUS, expressly declare, that intellect or understanding is not to be ascribed to the Deity; and that our most perfect worship of him consists, not in acts of veneration, reverence, gratitude, or love; but in a certain mysterious self-annihilation, or total extinction of all our faculties. These ideas are, perhaps, too far stretched; but still it must be acknowledged, that, by representing the Deity as so intelligible and comprehensible, and so similar to a human mind, we are guilty of the grossest and most narrow partiality, and make ourselves the model of the whole universe.

All the sentiments of the human mind, gratitude, resentment, love, friendship, approbation, blame, pity, emulation, envy, have a plain reference to the state and situation of man, and are calculated for preserving the existence and promoting the activity of such a being in such circumstances. It seems, therefore, unreasonable to transfer such sentiments to a supreme existence, or to suppose him actuated by them; and the phenomena besides of the universe will not support us in such a theory. All our ideas, derived from the senses, are confessedly false and illusive; and cannot therefore be supposed to have place in a supreme intelligence: And as the ideas of internal sentiment, added to those of the external senses, compose the whole furniture of human understanding, we may conclude, that none of the materials of thought are in any respect similar in the human and in the divine intelligence. Now, as to the manner of thinking; how can we make any comparison between them, or suppose them any wise resembling? Our thought is fluctuating, uncertain, fleeting, successive, and compounded; and were we to remove these circumstances, we absolutely annihilate its essence, and it would in such a case be an abuse of terms to apply to it the name of thought or reason. At least if it appear more pious and respectful (as it really is) still to retain these terms, when we mention the Supreme Being, we ought to acknowledge, that their meaning, in that case, is totally incomprehensible; and that the infirmities of our nature do not permit us to reach any ideas which in the least correspond to the ineffable sublimity of the Divine attributes.

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# DAVID HUME: DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION (PARTS 7-9)

## PART 7

But here, continued PHILO, in examining the ancient system of the soul of the world, there strikes me, all on a sudden, a new idea, which, if just, must go near to subvert all your reasoning, and destroy even your first inferences, on which you repose such confidence. If the universe bears a greater likeness to animal bodies and to vegetables, than to the works of human art, it is more probable that its cause resembles the cause of the former than that of the latter, and its origin ought rather to be ascribed to generation or vegetation, than to reason or design. Your conclusion, even according to your own principles, is therefore lame and defective.

Pray open up this argument a little further, said DEMEA, for I do not rightly apprehend it in that concise manner in which you have expressed it.

Our friend CLEANTHES, replied PHILO, as you have heard, asserts, that since no question of fact can be proved otherwise than by experience, the existence of a Deity admits not of proof from any other medium. The world, says he, resembles the works of human contrivance; therefore its cause must also resemble that of the other. Here we may remark, that the operation of one very small part of nature, to wit man, upon another very small part, to wit that inanimate matter lying within his reach, is the rule by which CLEANTHES judges of the origin of the whole; and he measures objects, so widely disproportioned, by the same individual standard. But to waive all objections drawn from this topic, I affirm, that there are other parts of the universe (besides the machines of human invention) which bear still a greater resemblance to the fabric of the world, and which, therefore, afford a better conjecture concerning the universal origin of this system. These parts are animals and vegetables. The world plainly resembles more an animal or a vegetable, than it does a watch or a knitting-loom. Its cause, therefore, it is more probable, resembles the cause of the former. The cause of the former is generation or vegetation. The cause, therefore, of the world, we may infer to be something similar or analogous to generation or vegetation.

But how is it conceivable, said DEMEA, that the world can arise from any thing similar to vegetation or generation?

Very easily, replied PHILO. In like manner as a tree sheds its seed into the neighbouring fields, and produces other trees; so the great vegetable, the world, or this planetary system, produces within itself certain seeds, which, being scattered into the surrounding chaos, vegetate into new worlds. A comet, for instance, is the seed of a world; and after it has been fully ripened, by passing from sun to sun, and star to star, it is at last tossed into the unformed elements which every where surround this universe, and immediately sprouts up into a new system.

Or if, for the sake of variety (for I see no other advantage), we should suppose this world to be an animal; a comet is the egg of this animal: and in like manner as an ostrich lays its egg in the sand, which, without any further care, hatches the egg, and produces a new animal; so...

I understand you, says DEMEA: But what wild, arbitrary suppositions are these! What data have you for such extraordinary conclusions? And is the slight, imaginary resemblance of the world to a vegetable or an animal sufficient to establish the same inference with regard to both? Objects, which are in general so widely different, ought they to be a standard for each other?

Right, cries PHILO: This is the topic on which I have all along insisted. I have still asserted, that we have no data to establish any system of cosmogony. Our experience, so imperfect in itself, and so limited both in extent and duration, can afford us no probable conjecture concerning the whole of things. But if we must needs fix on some hypothesis; by what rule, pray, ought we to determine our choice? Is there any other rule than the greater similarity of the objects compared? And does not a plant or an animal, which springs from vegetation or generation, bear a stronger resemblance to the world, than does any artificial machine, which arises from reason and design?

But what is this vegetation and generation of which you talk? said DEMEA. Can you explain their operations, and anatomise that fine internal structure on which they depend?

As much, at least, replied PHILO, as CLEANTHES can explain the operations of reason, or anatomise that internal structure on which it depends. But without any such elaborate disquisitions, when I see an animal, I infer, that it sprang from generation; and that with as great certainty as you conclude a house to have been reared by design. These words, generation, reason, mark only certain powers and energies in nature, whose effects are known, but whose essence is incomprehensible; and one of these principles, more than the other, has no privilege for being made a standard to the whole of nature.

In reality, DEMEA, it may reasonably be expected, that the larger the views are which we take of things, the better will they conduct us in our conclusions concerning such extraordinary and such magnificent subjects. In this little corner of the world alone, there are four principles, reason, instinct, generation, vegetation, which are similar to each other, and are the causes of similar effects. What a number of other principles may we naturally suppose in the immense extent and variety of the universe, could we travel from planet to planet, and from system to system, in order to examine each part of this mighty fabric? Any one of these four principles above mentioned, (and a hundred others which lie open to our conjecture,) may afford us a theory by which to judge of the origin of the world; and it is a palpable and egregious partiality to confine our view entirely to that principle by which our own minds operate. Were this principle more intelligible on that account, such a partiality might be somewhat excusable: But reason, in its internal fabric and structure, is really as little known to us as instinct or vegetation; and, perhaps, even that vague, indeterminate word, Nature, to which the vulgar refer every thing, is not at the bottom more inexplicable. The effects of these principles are all known to us from experience; but the principles themselves, and their manner of operation, are totally unknown; nor is it less intelligible, or less conformable to experience, to say, that the world arose by vegetation, from a seed shed by another world, than to say that it arose from a divine reason or contrivance, according to the sense in which CLEANTHES understands it.

But methinks, said DEMEA, if the world had a vegetative quality, and could sow the seeds of new worlds into the infinite chaos, this power would be still an additional argument for design in its author. For whence could arise so wonderful a faculty but from design? Or how can order spring from any thing which perceives not that order which it bestows?

You need only look around you, replied PHILO, to satisfy yourself with regard to this question. A tree bestows order and organisation on that tree which springs from it, without knowing the order; an animal in the same manner on its offspring; a bird on its nest; and instances of this kind are even more frequent in the world than those of order, which arise from reason and contrivance. To say, that all this order in animals and vegetables proceeds ultimately from design, is begging the question; nor can that great point be ascertained otherwise than by proving, a priori, both that order is, from its nature, inseparably attached to thought; and that it can never of itself, or from original unknown principles, belong to matter.

But further, DEMEA; this objection which you urge can never be made use of by CLEANTHES, without renouncing a defence which he has already made against one of my objections. When I inquired concerning the cause of that supreme reason and intelligence into which he resolves every thing; he told me, that the impossibility of satisfying such inquiries could never be admitted as an objection in any species of philosophy. "We must stop somewhere", says he; "nor is it ever within the reach of human capacity to explain ultimate causes, or show the last connections of any objects. It is sufficient, if any steps, so far as we go, are supported by experience and observation." Now, that vegetation and generation, as well as reason, are experienced to be principles of order in nature, is undeniable. If I rest my system of cosmogony on the former, preferably to the latter, it is at my choice. The matter seems entirely arbitrary. And when CLEANTHES asks me what is the cause of my great vegetative or generative faculty, I am equally entitled to ask him the cause of his great reasoning principle. These questions we have agreed to forbear on both sides; and it is chiefly his interest on the present occasion to stick to this agreement. Judging by our limited and imperfect experience, generation has some privileges above reason: for we see every day the latter arise from the former, never the former from the latter.

Compare, I beseech you, the consequences on both sides. The world, say I, resembles an animal; therefore it is an animal, therefore it arose from generation. The steps, I confess, are wide; yet there is some small appearance of analogy in each step. The world, says CLEANTHES, resembles a machine; therefore it is a machine, therefore it arose from design. The steps are here equally wide, and the analogy less striking. And if he pretends to carry on my hypothesis a step further, and to infer design or reason from the great principle of generation, on which I insist; I may, with better authority, use the same freedom to push further his hypothesis, and infer a divine generation or theogony from his principle of reason. I have at least some faint shadow of experience, which is the utmost that can ever be attained in the present subject. Reason, in innumerable instances, is observed to arise from the principle of generation, and never to arise from any other principle.

HESIOD, and all the ancient mythologists, were so struck with this analogy, that they universally explained the origin of nature from an animal birth, and copulation. PLATO too, so far as he is intelligible, seems to have adopted some such notion in his TIMAEUS.

The BRAHMINS assert, that the world arose from an infinite spider, who spun this whole complicated mass from his bowels, and annihilates afterwards the whole or any part of it, by absorbing it again, and resolving it into his own essence. Here is a species of cosmogony, which appears to us ridiculous; because a spider is a little contemptible animal, whose operations we are never likely to take for a model of the whole universe. But still here is a new species of analogy, even in our globe. And were there a planet wholly inhabited by spiders, (which is very possible,) this inference would there appear as natural and irrefragable as that which in our planet ascribes the origin of all things to design and intelligence, as explained by CLEANTHES. Why an orderly system may not be spun from the belly as well as from the brain, it will be difficult for him to give a satisfactory reason.

I must confess, PHILO, replied CLEANTHES, that of all men living, the task which you have undertaken, of raising doubts and objections, suits you best, and seems, in a manner, natural and unavoidable to you. So great is your fertility of invention, that I am not ashamed to acknowledge myself unable, on a sudden, to solve regularly such out-of-the-way difficulties as you incessantly start upon me: though I clearly see, in general, their fallacy and error. And I question not, but you are yourself, at present, in the same case, and have not the solution so ready as the objection: while you must be sensible, that common sense and reason are entirely against you; and that such whimsies as you have delivered, may puzzle, but never can convince us.

## PART 8

What you ascribe to the fertility of my invention, replied PHILO, is entirely owing to the nature of the subject. In subjects adapted to the narrow compass of human reason, there is commonly but one determination, which carries probability or conviction with it; and to a man of sound judgement, all other suppositions, but that one, appear entirely absurd and chimerical. But in such questions as the present, a hundred contradictory views may preserve a kind of imperfect analogy; and invention has here full scope to exert itself. Without any great effort of thought, I believe that I could, in an instant, propose other systems of cosmogony, which would have some faint appearance of truth, though it is a thousand, a million to one, if either yours or any one of mine be the true system.

For instance, what if I should revive the old EPICUREAN hypothesis? This is commonly, and I believe justly, esteemed the most absurd system that has yet been proposed; yet I know not whether, with a few alterations, it might not be brought to bear a faint appearance of probability. Instead of supposing matter infinite, as EPICURUS did, let us suppose it finite. A finite number of particles is only susceptible of finite transpositions: and it must

happen, in an eternal duration, that every possible order or position must be tried an infinite number of times. This world, therefore, with all its events, even the most minute, has before been produced and destroyed, and will again be produced and destroyed, without any bounds and limitations. No one, who has a conception of the powers of infinite, in comparison of finite, will ever scruple this determination.

But this supposes, said DEMEA, that matter can acquire motion, without any voluntary agent or first mover.

And where is the difficulty, replied PHILO, of that supposition? Every event, before experience, is equally difficult and incomprehensible; and every event, after experience, is equally easy and intelligible. Motion, in many instances, from gravity, from elasticity, from electricity, begins in matter, without any known voluntary agent: and to suppose always, in these cases, an unknown voluntary agent, is mere hypothesis; and hypothesis attended with no advantages. The beginning of motion in matter itself is as conceivable a priori as its communication from mind and intelligence.

Besides, why may not motion have been propagated by impulse through all eternity, and the same stock of it, or nearly the same, be still upheld in the universe? As much is lost by the composition of motion, as much is gained by its resolution. And whatever the causes are, the fact is certain, that matter is, and always has been, in continual agitation, as far as human experience or tradition reaches. There is not probably, at present, in the whole universe, one particle of matter at absolute rest.

And this very consideration too, continued PHILO, which we have stumbled on in the course of the argument, suggests a new hypothesis of cosmogony, that is not absolutely absurd and improbable. Is there a system, an order, an economy of things, by which matter can preserve that perpetual agitation which seems essential to it, and yet maintain a constancy in the forms which it produces? There certainly is such an economy; for this is actually the case with the present world. The continual motion of matter, therefore, in less than infinite transpositions, must produce this economy or order; and by its very nature, that order, when once established, supports itself, for many ages, if not to eternity. But wherever matter is so poised, arranged, and adjusted, as to continue in perpetual motion, and yet preserve a constancy in the forms, its situation must, of necessity, have all the same appearance of art and contrivance which we observe at present. All the parts of each form must have a relation to each other, and to the whole; and the whole itself must have a relation to the other parts of the universe; to the element in which the form subsists; to the materials with which it repairs its waste and decay; and to every other form which is hostile or friendly. A defect in any of these particulars destroys the form; and the matter of which it is composed is again set loose, and is thrown into irregular motions and fermentations, till it unite itself to some other regular form. If no such form be prepared to receive it, and if there be a great quantity of this corrupted matter in the universe, the universe itself is entirely disordered; whether it be the feeble embryo of a world in its first beginnings that is thus destroyed, or the rotten carcass of one languishing in old age and infirmity. In either case, a chaos ensues; till finite, though innumerable revolutions produce at last some forms, whose parts and organs are so adjusted as to support the forms amidst a continued succession of matter.

Suppose (for we shall endeavour to vary the expression), that matter were thrown into any position, by a blind, unguided force; it is evident that this first position must, in all probability, be the most confused and most disorderly imaginable, without any resemblance to those works of human contrivance, which, along with a symmetry of parts, discover an adjustment of means to ends, and a tendency to self-preservation. If the actuating force cease after this operation, matter must remain for ever in disorder, and continue an immense chaos, without any proportion or activity. But suppose that the actuating force, whatever it be, still continues in matter, this first position will immediately give place to a second, which will likewise in all probability be as disorderly as the first, and so on through many successions of changes and revolutions. No particular order or position ever continues a moment unaltered. The original force, still remaining in activity, gives a perpetual restlessness to matter. Every possible situation is produced, and instantly destroyed. If a glimpse or dawn of order appears for a moment, it is instantly hurried away, and confounded, by that never-ceasing force which actuates every part of matter.

Thus the universe goes on for many ages in a continued succession of chaos and disorder. But is it not possible that it may settle at last, so as not to lose its motion and active force (for that we have supposed inherent in it), yet so as to preserve an uniformity of appearance, amidst the continual motion and fluctuation of its parts? This we find to be the case with the universe at present. Every individual is perpetually changing, and every part of every individual; and yet the whole remains, in appearance, the same. May we not hope for such a position, or rather be assured of it, from the eternal revolutions of unguided matter; and may not this account for all the appearing wisdom and contrivance which is in the universe? Let us contemplate the subject a little, and we shall find, that this adjustment, if attained by matter of a seeming stability in the forms, with a real and perpetual revolution or motion of parts, affords a plausible, if not a true solution of the difficulty.

It is in vain, therefore, to insist upon the uses of the parts in animals or vegetables, and their curious adjustment to each other. I would fain know, how an animal could subsist, unless its parts were so adjusted? Do we not find, that it immediately perishes whenever this adjustment ceases, and that its matter corrupting tries some new form? It happens indeed, that the parts of the world are so well adjusted, that some regular form immediately lays claim to this corrupted matter: and if it were not so, could the world subsist? Must it not dissolve as well as the animal, and pass through new positions and situations, till in great, but finite succession, it falls at last into the present or some such order?

It is well, replied CLEANTHES, you told us, that this hypothesis was suggested on a sudden, in the course of the argument. Had you had leisure to examine it, you would soon have perceived the insuperable objections to which it is exposed. No form, you say, can subsist, unless it possess those powers and organs requisite for its subsistence: some new order or economy must be tried, and so on, without intermission; till at last some order, which can support and maintain itself, is fallen upon. But according to this hypothesis, whence arise the many conveniences and advantages which men and all animals possess? Two eyes, two ears, are not absolutely necessary for the subsistence of the species. Human race might have been propagated and preserved, without horses, dogs, cows, sheep, and those innumerable fruits and products which serve to our satisfaction and enjoyment. If no camels had been created for the use of man in the sandy deserts of AFRICA and ARABIA, would the world have been dissolved? If no lodestone had been framed to give that wonderful and useful direction to the needle, would human society and the human kind have been immediately extinguished? Though the maxims of Nature be in general very frugal, yet instances of this kind are far from being rare; and any one of them is a sufficient proof of design, and of a benevolent design, which gave rise to the order and arrangement of the universe.

At least, you may safely infer, said PHILO, that the foregoing hypothesis is so far incomplete and imperfect, which I shall not scruple to allow. But can we ever reasonably expect greater success in any attempts of this nature? Or can we ever hope to erect a system of cosmogony, that will be liable to no exceptions, and will contain no circumstance repugnant to our limited and imperfect experience of the analogy of Nature? Your theory itself cannot surely pretend to any such advantage, even though you have run into Anthropomorphism, the better to preserve a conformity to common experience. Let us once more put it to trial. In all instances which we have ever seen, ideas are copied from real objects, and are ectypal, not archetypal, to express myself in learned terms: You reverse this order, and give thought the precedence. In all instances which we have ever seen, thought has no influence upon matter, except where that matter is so conjoined with it as to have an equal reciprocal influence upon it. No animal can move immediately any thing but the members of its own body; and indeed, the equality of action and reaction seems to be an universal law of nature: But your theory implies a contradiction to this experience. These instances, with many more, which it were easy to collect, (particularly the supposition of a mind or system of thought that is eternal, or, in other words, an animal ingenerable and immortal); these instances, I say, may teach all of us sobriety in condemning each other, and let us see, that as no system of this kind ought ever to be received from a slight analogy, so neither ought any to be rejected on account of a small incongruity. For that is an inconvenience from which we can justly pronounce no one to be exempted.

All religious systems, it is confessed, are subject to great and insuperable difficulties. Each disputant triumphs in his turn; while he carries on an offensive war, and exposes the absurdities, barbarities, and pernicious tenets of his antagonist. But all of them, on the whole, prepare a complete triumph for the Sceptic; who tells them, that no system ought ever to be embraced with regard to such subjects: For this plain reason, that no absurdity ought ever to be assented to with regard to any subject. A total suspense of judgement is here our only reasonable resource. And if every attack, as is commonly observed, and no defence, among Theologians, is successful; how complete must be his victory, who remains always, with all mankind, on the offensive, and has himself no fixed station or abiding city, which he is ever, on any occasion, obliged to defend?

## PART 9

But if so many difficulties attend the argument a posteriori, said DEMEA, had we not better adhere to that simple and sublime argument a priori, which, by offering to us infallible demonstration, cuts off at once all doubt and difficulty? By this argument, too, we may prove the infinity of the Divine attributes, which, I am afraid, can never be ascertained with certainty from any other topic. For how can an effect, which either is finite, or, for aught we know, may be so; how can such an effect, I say, prove an infinite cause? The unity too of the Divine Nature, it is very difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to deduce merely from contemplating the works of nature; nor will the uniformity alone of the plan, even were it allowed, give us any assurance of that attribute. Whereas the argument a priori ...

You seem to reason, DEMEA, interposed CLEANTHES, as if those advantages and conveniences in the abstract argument were full proofs of its solidity. But it is first proper, in my opinion, to determine what argument of this nature you choose to insist on; and we shall afterwards, from itself, better than from its useful consequences, endeavour to determine what value we ought to put upon it.

The argument, replied DEMEA, which I would insist on, is the common one. Whatever exists must have a cause or reason of its existence; it being absolutely impossible for any thing to produce itself, or be the cause of its own existence. In mounting up, therefore, from effects to causes, we must either go on in tracing an infinite succession, without any ultimate cause at all; or must at last have recourse to some ultimate cause, that is necessarily existent: Now, that the first supposition is absurd, may be thus proved. In the infinite chain or succession of causes and effects, each single effect is determined to exist by the power and efficacy of that cause which immediately preceded; but the whole eternal chain or succession, taken together, is not determined or caused by any thing; and yet it is evident that it requires a cause or reason, as much as any particular object which begins to exist in time. The question is still reasonable, why this particular succession of causes existed from eternity, and not any other succession, or no succession at all. If there be no necessarily existent being, any supposition which can be formed is equally possible; nor is there any more absurdity in Nothing's having existed from eternity, than there is in that succession of causes which constitutes the universe. What was it, then, which determined Something to exist rather than Nothing, and bestowed being on a particular possibility, exclusive of the rest? External causes, there are supposed to be none. Chance is a word without a meaning. Was it Nothing? But that can never produce any thing. We must, therefore, have recourse to a necessarily existent Being, who carries the REASON of his existence in himself, and who cannot be supposed not to exist, without an express contradiction. There is, consequently, such a Being; that is, there is a Deity.

I shall not leave it to PHILO, said CLEANTHES, though I know that the starting objections is his chief delight, to point out the weakness of this metaphysical reasoning. It seems to me so obviously ill-grounded, and at the same time of so little consequence to the cause of true piety and religion, that I shall myself venture to show the fallacy of it.

I shall begin with observing, that there is an evident absurdity in pretending to demonstrate a matter of fact, or to prove it by any arguments a priori. Nothing is demonstrable, unless the contrary implies a contradiction. Nothing, that is distinctly conceivable, implies a contradiction. Whatever we conceive as existent, we can also conceive as non-existent. There is no being, therefore, whose non-existence implies a contradiction. Consequently there is no being, whose existence is demonstrable. I propose this argument as entirely decisive, and am willing to rest the whole controversy upon it.

It is pretended that the Deity is a necessarily existent being; and this necessity of his existence is attempted to be explained by asserting, that if we knew his whole essence or nature, we should perceive it to be as impossible for him not to exist, as for twice two not to be four. But it is evident that this can never happen, while our faculties remain the same as at present. It will still be possible for us, at any time, to conceive the non-existence of what we formerly conceived to exist; nor can the mind ever lie under a necessity of supposing any object to remain always in being; in the same manner as we lie under a necessity of always conceiving twice two to be four. The words, therefore, necessary existence, have no meaning; or, which is the same thing, none that is consistent.

But further, why may not the material universe be the necessarily existent Being, according to this pretended explication of necessity? We dare not affirm that we know all the qualities of matter; and for aught we can determine, it may contain some qualities, which, were they known, would make its non-existence appear as great a contradiction as that twice two is five. I find only one argument employed to prove, that the material world is not the necessarily existent Being: and this argument is derived from the contingency both of the matter and the form of the world. "Any particle of matter," it is said[]Dr. Clarke, "may be conceived to be annihilated; and any form may be conceived to be altered. Such an annihilation or alteration, therefore, is not impossible." But it seems a great partiality not to perceive, that the same argument extends equally to the Deity, so far as we have any conception of him; and that the mind can at least imagine him to be non-existent, or his attributes to be altered. It must be some unknown, inconceivable qualities, which can make his non-existence appear impossible, or his attributes unalterable: And no reason can be assigned, why these qualities may not belong to matter. As they are altogether unknown and inconceivable, they can never be proved incompatible with it.

Add to this, that in tracing an eternal succession of objects, it seems absurd to inquire for a general cause or first author. How can any thing, that exists from eternity, have a cause, since that relation implies a priority in time, and a beginning of existence?

In such a chain, too, or succession of objects, each part is caused by that which preceded it, and causes that which succeeds it. Where then is the difficulty? But the whole, you say, wants a cause. I answer, that the uniting of these parts into a whole, like the uniting of several distinct countries into one kingdom, or several distinct members into one body, is performed merely by an arbitrary act of the mind, and has no influence on the nature of things. Did I show you the particular causes of each individual in a collection of twenty particles of matter, I should think it very unreasonable, should you afterwards ask me, what was the cause of the whole twenty. This is sufficiently explained in explaining the cause of the parts.

Though the reasonings which you have urged, CLEANTHES, may well excuse me, said PHILO, from starting any further difficulties, yet I cannot forbear insisting still upon another topic. It is observed by arithmeticians, that the products of 9, compose always either 9, or some lesser product of 9, if you add together all the characters of which any of the former products is composed. Thus, of 18, 27, 36, which are products of 9, you make 9 by adding 1 to 8, 2 to 7, 3 to 6. Thus, 369 is a product also of 9; and if you add 3, 6, and 9, you make 18, a lesser product of 9. To a superficial observer, so wonderful a regularity may be admired as the effect either of chance or design: but a skilful algebraist immediately concludes it to be the work of necessity, and demonstrates, that it must for ever result from the nature of these numbers. Is it not probable, I ask, that the whole economy of the universe is conducted by a like necessity, though no human algebra can furnish a key which solves the difficulty? And instead of admiring the order of natural beings, may it not happen, that, could we penetrate into the intimate nature of bodies, we should clearly see why it was absolutely impossible they could ever admit of any other disposition? So dangerous is it to introduce this idea of necessity into the present question! and so naturally does it afford an inference directly opposite to the religious hypothesis!

But dropping all these abstractions, continued PHILO, and confining ourselves to more familiar topics, I shall venture to add an observation, that the argument a priori has seldom been found very convincing, except to people of a metaphysical head, who have accustomed themselves to abstract reasoning, and who, finding from mathematics, that the understanding frequently leads to truth through obscurity, and, contrary to first appearances, have transferred the same habit of thinking to subjects where it ought not to have place. Other people, even of good sense and the best inclined to religion, feel always some deficiency in such arguments, though they are not perhaps able to explain distinctly where it lies; a certain proof that men ever did, and ever will derive their religion from other sources than from this species of reasoning.

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## DAVID HUME: DIALOGUES CONCERNING NATURAL RELIGION (PARTS 10-12)

### PART 10

It is my opinion, I own, replied DEMEA, that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breast, and, from a consciousness of his imbecility and misery, rather than from any reasoning, is led to seek protection from that Being, on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or so tedious are even the best scenes of life, that futurity is still the object of all our hopes and fears. We incessantly look forward, and endeavour, by prayers, adoration, and sacrifice, to appease those unknown powers, whom we find, by experience, so able to afflict and oppress us. Wretched creatures that we are! what resource for us amidst the innumerable ills of life, did not religion suggest some methods of atonement, and appease those terrors with which we are incessantly agitated and tormented?

I am indeed persuaded, said PHILO, that the best, and indeed the only method of bringing every one to a due sense of religion, is by just representations of the misery and wickedness of men. And for that purpose a talent of eloquence and strong imagery is more requisite than that of reasoning and argument. For is it necessary to prove what every one feels within himself? It is only necessary to make us feel it, if possible, more intimately and sensibly.

The people, indeed, replied DEMEA, are sufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miseries of life; the unhappiness of man; the general corruptions of our nature; the unsatisfactory enjoyment of pleasures, riches, honours; these phrases have become almost proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?

In this point, said PHILO, the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, sacred and profane, the topic of human misery has been insisted on with the most pathetic eloquence that sorrow and melancholy could inspire. The poets, who speak from sentiment, without a system, and whose testimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From Homer down to Dr. Young, the whole inspired tribe have ever been sensible, that no other representation of things would suit the feeling and observation of each individual.

As to authorities, replied DEMEA, you need not seek them. Look round this library of CLEANTHES. I shall venture to affirm, that, except authors of particular sciences, such as chemistry or botany, who have no occasion to treat of human life, there is scarce one of those innumerable writers, from whom the sense of human misery has not, in some passage or other, extorted a complaint and confession of it. At least, the chance is entirely on that side; and no one author has ever, so far as I can recollect, been so extravagant as to deny it.

There you must excuse me, said PHILO: LEIBNIZ has denied it; and is perhaps the first [That sentiment had been maintained by Dr. King and some few others before Leibniz; though by none of so great a fame as that German philosopher] who ventured upon so bold and paradoxical an opinion; at least, the first who made it essential to his philosophical system.

And by being the first, replied DEMEA, might he not have been sensible of his error? For is this a subject in which philosophers can propose to make discoveries especially in so late an age? And can any man hope by a simple denial (for the subject scarcely admits of reasoning), to bear down the united testimony of mankind, founded on sense and consciousness?

And why should man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, PHILO, is cursed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want, stimulate the strong and courageous: Fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent: Weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage of that life: and it is at last finished in agony and horror.

Observe too, says PHILO, the curious artifices of Nature, in order to embitter the life of every living being. The stronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the stronger, and vex and molest them without relaxation. Consider that innumerable race of insects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or, flying about, infix their stings in him. These insects have others still less than themselves, which torment them. And thus on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies, which incessantly seek his misery and destruction.

Man alone, said DEMEA, seems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For by combination in society, he can easily master lions, tigers, and bears, whose greater strength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried PHILO, that the uniform and equal maxims of Nature are most apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, surmount all his real enemies, and become master of the whole animal creation: but does he not immediately raise up to himself imaginary enemies, the demons of his fancy, who haunt him with superstitious terrors, and blast every enjoyment of life? His pleasure, as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime: his food and repose give them umbrage and offence: his very sleep and dreams furnish new materials to anxious fear: and even death, his refuge from every other ill, presents only the dread of endless and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf molest more the timid flock, than superstition does the anxious breast of wretched mortals.

Besides, consider, DEMEA: This very society, by which we surmount those wild beasts, our natural enemies; what new enemies does it not raise to us? What woe and misery does it not occasion? Man is the greatest enemy of man. Oppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, violence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud; by these they mutually torment each other; and they would soon dissolve that society which they had formed, were it not for the dread of still greater ills, which must attend their separation.

But though these external insults, said DEMEA, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which assault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in comparison of those which arise within ourselves, from the

distempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diseases? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet.

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs,  
Demonic frenzy, moping melancholy,  
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,  
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence.  
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans: despair  
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch.  
And over them triumphant death his dart  
Shook: but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd  
With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The disorders of the mind, continued DEMEA, though more secret, are not perhaps less dismal and vexatious. Remorse, shame, anguish, rage, disappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, despair; who has ever passed through life without cruel inroads from these tormentors? How many have scarcely ever felt any better sensations? Labour and poverty, so abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number; and those few privileged persons, who enjoy ease and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united would not make a very happy man; but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almost (and who can be free from every one?) nay often the absence of one good (and who can possess all?) is sufficient to render life ineligible.

Were a stranger to drop on a sudden into this world, I would show him, as a specimen of its ills, a hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewn with carcasses, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him, and give him a notion of its pleasures; whither should I conduct him? to a ball, to an opera, to court? He might justly think, that I was only showing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.

There is no evading such striking instances, said PHILO, but by apologies, which still further aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I ask, in all ages, complained incessantly of the miseries of life?... They have no just reason, says one: these complaints proceed only from their discontented, repining, anxious disposition... And can there possibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of misery, than such a wretched temper?

But if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, says my antagonist, why do they remain in life?...

Not satisfied with life, afraid of death.

This is the secret chain, say I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed to the continuance of our existence.

It is only a false delicacy, he may insist, which a few refined spirits indulge, and which has spread these complaints among the whole race of mankind. . . . And what is this delicacy, I ask, which you blame? Is it any thing but a greater sensibility to all the pleasures and pains of life? and if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being so much more alive than the rest of the world, is only so much more unhappy, what judgement must we form in general of human life?

Let men remain at rest, says our adversary, and they will be easy. They are willing artificers of their own misery. . . . No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repose; disappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I can observe something like what you mention in some others, replied CLEANTHES: but I confess I feel little or nothing of it in myself, and hope that it is not so common as you represent it.

If you feel not human misery yourself, cried DEMEA, I congratulate you on so happy a singularity. Others, seemingly the most prosperous, have not been ashamed to vent their complaints in the most melancholy strains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor, CHARLES V, when, tired with human grandeur, he resigned all his extensive dominions into the hands of his son. In the last harangue which he made on that memorable occasion, he publicly avowed, that the greatest prosperities which he had ever enjoyed, had been mixed with so many adversities, that he might truly say he had never enjoyed any satisfaction or contentment. But did the retired

life, in which he sought for shelter, afford him any greater happiness? If we may credit his son's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his resignation.

CICERO's fortune, from small beginnings, rose to the greatest lustre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philosophical discourses, contain? And suitably to his own experience, he introduces CATO, the great, the fortunate CATO, protesting in his old age, that had he a new life in his offer, he would reject the present.

Ask yourself, ask any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the last ten or twenty years of their life. No! but the next twenty, they say, will be better:

And from the dregs of life, hope to receive  
What the first sprightly running could not give.

Thus at last they find (such is the greatness of human misery, it reconciles even contradictions), that they complain at once of the shortness of life, and of its vanity and sorrow.

And is it possible, CLEANTHES, said PHILO, that after all these reflections, and infinitely more, which might be suggested, you can still persevere in your Anthropomorphism, and assert the moral attributes of the Deity, his justice, benevolence, mercy, and rectitude, to be of the same nature with these virtues in human creatures? His power we allow is infinite: whatever he wills is executed: but neither man nor any other animal is happy: therefore he does not will their happiness. His wisdom is infinite: He is never mistaken in choosing the means to any end: But the course of Nature tends not to human or animal felicity: therefore it is not established for that purpose. Through the whole compass of human knowledge, there are no inferences more certain and infallible than these. In what respect, then, do his benevolence and mercy resemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

EPICURUS's old questions are yet unanswered. Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

You ascribe, CLEANTHES (and I believe justly), a purpose and intention to Nature. But what, I beseech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery, which she has displayed in all animals? The preservation alone of individuals, and propagation of the species. It seems enough for her purpose, if such a rank be barely upheld in the universe, without any care or concern for the happiness of the members that compose it. No resource for this purpose: no machinery, in order merely to give pleasure or ease: no fund of pure joy and contentment: no indulgence, without some want or necessity accompanying it. At least, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by opposite phenomena of still greater importance.

Our sense of music, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives satisfaction, without being absolutely necessary to the preservation and propagation of the species. But what racking pains, on the other hand, arise from gout, gravels, meargims, toothaches, rheumatisms, where the injury to the animal machinery is either small or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic, seem gratuitous satisfactions, which have no further tendency: spleen, melancholy, discontent, superstition, are pains of the same nature. How then does the Divine benevolence display itself, in the sense of you Anthropomorphites? None but we Mystics, as you were pleased to call us, can account for this strange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes, infinitely perfect, but incomprehensible.

And have you at last, said CLEANTHES smiling, betrayed your intentions, PHILO? Your long agreement with DEMEA did indeed a little surprise me; but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery against me. And I must confess, that you have now fallen upon a subject worthy of your noble spirit of opposition and controversy. If you can make out the present point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For to what purpose establish the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are still doubtful and uncertain?

You take umbrage very easily, replied DEMEA, at opinions the most innocent, and the most generally received, even amongst the religious and devout themselves: and nothing can be more surprising than to find a topic like this, concerning the wickedness and misery of man, charged with no less than Atheism and profaneness. Have not all pious divines and preachers, who have indulged their rhetoric on so fertile a subject; have they not easily, I say, given a solution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in comparison of the

universe; this life but a moment in comparison of eternity. The present evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in some future period of existence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, see the whole connection of general laws; and trace with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the Deity, through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied CLEANTHES, No! These arbitrary suppositions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of fact, visible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cause be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypothesis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To establish one hypothesis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmost we ever attain, by these conjectures and fictions, is to ascertain the bare possibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon such terms, establish its reality.

The only method of supporting Divine benevolence, and it is what I willingly embrace, is to deny absolutely the misery and wickedness of man. Your representations are exaggerated; your melancholy views mostly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than sickness; pleasure than pain; happiness than misery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

Admitting your position, replied PHILO, which yet is extremely doubtful, you must at the same time allow, that if pain be less frequent than pleasure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common insipid enjoyments; and how many days, weeks, and months, are passed by several in the most acute torments? Pleasure, scarcely in one instance, is ever able to reach ecstasy and rapture; and in no one instance can it continue for any time at its highest pitch and altitude. The spirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is disordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneasiness. But pain often, good God, how often! rises to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes still more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhausted, courage languishes, melancholy seizes us, and nothing terminates our misery but the removal of its cause, or another event, which is the sole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with still greater horror and consternation.

But not to insist upon these topics, continued PHILO, though most obvious, certain, and important; I must use the freedom to admonish you, CLEANTHES, that you have put the controversy upon a most dangerous issue, and are unawares introducing a total scepticism into the most essential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a just foundation for religion, unless we allow the happiness of human life, and maintain a continued existence even in this world, with all our present pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and desirable! But this is contrary to every one's feeling and experience: It is contrary to an authority so established as nothing can subvert. No decisive proofs can ever be produced against this authority; nor is it possible for you to compute, estimate, and compare, all the pains and all the pleasures in the lives of all men and of all animals: And thus, by your resting the whole system of religion on a point, which, from its very nature, must for ever be uncertain, you tacitly confess, that that system is equally uncertain.

But allowing you what never will be believed, at least what you never possibly can prove, that animal, or at least human happiness, in this life, exceeds its misery, you have yet done nothing: For this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite wisdom, and infinite goodness. Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive; except we assert, that these subjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common measures of truth and falsehood are not applicable to them; a topic which I have all along insisted on, but which you have, from the beginning, rejected with scorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire still from this entrenchment, for I deny that you can ever force me in it. I will allow, that pain or misery in man is compatible with infinite power and goodness in the Deity, even in your sense of these attributes: What are you advanced by all these concessions? A mere possible compatibility is not sufficient. You must prove these pure, unmixed, and uncontrollable attributes from the present mixed and confused phenomena, and from these alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phenomena ever so pure and unmixed, yet being finite, they would be insufficient for that purpose. How much more, where they are also so jarring and discordant!

Here, CLEANTHES, I find myself at ease in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and design, I needed all my sceptical and metaphysical subtlety to elude your grasp. In many views of the universe, and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them. But there is no

view of human life, or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greatest violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wisdom, which we must discover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the labouring oar, and to support your philosophical subtleties against the dictates of plain reason and experience.

## PART 11

I scruple not to allow, said CLEANTHES, that I have been apt to suspect the frequent repetition of the word infinite, which we meet with in all theological writers, to savour more of panegyric than of philosophy; and that any purposes of reasoning, and even of religion, would be better served, were we to rest contented with more accurate and more moderate expressions. The terms, admirable, excellent, superlatively great, wise, and holy; these sufficiently fill the imaginations of men; and any thing beyond, besides that it leads into absurdities, has no influence on the affections or sentiments. Thus, in the present subject, if we abandon all human analogy, as seems your intention, DEMEA, I am afraid we abandon all religion, and retain no conception of the great object of our adoration. If we preserve human analogy, we must for ever find it impossible to reconcile any mixture of evil in the universe with infinite attributes; much less can we ever prove the latter from the former. But supposing the Author of Nature to be finitely perfect, though far exceeding mankind, a satisfactory account may then be given of natural and moral evil, and every untoward phenomenon be explained and adjusted. A less evil may then be chosen, in order to avoid a greater; inconveniences be submitted to, in order to reach a desirable end; and in a word, benevolence, regulated by wisdom, and limited by necessity, may produce just such a world as the present. You, PHILO, who are so prompt at starting views, and reflections, and analogies, I would gladly hear, at length, without interruption, your opinion of this new theory; and if it deserve our attention, we may afterwards, at more leisure, reduce it into form.

My sentiments, replied PHILO, are not worth being made a mystery of; and therefore, without any ceremony, I shall deliver what occurs to me with regard to the present subject. It must, I think, be allowed, that if a very limited intelligence, whom we shall suppose utterly unacquainted with the universe, were assured, that it were the production of a very good, wise, and powerful Being, however finite, he would, from his conjectures, form beforehand a different notion of it from what we find it to be by experience; nor would he ever imagine, merely from these attributes of the cause, of which he is informed, that the effect could be so full of vice and misery and disorder, as it appears in this life. Supposing now, that this person were brought into the world, still assured that it was the workmanship of such a sublime and benevolent Being; he might, perhaps, be surprised at the disappointment; but would never retract his former belief, if founded on any very solid argument; since such a limited intelligence must be sensible of his own blindness and ignorance, and must allow, that there may be many solutions of those phenomena, which will for ever escape his comprehension. But supposing, which is the real case with regard to man, that this creature is not antecedently convinced of a supreme intelligence, benevolent, and powerful, but is left to gather such a belief from the appearances of things; this entirely alters the case, nor will he ever find any reason for such a conclusion. He may be fully convinced of the narrow limits of his understanding; but this will not help him in forming an inference concerning the goodness of superior powers, since he must form that inference from what he knows, not from what he is ignorant of. The more you exaggerate his weakness and ignorance, the more diffident you render him, and give him the greater suspicion that such subjects are beyond the reach of his faculties. You are obliged, therefore, to reason with him merely from the known phenomena, and to drop every arbitrary supposition or conjecture.

Did I show you a house or palace, where there was not one apartment convenient or agreeable; where the windows, doors, fires, passages, stairs, and the whole economy of the building, were the source of noise, confusion, fatigue, darkness, and the extremes of heat and cold; you would certainly blame the contrivance, without any further examination. The architect would in vain display his subtlety, and prove to you, that if this door or that window were altered, greater ills would ensue. What he says may be strictly true: The alteration of one particular, while the other parts of the building remain, may only augment the inconveniences. But still you would assert in general, that, if the architect had had skill and good intentions, he might have formed such a plan of the whole, and might have adjusted the parts in such a manner, as would have remedied all or most of these inconveniences. His ignorance, or even your own ignorance of such a plan, will never convince you of the impossibility of it. If you find any inconveniences and deformities in the building, you will always, without entering into any detail, condemn the architect.

In short, I repeat the question: Is the world, considered in general, and as it appears to us in this life, different from what a man, or such a limited being, would, beforehand, expect from a very powerful, wise, and benevolent Deity? It must be strange prejudice to assert the contrary. And from thence I conclude, that however consistent the world may be, allowing certain suppositions and conjectures, with the idea of such a Deity, it can never afford

us an inference concerning his existence. The consistence is not absolutely denied, only the inference. Conjectures, especially where infinity is excluded from the Divine attributes, may perhaps be sufficient to prove a consistence, but can never be foundations for any inference.

There seem to be four circumstances, on which depend all, or the greatest part of the ills, that molest sensible creatures; and it is not impossible but all these circumstances may be necessary and unavoidable. We know so little beyond common life, or even of common life, that, with regard to the economy of a universe, there is no conjecture, however wild, which may not be just; nor any one, however plausible, which may not be erroneous. All that belongs to human understanding, in this deep ignorance and obscurity, is to be sceptical, or at least cautious, and not to admit of any hypothesis whatever, much less of any which is supported by no appearance of probability. Now, this I assert to be the case with regard to all the causes of evil, and the circumstances on which it depends. None of them appear to human reason in the least degree necessary or unavoidable; nor can we suppose them such, without the utmost license of imagination.

The first circumstance which introduces evil, is that contrivance or economy of the animal creation, by which pains, as well as pleasures, are employed to excite all creatures to action, and make them vigilant in the great work of self-preservation. Now pleasure alone, in its various degrees, seems to human understanding sufficient for this purpose. All animals might be constantly in a state of enjoyment: but when urged by any of the necessities of nature, such as thirst, hunger, weariness; instead of pain, they might feel a diminution of pleasure, by which they might be prompted to seek that object which is necessary to their subsistence. Men pursue pleasure as eagerly as they avoid pain; at least they might have been so constituted. It seems, therefore, plainly possible to carry on the business of life without any pain. Why then is any animal ever rendered susceptible of such a sensation? If animals can be free from it an hour, they might enjoy a perpetual exemption from it; and it required as particular a contrivance of their organs to produce that feeling, as to endow them with sight, hearing, or any of the senses. Shall we conjecture, that such a contrivance was necessary, without any appearance of reason? and shall we build on that conjecture as on the most certain truth?

But a capacity of pain would not alone produce pain, were it not for the second circumstance, viz. the conducting of the world by general laws; and this seems nowise necessary to a very perfect Being. It is true, if everything were conducted by particular volitions, the course of nature would be perpetually broken, and no man could employ his reason in the conduct of life. But might not other particular volitions remedy this inconvenience? In short, might not the Deity exterminate all ill, wherever it were to be found; and produce all good, without any preparation, or long progress of causes and effects?

Besides, we must consider, that, according to the present economy of the world, the course of nature, though supposed exactly regular, yet to us appears not so, and many events are uncertain, and many disappoint our expectations. Health and sickness, calm and tempest, with an infinite number of other accidents, whose causes are unknown and variable, have a great influence both on the fortunes of particular persons and on the prosperity of public societies; and indeed all human life, in a manner, depends on such accidents. A being, therefore, who knows the secret springs of the universe, might easily, by particular volitions, turn all these accidents to the good of mankind, and render the whole world happy, without discovering himself in any operation. A fleet, whose purposes were salutary to society, might always meet with a fair wind. Good princes enjoy sound health and long life. Persons born to power and authority, be framed with good tempers and virtuous dispositions. A few such events as these, regularly and wisely conducted, would change the face of the world; and yet would no more seem to disturb the course of nature, or confound human conduct, than the present economy of things, where the causes are secret, and variable, and compounded. Some small touches given to CALIGULA's brain in his infancy, might have converted him into a TRAJAN. One wave, a little higher than the rest, by burying CAESAR and his fortune in the bottom of the ocean, might have restored liberty to a considerable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reasons why Providence interposes not in this manner; but they are unknown to us; and though the mere supposition, that such reasons exist, may be sufficient to save the conclusion concerning the Divine attributes, yet surely it can never be sufficient to establish that conclusion.

If every thing in the universe be conducted by general laws, and if animals be rendered susceptible of pain, it scarcely seems possible but some ill must arise in the various shocks of matter, and the various concurrence and opposition of general laws; but this ill would be very rare, were it not for the third circumstance, which I proposed to mention, viz. the great frugality with which all powers and faculties are distributed to every particular being. So well adjusted are the organs and capacities of all animals, and so well fitted to their preservation, that, as far as history or tradition reaches, there appears not to be any single species which has yet been extinguished in the universe. Every animal has the requisite endowments; but these endowments are bestowed with so scrupulous an economy, that any considerable diminution must entirely destroy the creature. Wherever one power is increased, there is a proportional abatement in the others. Animals which excel in swiftness are commonly

defective in force. Those which possess both are either imperfect in some of their senses, or are oppressed with the most craving wants. The human species, whose chief excellency is reason and sagacity, is of all others the most necessitous, and the most deficient in bodily advantages; without clothes, without arms, without food, without lodging, without any convenience of life, except what they owe to their own skill and industry. In short, nature seems to have formed an exact calculation of the necessities of her creatures; and, like a rigid master, has afforded them little more powers or endowments than what are strictly sufficient to supply those necessities. An indulgent parent would have bestowed a large stock, in order to guard against accidents, and secure the happiness and welfare of the creature in the most unfortunate concurrence of circumstances. Every course of life would not have been so surrounded with precipices, that the least departure from the true path, by mistake or necessity, must involve us in misery and ruin. Some reserve, some fund, would have been provided to ensure happiness; nor would the powers and the necessities have been adjusted with so rigid an economy. The Author of Nature is inconceivably powerful: his force is supposed great, if not altogether inexhaustible: nor is there any reason, as far as we can judge, to make him observe this strict frugality in his dealings with his creatures. It would have been better, were his power extremely limited, to have created fewer animals, and to have endowed these with more faculties for their happiness and preservation. A builder is never esteemed prudent, who undertakes a plan beyond what his stock will enable him to finish.

In order to cure most of the ills of human life, I require not that man should have the wings of the eagle, the swiftness of the stag, the force of the ox, the arms of the lion, the scales of the crocodile or rhinoceros; much less do I demand the sagacity of an angel or cherubim. I am contented to take an increase in one single power or faculty of his soul. Let him be endowed with a greater propensity to industry and labour; a more vigorous spring and activity of mind; a more constant bent to business and application. Let the whole species possess naturally an equal diligence with that which many individuals are able to attain by habit and reflection; and the most beneficial consequences, without any alloy of ill, is the immediate and necessary result of this endowment. Almost all the moral, as well as natural evils of human life, arise from idleness; and were our species, by the original constitution of their frame, exempt from this vice or infirmity, the perfect cultivation of land, the improvement of arts and manufactures, the exact execution of every office and duty, immediately follow; and men at once may fully reach that state of society, which is so imperfectly attained by the best regulated government. But as industry is a power, and the most valuable of any, Nature seems determined, suitably to her usual maxims, to bestow it on men with a very sparing hand; and rather to punish him severely for his deficiency in it, than to reward him for his attainments. She has so contrived his frame, that nothing but the most violent necessity can oblige him to labour; and she employs all his other wants to overcome, at least in part, the want of diligence, and to endow him with some share of a faculty of which she has thought fit naturally to bereave him. Here our demands may be allowed very humble, and therefore the more reasonable. If we required the endowments of superior penetration and judgement, of a more delicate taste of beauty, of a nicer sensibility to benevolence and friendship; we might be told, that we impiously pretend to break the order of Nature; that we want to exalt ourselves into a higher rank of being; that the presents which we require, not being suitable to our state and condition, would only be pernicious to us. But it is hard; I dare to repeat it, it is hard, that being placed in a world so full of wants and necessities, where almost every being and element is either our foe or refuses its assistance ... we should also have our own temper to struggle with, and should be deprived of that faculty which can alone fence against these multiplied evils.

The fourth circumstance, whence arises the misery and ill of the universe, is the inaccurate workmanship of all the springs and principles of the great machine of nature. It must be acknowledged, that there are few parts of the universe, which seem not to serve some purpose, and whose removal would not produce a visible defect and disorder in the whole. The parts hang all together; nor can one be touched without affecting the rest, in a greater or less degree. But at the same time, it must be observed, that none of these parts or principles, however useful, are so accurately adjusted, as to keep precisely within those bounds in which their utility consists; but they are, all of them, apt, on every occasion, to run into the one extreme or the other. One would imagine, that this grand production had not received the last hand of the maker; so little finished is every part, and so coarse are the strokes with which it is executed. Thus, the winds are requisite to convey the vapours along the surface of the globe, and to assist men in navigation: but how oft, rising up to tempests and hurricanes, do they become pernicious? Rains are necessary to nourish all the plants and animals of the earth: but how often are they defective? how often excessive? Heat is requisite to all life and vegetation; but is not always found in the due proportion. On the mixture and secretion of the humours and juices of the body depend the health and prosperity of the animal: but the parts perform not regularly their proper function. What more useful than all the passions of the mind, ambition, vanity, love, anger? But how oft do they break their bounds, and cause the greatest convulsions in society? There is nothing so advantageous in the universe, but what frequently becomes pernicious, by its excess or defect; nor has Nature guarded, with the requisite accuracy, against all disorder or confusion. The irregularity is never perhaps so great as to destroy any species; but is often sufficient to involve the individuals in ruin and misery.

On the concurrence, then, of these four circumstances, does all or the greatest part of natural evil depend. Were all living creatures incapable of pain, or were the world administered by particular volitions, evil never could have found access into the universe: and were animals endowed with a large stock of powers and faculties, beyond what strict necessity requires; or were the several springs and principles of the universe so accurately framed as to preserve always the just temperament and medium; there must have been very little ill in comparison of what we feel at present. What then shall we pronounce on this occasion? Shall we say that these circumstances are not necessary, and that they might easily have been altered in the contrivance of the universe? This decision seems too presumptuous for creatures so blind and ignorant. Let us be more modest in our conclusions. Let us allow, that, if the goodness of the Deity (I mean a goodness like the human) could be established on any tolerable reasons a priori, these phenomena, however untoward, would not be sufficient to subvert that principle; but might easily, in some unknown manner, be reconcilable to it. But let us still assert, that as this goodness is not antecedently established, but must be inferred from the phenomena, there can be no grounds for such an inference, while there are so many ills in the universe, and while these ills might so easily have been remedied, as far as human understanding can be allowed to judge on such a subject. I am Sceptic enough to allow, that the bad appearances, notwithstanding all my reasonings, may be compatible with such attributes as you suppose; but surely they can never prove these attributes. Such a conclusion cannot result from Scepticism, but must arise from the phenomena, and from our confidence in the reasonings which we deduce from these phenomena.

Look round this universe. What an immense profusion of beings, animated and organised, sensible and active! You admire this prodigious variety and fecundity. But inspect a little more narrowly these living existences, the only beings worth regarding. How hostile and destructive to each other! How insufficient all of them for their own happiness! How contemptible or odious to the spectator! The whole presents nothing but the idea of a blind Nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without discernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children!

Here the MANICHAEAN system occurs as a proper hypothesis to solve the difficulty: and no doubt, in some respects, it is very specious, and has more probability than the common hypothesis, by giving a plausible account of the strange mixture of good and ill which appears in life. But if we consider, on the other hand, the perfect uniformity and agreement of the parts of the universe, we shall not discover in it any marks of the combat of a malevolent with a benevolent being. There is indeed an opposition of pains and pleasures in the feelings of sensible creatures: but are not all the operations of Nature carried on by an opposition of principles, of hot and cold, moist and dry, light and heavy? The true conclusion is, that the original Source of all things is entirely indifferent to all these principles; and has no more regard to good above ill, than to heat above cold, or to drought above moisture, or to light above heavy.

There may four hypotheses be framed concerning the first causes of the universe: that they are endowed with perfect goodness; that they have perfect malice; that they are opposite, and have both goodness and malice; that they have neither goodness nor malice. Mixed phenomena can never prove the two former unmixed principles; and the uniformity and steadiness of general laws seem to oppose the third. The fourth, therefore, seems by far the most probable.

What I have said concerning natural evil will apply to moral, with little or no variation; and we have no more reason to infer, that the rectitude of the Supreme Being resembles human rectitude, than that his benevolence resembles the human. Nay, it will be thought, that we have still greater cause to exclude from him moral sentiments, such as we feel them; since moral evil, in the opinion of many, is much more predominant above moral good than natural evil above natural good.

But even though this should not be allowed, and though the virtue which is in mankind should be acknowledged much superior to the vice, yet so long as there is any vice at all in the universe, it will very much puzzle you Anthropomorphites, how to account for it. You must assign a cause for it, without having recourse to the first cause. But as every effect must have a cause, and that cause another, you must either carry on the progression in infinitum, or rest on that original principle, who is the ultimate cause of all things...

Hold! hold! cried DEMEA: Whither does your imagination hurry you? I joined in alliance with you, in order to prove the incomprehensible nature of the Divine Being, and refute the principles of CLEANTHES, who would measure every thing by human rule and standard. But I now find you running into all the topics of the greatest libertines and infidels, and betraying that holy cause which you seemingly espoused. Are you secretly, then, a more dangerous enemy than CLEANTHES himself?

And are you so late in perceiving it? replied CLEANTHES. Believe me, DEMEA, your friend PHILO, from the beginning, has been amusing himself at both our expense; and it must be confessed, that the injudicious

reasoning of our vulgar theology has given him but too just a handle of ridicule. The total infirmity of human reason, the absolute incomprehensibility of the Divine Nature, the great and universal misery, and still greater wickedness of men; these are strange topics, surely, to be so fondly cherished by orthodox divines and doctors. In ages of stupidity and ignorance, indeed, these principles may safely be espoused; and perhaps no views of things are more proper to promote superstition, than such as encourage the blind amazement, the diffidence, and melancholy of mankind. But at present...

Blame not so much, interposed PHILO, the ignorance of these reverend gentlemen. They know how to change their style with the times. Formerly it was a most popular theological topic to maintain, that human life was vanity and misery, and to exaggerate all the ills and pains which are incident to men. But of late years, divines, we find, begin to retract this position; and maintain, though still with some hesitation, that there are more goods than evils, more pleasures than pains, even in this life. When religion stood entirely upon temper and education, it was thought proper to encourage melancholy; as indeed mankind never have recourse to superior powers so readily as in that disposition. But as men have now learned to form principles, and to draw consequences, it is necessary to change the batteries, and to make use of such arguments as will endure at least some scrutiny and examination. This variation is the same (and from the same causes) with that which I formerly remarked with regard to Scepticism.

Thus PHILO continued to the last his spirit of opposition, and his censure of established opinions. But I could observe that DEMEA did not at all relish the latter part of the discourse; and he took occasion soon after, on some pretence or other, to leave the company.

## PART 12

After DEMEA's departure, CLEANTHES and PHILO continued the conversation in the following manner. Our friend, I am afraid, said CLEANTHES, will have little inclination to revive this topic of discourse, while you are in company; and to tell truth, PHILO, I should rather wish to reason with either of you apart on a subject so sublime and interesting. Your spirit of controversy, joined to your abhorrence of vulgar superstition, carries you strange lengths, when engaged in an argument; and there is nothing so sacred and venerable, even in your own eyes, which you spare on that occasion.

I must confess, replied PHILO, that I am less cautious on the subject of Natural Religion than on any other; both because I know that I can never, on that head, corrupt the principles of any man of common sense; and because no one, I am confident, in whose eyes I appear a man of common sense, will ever mistake my intentions. You, in particular, CLEANTHES, with whom I live in unreserved intimacy; you are sensible, that notwithstanding the freedom of my conversation, and my love of singular arguments, no one has a deeper sense of religion impressed on his mind, or pays more profound adoration to the Divine Being, as he discovers himself to reason, in the inexplicable contrivance and artifice of nature. A purpose, an intention, a design, strikes every where the most careless, the most stupid thinker; and no man can be so hardened in absurd systems, as at all times to reject it. That Nature does nothing in vain, is a maxim established in all the schools, merely from the contemplation of the works of Nature, without any religious purpose; and, from a firm conviction of its truth, an anatomist, who had observed a new organ or canal, would never be satisfied till he had also discovered its use and intention. One great foundation of the Copernican system is the maxim, That Nature acts by the simplest methods, and chooses the most proper means to any end; and astronomers often, without thinking of it, lay this strong foundation of piety and religion. The same thing is observable in other parts of philosophy: And thus all the sciences almost lead us insensibly to acknowledge a first intelligent Author; and their authority is often so much the greater, as they do not directly profess that intention.

It is with pleasure I hear GALEN reason concerning the structure of the human body. The anatomy of a man, says he [De formatione foetus], discovers above 600 different muscles; and whoever duly considers these, will find, that, in each of them, Nature must have adjusted at least ten different circumstances, in order to attain the end which she proposed; proper figure, just magnitude, right disposition of the several ends, upper and lower position of the whole, the due insertion of the several nerves, veins, and arteries: So that, in the muscles alone, above 6000 several views and intentions must have been formed and executed. The bones he calculates to be 284: The distinct purposes aimed at in the structure of each, above forty. What a prodigious display of artifice, even in these simple and homogeneous parts! But if we consider the skin, ligaments, vessels, glandules, humours, the several limbs and members of the body; how must our astonishment rise upon us, in proportion to the number and intricacy of the parts so artificially adjusted! The further we advance in these researches, we discover new scenes of art and wisdom: But descry still, at a distance, further scenes beyond our reach; in the fine internal structure of the parts, in the economy of the brain, in the fabric of the seminal vessels. All these artifices are

repeated in every different species of animal, with wonderful variety, and with exact propriety, suited to the different intentions of Nature in framing each species. And if the infidelity of GALEN, even when these natural sciences were still imperfect, could not withstand such striking appearances, to what pitch of pertinacious obstinacy must a philosopher in this age have attained, who can now doubt of a Supreme Intelligence!

Could I meet with one of this species (who, I thank God, are very rare), I would ask him: Supposing there were a God, who did not discover himself immediately to our senses, were it possible for him to give stronger proofs of his existence, than what appear on the whole face of Nature? What indeed could such a Divine Being do, but copy the present economy of things; render many of his artifices so plain, that no stupidity could mistake them; afford glimpses of still greater artifices, which demonstrate his prodigious superiority above our narrow apprehensions; and conceal altogether a great many from such imperfect creatures? Now, according to all rules of just reasoning, every fact must pass for undisputed, when it is supported by all the arguments which its nature admits of; even though these arguments be not, in themselves, very numerous or forcible: How much more, in the present case, where no human imagination can compute their number, and no understanding estimate their cogency!

I shall further add, said CLEANTHES, to what you have so well urged, that one great advantage of the principle of Theism, is, that it is the only system of cosmogony which can be rendered intelligible and complete, and yet can throughout preserve a strong analogy to what we every day see and experience in the world. The comparison of the universe to a machine of human contrivance, is so obvious and natural, and is justified by so many instances of order and design in Nature, that it must immediately strike all unprejudiced apprehensions, and procure universal approbation. Whoever attempts to weaken this theory, cannot pretend to succeed by establishing in its place any other that is precise and determinate: It is sufficient for him if he start doubts and difficulties; and by remote and abstract views of things, reach that suspense of judgement, which is here the utmost boundary of his wishes. But, besides that this state of mind is in itself unsatisfactory, it can never be steadily maintained against such striking appearances as continually engage us into the religious hypothesis. A false, absurd system, human nature, from the force of prejudice, is capable of adhering to with obstinacy and perseverance: But no system at all, in opposition to a theory supported by strong and obvious reason, by natural propensity, and by early education, I think it absolutely impossible to maintain or defend.

So little, replied PHILO, do I esteem this suspense of judgement in the present case to be possible, that I am apt to suspect there enters somewhat of a dispute of words into this controversy, more than is usually imagined. That the works of Nature bear a great analogy to the productions of art, is evident; and according to all the rules of good reasoning, we ought to infer, if we argue at all concerning them, that their causes have a proportional analogy. But as there are also considerable differences, we have reason to suppose a proportional difference in the causes; and in particular, ought to attribute a much higher degree of power and energy to the supreme cause, than any we have ever observed in mankind. Here then the existence of a DEITY is plainly ascertained by reason: and if we make it a question, whether, on account of these analogies, we can properly call him a mind or intelligence, notwithstanding the vast difference which may reasonably be supposed between him and human minds; what is this but a mere verbal controversy? No man can deny the analogies between the effects: To restrain ourselves from inquiring concerning the causes is scarcely possible. From this inquiry, the legitimate conclusion is, that the causes have also an analogy: And if we are not contented with calling the first and supreme cause a GOD or DEITY, but desire to vary the expression; what can we call him but MIND or THOUGHT, to which he is justly supposed to bear a considerable resemblance?

All men of sound reason are disgusted with verbal disputes, which abound so much in philosophical and theological inquiries; and it is found, that the only remedy for this abuse must arise from clear definitions, from the precision of those ideas which enter into any argument, and from the strict and uniform use of those terms which are employed. But there is a species of controversy, which, from the very nature of language and of human ideas, is involved in perpetual ambiguity, and can never, by any precaution or any definitions, be able to reach a reasonable certainty or precision. These are the controversies concerning the degrees of any quality or circumstance. Men may argue to all eternity, whether HANNIBAL be a great, or a very great, or a superlatively great man, what degree of beauty CLEOPATRA possessed, what epithet of praise LIVY or THUCYDIDES is entitled to, without bringing the controversy to any determination. The disputants may here agree in their sense, and differ in the terms, or vice versa; yet never be able to define their terms, so as to enter into each other's meaning: Because the degrees of these qualities are not, like quantity or number, susceptible of any exact mensuration, which may be the standard in the controversy. That the dispute concerning Theism is of this nature, and consequently is merely verbal, or perhaps, if possible, still more incurably ambiguous, will appear upon the slightest inquiry. I ask the Theist, if he does not allow, that there is a great and immeasurable, because incomprehensible difference between the human and the divine mind: The more pious he is, the more readily will he assent to the affirmative, and the more will he be disposed to magnify the difference: He will even assert, that

the difference is of a nature which cannot be too much magnified. I next turn to the Atheist, who, I assert, is only nominally so, and can never possibly be in earnest; and I ask him, whether, from the coherence and apparent sympathy in all the parts of this world, there be not a certain degree of analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every situation and in every age; whether the rotting of a turnip, the generation of an animal, and the structure of human thought, be not energies that probably bear some remote analogy to each other: It is impossible he can deny it: He will readily acknowledge it. Having obtained this concession, I push him still further in his retreat; and I ask him, if it be not probable, that the principle which first arranged, and still maintains order in this universe, bears not also some remote inconceivable analogy to the other operations of nature, and, among the rest, to the economy of human mind and thought. However reluctant, he must give his assent. Where then, cry I to both these antagonists, is the subject of your dispute? The Theist allows, that the original intelligence is very different from human reason: The Atheist allows, that the original principle of order bears some remote analogy to it. Will you quarrel, Gentlemen, about the degrees, and enter into a controversy, which admits not of any precise meaning, nor consequently of any determination? If you should be so obstinate, I should not be surprised to find you insensibly change sides; while the Theist, on the one hand, exaggerates the dissimilarity between the Supreme Being, and frail, imperfect, variable, fleeting, and mortal creatures; and the Atheist, on the other, magnifies the analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every period, every situation, and every position. Consider then, where the real point of controversy lies; and if you cannot lay aside your disputes, endeavour, at least, to cure yourselves of your animosity.

And here I must also acknowledge, CLEANTHES, that as the works of Nature have a much greater analogy to the effects of our art and contrivance, than to those of our benevolence and justice, we have reason to infer, that the natural attributes of the Deity have a greater resemblance to those of men, than his moral have to human virtues. But what is the consequence? Nothing but this, that the moral qualities of man are more defective in their kind than his natural abilities. For, as the Supreme Being is allowed to be absolutely and entirely perfect, whatever differs most from him, departs the furthest from the supreme standard of rectitude and perfection.

It seems evident that the dispute between the Sceptics and Dogmatists is entirely verbal, or at least regards only the degrees of doubt and assurance which we ought to indulge with regard to all reasoning; and such disputes are commonly, at the bottom, verbal, and admit not of any precise determination. No philosophical Dogmatist denies that there are difficulties both with regard to the senses and to all science, and that these difficulties are in a regular, logical method, absolutely insolvable. No Sceptic denies that we lie under an absolute necessity, notwithstanding these difficulties, of thinking, and believing, and reasoning, with regard to all kinds of subjects, and even of frequently assenting with confidence and security. The only difference, then, between these sects, if they merit that name, is, that the Sceptic, from habit, caprice, or inclination, insists most on the difficulties; the Dogmatist, for like reasons, on the necessity.

These, CLEANTHES, are my unfeigned sentiments on this subject; and these sentiments, you know, I have ever cherished and maintained. But in proportion to my veneration for true religion, is my abhorrence of vulgar superstitions; and I indulge a peculiar pleasure, I confess, in pushing such principles, sometimes into absurdity, sometimes into impiety. And you are sensible, that all bigots, notwithstanding their great aversion to the latter above the former, are commonly equally guilty of both.

My inclination, replied CLEANTHES, lies, I own, a contrary way. Religion, however corrupted, is still better than no religion at all. The doctrine of a future state is so strong and necessary a security to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it. For if finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great an effect, as we daily find; how much greater must be expected from such as are infinite and eternal?

How happens it then, said PHILO, if vulgar superstition be so salutary to society, that all history abounds so much with accounts of its pernicious consequences on public affairs? Factions, civil wars, persecutions, subversions of government, oppression, slavery; these are the dismal consequences which always attend its prevalency over the minds of men. If the religious spirit be ever mentioned in any historical narration, we are sure to meet afterwards with a detail of the miseries which attend it. And no period of time can be happier or more prosperous, than those in which it is never regarded or heard of.

The reason of this observation, replied CLEANTHES, is obvious. The proper office of religion is to regulate the heart of men, humanise their conduct, infuse the spirit of temperance, order, and obedience; and as its operation is silent, and only enforces the motives of morality and justice, it is in danger of being overlooked, and confounded with these other motives. When it distinguishes itself, and acts as a separate principle over men, it has departed from its proper sphere, and has become only a cover to faction and ambition.

And so will all religion, said PHILO, except the philosophical and rational kind. Your reasonings are more easily eluded than my facts. The inference is not just, because finite and temporary rewards and punishments have so great influence, that therefore such as are infinite and eternal must have so much greater. Consider, I beseech you, the attachment which we have to present things, and the little concern which we discover for objects so remote and uncertain. When divines are declaiming against the common behaviour and conduct of the world, they always represent this principle as the strongest imaginable (which indeed it is); and describe almost all human kind as lying under the influence of it, and sunk into the deepest lethargy and unconcern about their religious interests. Yet these same divines, when they refute their speculative antagonists, suppose the motives of religion to be so powerful, that, without them, it were impossible for civil society to subsist; nor are they ashamed of so palpable a contradiction. It is certain, from experience, that the smallest grain of natural honesty and benevolence has more effect on men's conduct, than the most pompous views suggested by theological theories and systems. A man's natural inclination works incessantly upon him; it is for ever present to the mind, and mingles itself with every view and consideration: whereas religious motives, where they act at all, operate only by starts and bounds; and it is scarcely possible for them to become altogether habitual to the mind. The force of the greatest gravity, say the philosophers, is infinitely small, in comparison of that of the least impulse: yet it is certain, that the smallest gravity will, in the end, prevail above a great impulse; because no strokes or blows can be repeated with such constancy as attraction and gravitation.

Another advantage of inclination: It engages on its side all the wit and ingenuity of the mind; and when set in opposition to religious principles, seeks every method and art of eluding them: In which it is almost always successful. Who can explain the heart of man, or account for those strange salvos and excuses, with which people satisfy themselves, when they follow their inclinations in opposition to their religious duty? This is well understood in the world; and none but fools ever repose less trust in a man, because they hear, that from study and philosophy, he has entertained some speculative doubts with regard to theological subjects. And when we have to do with a man, who makes a great profession of religion and devotion, has this any other effect upon several, who pass for prudent, than to put them on their guard, lest they be cheated and deceived by him?

We must further consider, that philosophers, who cultivate reason and reflection, stand less in need of such motives to keep them under the restraint of morals; and that the vulgar, who alone may need them, are utterly incapable of so pure a religion as represents the Deity to be pleased with nothing but virtue in human behaviour. The recommendations to the Divinity are generally supposed to be either frivolous observances, or rapturous ecstasies, or a bigoted credulity. We need not run back into antiquity, or wander into remote regions, to find instances of this degeneracy. Amongst ourselves, some have been guilty of that atrociousness, unknown to the Egyptian and Grecian superstitions, of declaiming in express terms, against morality; and representing it as a sure forfeiture of the Divine favour, if the least trust or reliance be laid upon it.

But even though superstition or enthusiasm should not put itself in direct opposition to morality; the very diverting of the attention, the raising up a new and frivolous species of merit, the preposterous distribution which it makes of praise and blame, must have the most pernicious consequences, and weaken extremely men's attachment to the natural motives of justice and humanity.

Such a principle of action likewise, not being any of the familiar motives of human conduct, acts only by intervals on the temper; and must be roused by continual efforts, in order to render the pious zealot satisfied with his own conduct, and make him fulfil his devotional task. Many religious exercises are entered into with seeming fervour, where the heart, at the time, feels cold and languid: A habit of dissimulation is by degrees contracted; and fraud and falsehood become the predominant principle. Hence the reason of that vulgar observation, that the highest zeal in religion and the deepest hypocrisy, so far from being inconsistent, are often or commonly united in the same individual character.

The bad effects of such habits, even in common life, are easily imagined; but where the interests of religion are concerned, no morality can be forcible enough to bind the enthusiastic zealot. The sacredness of the cause sanctifies every measure which can be made use of to promote it.

The steady attention alone to so important an interest as that of eternal salvation, is apt to extinguish the benevolent affections, and beget a narrow, contracted selfishness. And when such a temper is encouraged, it easily eludes all the general precepts of charity and benevolence.

Thus, the motives of vulgar superstition have no great influence on general conduct; nor is their operation favourable to morality, in the instances where they predominate.

Is there any maxim in politics more certain and infallible, than that both the number and authority of priests should be confined within very narrow limits; and that the civil magistrate ought, for ever, to keep his fasces and axes from such dangerous hands? But if the spirit of popular religion were so salutary to society, a contrary maxim ought to prevail. The greater number of priests, and their greater authority and riches, will always augment the religious spirit. And though the priests have the guidance of this spirit, why may we not expect a superior sanctity of life, and greater benevolence and moderation, from persons who are set apart for religion, who are continually inculcating it upon others, and who must themselves imbibe a greater share of it? Whence comes it then, that, in fact, the utmost a wise magistrate can propose with regard to popular religions, is, as far as possible, to make a saving game of it, and to prevent their pernicious consequences with regard to society? Every expedient which he tries for so humble a purpose is surrounded with inconveniences. If he admits only one religion among his subjects, he must sacrifice, to an uncertain prospect of tranquillity, every consideration of public liberty, science, reason, industry, and even his own independency. If he gives indulgence to several sects, which is the wiser maxim, he must preserve a very philosophical indifference to all of them, and carefully restrain the pretensions of the prevailing sect; otherwise he can expect nothing but endless disputes, quarrels, factions, persecutions, and civil commotions.

True religion, I allow, has no such pernicious consequences: but we must treat of religion, as it has commonly been found in the world; nor have I any thing to do with that speculative tenet of Theism, which, as it is a species of philosophy, must partake of the beneficial influence of that principle, and at the same time must lie under a like inconvenience, of being always confined to very few persons.

Oaths are requisite in all courts of judicature; but it is a question whether their authority arises from any popular religion. It is the solemnity and importance of the occasion, the regard to reputation, and the reflecting on the general interests of society, which are the chief restraints upon mankind. Custom-house oaths and political oaths are but little regarded even by some who pretend to principles of honesty and religion; and a Quaker's asseveration is with us justly put upon the same footing with the oath of any other person. I know, that POLYBIUS [Lib. vi. cap. 54.] ascribes the infamy of GREEK faith to the prevalency of the EPICUREAN philosophy: but I know also, that Punic faith had as bad a reputation in ancient times as Irish evidence has in modern; though we cannot account for these vulgar observations by the same reason. Not to mention that Greek faith was infamous before the rise of the Epicurean philosophy; and EURIPIDES [Iphigenia in Tauride], in a passage which I shall point out to you, has glanced a remarkable stroke of satire against his nation, with regard to this circumstance.

Take care, PHILO, replied CLEANTHES, take care: push not matters too far: allow not your zeal against false religion to undermine your veneration for the true. Forfeit not this principle, the chief, the only great comfort in life; and our principal support amidst all the attacks of adverse fortune. The most agreeable reflection, which it is possible for human imagination to suggest, is that of genuine Theism, which represents us as the workmanship of a Being perfectly good, wise, and powerful; who created us for happiness; and who, having implanted in us immeasurable desires of good, will prolong our existence to all eternity, and will transfer us into an infinite variety of scenes, in order to satisfy those desires, and render our felicity complete and durable. Next to such a Being himself (if the comparison be allowed), the happiest lot which we can imagine, is that of being under his guardianship and protection.

These appearances, said PHILO, are most engaging and alluring; and with regard to the true philosopher, they are more than appearances. But it happens here, as in the former case, that, with regard to the greater part of mankind, the appearances are deceitful, and that the terrors of religion commonly prevail above its comforts.

It is allowed, that men never have recourse to devotion so readily as when dejected with grief or depressed with sickness. Is not this a proof, that the religious spirit is not so nearly allied to joy as to sorrow?

But men, when afflicted, find consolation in religion, replied CLEANTHES. Sometimes, said PHILO: but it is natural to imagine, that they will form a notion of those unknown beings, suitably to the present gloom and melancholy of their temper, when they betake themselves to the contemplation of them. Accordingly, we find the tremendous images to predominate in all religions; and we ourselves, after having employed the most exalted expression in our descriptions of the Deity, fall into the flattest contradiction in affirming that the damned are infinitely superior in number to the elect.

I shall venture to affirm, that there never was a popular religion, which represented the state of departed souls in such a light, as would render it eligible for human kind that there should be such a state. These fine models of religion are the mere product of philosophy. For as death lies between the eye and the prospect of futurity, that event is so shocking to Nature, that it must throw a gloom on all the regions which lie beyond it; and suggest to the generality of mankind the idea of CERBERUS and FURIES; devils, and torrents of fire and brimstone.

It is true, both fear and hope enter into religion; because both these passions, at different times, agitate the human mind, and each of them forms a species of divinity suitable to itself. But when a man is in a cheerful disposition, he is fit for business, or company, or entertainment of any kind; and he naturally applies himself to these, and thinks not of religion. When melancholy and dejected, he has nothing to do but brood upon the terrors of the invisible world, and to plunge himself still deeper in affliction. It may indeed happen, that after he has, in this manner, engraved the religious opinions deep into his thought and imagination, there may arrive a change of health or circumstances, which may restore his good humour, and raising cheerful prospects of futurity, make him run into the other extreme of joy and triumph. But still it must be acknowledged, that, as terror is the primary principle of religion, it is the passion which always predominates in it, and admits but of short intervals of pleasure.

Not to mention, that these fits of excessive, enthusiastic joy, by exhausting the spirits, always prepare the way for equal fits of superstitious terror and dejection; nor is there any state of mind so happy as the calm and equable. But this state it is impossible to support, where a man thinks that he lies in such profound darkness and uncertainty, between an eternity of happiness and an eternity of misery. No wonder that such an opinion disjoins the ordinary frame of the mind, and throws it into the utmost confusion. And though that opinion is seldom so steady in its operation as to influence all the actions; yet it is apt to make a considerable breach in the temper, and to produce that gloom and melancholy so remarkable in all devout people.

It is contrary to common sense to entertain apprehensions or terrors upon account of any opinion whatsoever, or to imagine that we run any risk hereafter, by the freest use of our reason. Such a sentiment implies both an absurdity and an inconsistency. It is an absurdity to believe that the Deity has human passions, and one of the lowest of human passions, a restless appetite for applause. It is an inconsistency to believe, that, since the Deity has this human passion, he has not others also; and, in particular, a disregard to the opinions of creatures so much inferior.

To know God, says SENECA, is to worship him. All other worship is indeed absurd, superstitious, and even impious. It degrades him to the low condition of mankind, who are delighted with entreaty, solicitation, presents, and flattery. Yet is this impiety the smallest of which superstition is guilty. Commonly, it depresses the Deity far below the condition of mankind; and represents him as a capricious DEMON, who exercises his power without reason and without humanity! And were that Divine Being disposed to be offended at the vices and follies of silly mortals, who are his own workmanship, ill would it surely fare with the votaries of most popular superstitions. Nor would any of human race merit his favour, but a very few, the philosophical Theists, who entertain, or rather indeed endeavour to entertain, suitable notions of his Divine perfections: As the only persons entitled to his compassion and indulgence would be the philosophical Sceptics, a sect almost equally rare, who, from a natural diffidence of their own capacity, suspend, or endeavour to suspend, all judgement with regard to such sublime and such extraordinary subjects.

If the whole of Natural Theology, as some people seem to maintain, resolves itself into one simple, though somewhat ambiguous, at least undefined proposition, That the cause or causes of order in the universe probably bear some remote analogy to human intelligence: If this proposition be not capable of extension, variation, or more particular explication: If it affords no inference that affects human life, or can be the source of any action or forbearance: And if the analogy, imperfect as it is, can be carried no further than to the human intelligence, and cannot be transferred, with any appearance of probability, to the other qualities of the mind; if this really be the case, what can the most inquisitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philosophical assent to the proposition, as often as it occurs, and believe that the arguments on which it is established exceed the objections which lie against it? Some astonishment, indeed, will naturally arise from the greatness of the object; some melancholy from its obscurity; some contempt of human reason, that it can give no solution more satisfactory with regard to so extraordinary and magnificent a question. But believe me, CLEANTHES, the most natural sentiment which a well-disposed mind will feel on this occasion, is a longing desire and expectation that Heaven would be pleased to dissipate, at least alleviate, this profound ignorance, by affording some more particular revelation to mankind, and making discoveries of the nature, attributes, and operations of the Divine object of our faith. A person, seasoned with a just sense of the imperfections of natural reason, will fly to revealed truth with the greatest avidity: While the haughty Dogmatist, persuaded that he can erect a complete system of Theology by the mere help of philosophy, disdains any further aid, and rejects this adventitious instructor. To be a philosophical Sceptic is, in a man of letters, the first and most essential step towards being a sound, believing Christian; a proposition which I would willingly recommend to the attention of PAMPHILUS: And I hope CLEANTHES will forgive me for interposing so far in the education and instruction of his pupil.

CLEANTHES and PHILO pursued not this conversation much further: and as nothing ever made greater impression on me, than all the reasonings of that day, so I confess, that, upon a serious review of the whole, I

cannot but think, that PHILO's principles are more probable than DEMEA's; but that those of CLEANTHES approach still nearer to the truth.

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## PROBLEM OF EVIL (OVERVIEW)

The problem of evil refers to the question of how to reconcile the existence of [evil](#) with an [omnibenevolent](#), [omniscient](#) and [omnipotent God](#) (see [theism](#)).<sup>[1][2]</sup> An [argument from evil](#) attempts to show that the co-existence of evil and such a God is unlikely or impossible. Attempts to show the contrary have traditionally been discussed under the heading of [theodicy](#). Besides philosophy of religion, the problem of evil is also important to the field of [theology](#) and [ethics](#).

The problem of evil is often formulated in two forms: the logical problem of evil and the evidential problem of evil. The logical form of the argument tries to show a logical impossibility in the coexistence of God and evil,<sup>[1][3]</sup> while the evidential form tries to show that given the evil in the world, it is improbable that there is an omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly good God.<sup>[2]</sup> The problem of evil has been extended to non-human life forms, to include animal suffering from natural evils and human cruelty against them.<sup>[4]</sup>

Responses to various versions of the problem of evil, meanwhile, come in three forms: refutations, defenses, and theodicies. A wide range of responses have been made against these arguments. There are also many discussions of evil and associated problems in other philosophical fields, such as [secular ethics](#),<sup>[5][6][7]</sup> and [evolutionary ethics](#).<sup>[8][9]</sup> But as usually understood, the “problem of evil” is posed in a [theological](#) context.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

The problem of evil acutely applies to monotheistic religions such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism that believe in a monotheistic God who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnibenevolent;<sup>[10][11]</sup> but it has also been studied in religions that are non-theistic or polytheistic, such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism.<sup>[12][13]</sup>

The problem of evil refers to the challenge of reconciling belief in an omniscient, omnipotent and omnibenevolent God, with the existence of evil and suffering in the world.<sup>[2][12][14][note 1]</sup> The problem may be described either experientially or theoretically.<sup>[2]</sup> The experiential problem is the difficulty in believing in a concept of loving God when confronted by suffering or evil in the real world, such as from epidemics, or wars, or murder, or rape or terror attacks wherein innocent children, women, men or a loved one becomes a victim.<sup>[17][18][19]</sup> The problem of evil is also a theoretical one, usually described and studied by religion scholars in two varieties: the logical problem and the evidential problem.<sup>[2]</sup>

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# PROBLEM OF EVIL (LOGICAL AND EVIDENTIAL PROBLEM)

## Logical problem of evil

Originating with Greek philosopher [Epicurus](#),<sup>[20]</sup> the logical argument from evil is as follows:

1. If an [omnipotent](#), [omniscient](#), and [omnibenevolent](#) god exists, then evil does not.
2. There is evil in the world.
3. Therefore, an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God does not exist.

This argument is of the form [modus tollens](#), and is [logically valid](#): If its premises are true, the conclusion follows of necessity. To show that the first premise is plausible, subsequent versions tend to expand on it, such as this modern example:<sup>[2]</sup>

1. God exists.
2. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent.
3. An omnibenevolent being would want to prevent all evils.
4. An omniscient being knows every way in which evils can come into existence, and knows every way in which those evils could be prevented.
5. An omnipotent being has the power to prevent that evil from coming into existence.
6. A being who knows every way in which an evil can come into existence, who is able to prevent that evil from coming into existence, and who wants to do so, would prevent the existence of that evil.
7. If there exists an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God, then no evil exists.
8. Evil exists (logical contradiction).

Both of these arguments are understood to be presenting two forms of the *logical* problem of evil. They attempt to show that the assumed [propositions](#) lead to a [logical contradiction](#) and therefore cannot all be correct. Most philosophical debate has focused on the propositions stating that God cannot exist with, or would want to prevent, all evils (premises 3 and 6), with defenders of theism (for example, Leibniz) arguing that God could very well exist with and allow evil in order to achieve a greater good.

## Theism that forgoes absolute omniscience, omnipotence, or omnibenevolence[[edit](#)]

If God lacks any one of these qualities—omniscience, omnipotence, or omnibenevolence—then the logical problem of evil can be resolved. [Process theology](#) and [open theism](#) are other positions that limit God's omnipotence and/or omniscience (as defined in traditional theology). [Dystheism](#) is the belief that God is not wholly good.

## Evidential problem of evil

[William L. Rowe](#)'s example of [natural evil](#): "In some distant forest lightning strikes a dead tree, resulting in a forest fire. In the fire a fawn is trapped, horribly burned, and lies in terrible agony for several days before death relieves its suffering."<sup>[21]</sup> Rowe also cites the example of human evil where an innocent child is a victim of violence and thereby suffers.<sup>[21]</sup>

The *evidential* version of the problem of evil (also referred to as the probabilistic or inductive version), seeks to show that the existence of evil, although logically consistent with the existence of God, counts against or lowers the [probability](#) of the truth of theism. As an example, a critic of Plantinga's idea of "a mighty nonhuman spirit" causing natural evils may concede that the existence of such a being is not logically impossible but argue that due to lacking scientific evidence for its existence this is very unlikely and thus it is an unconvincing explanation for the

presence of natural evils. Both absolute versions and relative versions of the evidential problems of evil are presented below.

A version by [William L. Rowe](#):

1. There exist instances of intense suffering which an omnipotent, omniscient being could have prevented without thereby losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.
2. An omniscient, wholly good being would prevent the occurrence of any intense suffering it could, unless it could not do so without thereby losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.
3. (Therefore) There does not exist an omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good being.<sup>[2]</sup>

Another by [Paul Draper](#):

1. Gratuitous evils exist.
2. The hypothesis of indifference, *i.e.*, that if there are supernatural beings they are indifferent to gratuitous evils, is a better explanation for (1) than theism.
3. Therefore, evidence prefers that no god, as commonly understood by theists, exists.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Problem of evil and animal suffering

The problem of evil has also been extended beyond human suffering, to include suffering of animals from cruelty, disease and evil.<sup>[4]</sup> One version of this problem includes animal suffering from natural evil, such as the violence and fear faced by animals from predators, natural disasters, over the history of evolution.<sup>[23]</sup> This is also referred to the Darwinian problem of evil,<sup>[24][25]</sup> after Charles Darwin who expressed it as follows:<sup>[26]</sup>

The sufferings of millions of the lower animals throughout almost endless time' are apparently irreconcilable with the existence of a Creator of 'unbounded' goodness.

— [Charles Darwin, 1856](#)<sup>[26]</sup>

The second version of the problem of evil applied to animals, and avoidable suffering experienced by them, is one caused by some human beings, such as from animal cruelty or when they are shot or slaughtered. This version of the problem of evil has been used by scholars including John Hick to counter the responses and defenses to the problem of evil such as suffering being a means to perfect the morals and greater good because animals are innocent, helpless, amoral but sentient victims.<sup>[4][27][28]</sup> Scholar Michael Almeida said this was “perhaps the most serious and difficult” version of the problem of evil.<sup>[25]</sup> The problem of evil in the context of animal suffering, states Almeida, can be stated as:<sup>[29][note 2]</sup>

1. God is omnipotent, omniscient and wholly good.
2. The evil of extensive animal suffering exists.
3. Necessarily, God can actualize an evolutionary perfect world.
4. Necessarily, God can actualize an evolutionary perfect world only if God does actualize an evolutionary perfect world.
5. Necessarily, God actualized an evolutionary perfect world.
6. If #1 is true then either #2 or #5 is true, but not both. This is a contradiction, so #1 is not true.

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# PROBLEM OF EVIL (RESPONSES)

Responses to the problem of evil have occasionally been classified as *defences* or *theodicies*; however, authors disagree on the exact definitions.<sup>[1][2][30]</sup> Generally, a *defense* against the problem of evil may refer to attempts to

defuse the logical problem of evil by showing that there is no logical incompatibility between the existence of evil and the existence of God. This task does not require the identification of a plausible explanation of evil, and is successful if the explanation provided shows that the existence of God and the existence of evil are logically compatible. It need not even be true, since a false though coherent explanation would be sufficient to show logical compatibility.<sup>[31]</sup>

A *theodicy*,<sup>[32]</sup> on the other hand, is more ambitious, since it attempts to provide a plausible justification—a morally or philosophically sufficient reason—for the existence of evil and thereby rebut the “evidential” argument from evil.<sup>[2]</sup> Richard Swinburne maintains that it does not make sense to assume there are greater goods that justify the evil’s presence in the world unless we know what they are—without knowledge of what the greater goods could be, one cannot have a successful theodicy.<sup>[33]</sup> Thus, some authors see arguments appealing to *demons* or the *fall of man* as indeed logically possible, but not very *plausible* given our knowledge about the world, and so see those arguments as providing defences but not good theodicies.<sup>[2]</sup>

The above argument is set against numerous versions of the problem of evil that have been formulated.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> These versions have included philosophical and theological formulations.

## Skeptical theism

Skeptical theism defends the problem of evil by asserting that God allows an evil to happen in order to prevent a greater evil or to encourage a response that will lead to a greater good.<sup>[34]</sup> Thus a rape or a murder of an innocent child is defended as having a God’s purpose that a human being may not comprehend, but which may lead to lesser evil or greater good.<sup>[34]</sup> This is called skeptical theism because the argument aims to encourage self-skepticism, either by trying to rationalize God’s possible hidden motives, or by trying to explain it as a limitation of human ability to know.<sup>[34][35]</sup> The greater good defense is more often argued in religious studies in response to the evidential version of the problem of evil,<sup>[35]</sup> while the free will defense is usually discussed in the context of the logical version.<sup>[36]</sup> Most scholars criticize the skeptical theism defense as “devaluing the suffering” and not addressing the premise that God is all-benevolent and should be able to stop all suffering and evil, rather than play a balancing act.<sup>[37]</sup>

## “Greater good” responses

The *omnipotence paradoxes*, where evil persists in the presence of an all powerful God, raise questions as to the nature of God’s omnipotence. Although that is from excluding the idea of how an interference would negate and subjugate the concept of free will, or in other words result in a totalitarian system that creates a lack of freedom. Some solutions propose that omnipotence does not require the ability to actualize the logically impossible. “Greater good” responses to the problem make use of this insight by arguing for the existence of goods of great value which God cannot actualize without also permitting evil, and thus that there are evils he cannot be expected to prevent despite being omnipotent. Among the most popular versions of the “greater good” response are appeals to the apologetics of free will. Theologians will argue that since no one can fully understand God’s ultimate plan, no one can assume that evil actions do not have some sort of greater purpose. Therefore, the nature of evil has a necessary role to play in God’s plan for a better world.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Free will

The problem of evil is sometimes explained as a consequence of *free will*, an ability granted by God.<sup>[39][40]</sup> Free will is both a source of good and of evil, and with free will also comes the potential for abuse, as when individuals act immorally. People with free will “decide to cause suffering and act in other evil ways”, states Boyd, and it is they who make that choice, not God.<sup>[39]</sup> Further, the free will argument asserts that it would be logically inconsistent for God to prevent evil by coercion and curtailing free will, because that would no longer be free will.<sup>[39][40]</sup> This explanation does not completely address the problem of evil, because some suffering and evil is not a result of consciousness choice, but is the result of ignorance or natural causes (a child suffering from a

disease), and an all-powerful and all-benevolent God would create a world with free beings and stop this suffering and evil.<sup>[39][40]</sup>

Alvin Plantinga has suggested an expanded version of the [free will defense](#). The first part of his defense accounts for moral evil as the result of human action with free will. The second part of his defense suggests the logical possibility of “a mighty non-human spirit” (non-God supernatural beings and fallen angels)<sup>[1][41]</sup> whose free will is responsible for “[natural evils](#)“, including earthquakes, floods, and virulent diseases. Most scholars agree that Plantinga’s free will of human and non-human spirits (demons) argument successfully solves the logical problem of evil, proving that God and evil are logically compatible<sup>[42]</sup> but other scholars explicitly dissent.<sup>[43]</sup> The dissenters state that while explaining infectious diseases, cancer, hurricanes and other nature caused suffering as something that is caused by the free will of supernatural beings, solves the logical version of the problem of evil, but it is highly unlikely that these natural evils do not have natural causes that an omnipotent God could prevent, but instead are caused by the immoral actions of supernatural beings with free will who God created.<sup>[1]</sup> According to Michael Tooley, this defense is also highly implausible because suffering from natural evil is localized, rational causes and cures for major diseases have been found, and it is unclear why anyone, including a supernatural being who God created would choose then inflict localized evil and suffering to innocent children for example, and why God fails to stop such suffering if he is omnipotent.<sup>[44]</sup>

Critics of the free will response have questioned whether it accounts for the degree of evil seen in this world. One point in this regard is that while the value of free will may be thought sufficient to counterbalance minor evils, it is less obvious that it outweighs the negative attributes of evils such as rape and murder. Particularly egregious cases known as horrendous evils, which “[constitute] [prima facie](#) reason to doubt whether the participant’s life could (given their inclusion in it) be a great good to him/her on the whole,” have been the focus of recent work in the problem of evil.<sup>[45]</sup> Another point is that those actions of free beings which bring about evil very often diminish the freedom of those who suffer the evil; for example the murder of a young child may prevent the child from ever exercising their free will. In such a case the freedom of an innocent child is pitted against the freedom of the evil-doer, it is not clear why God would remain unresponsive and passive.<sup>[46]</sup>

Another criticism is that the potential for evil inherent in free will may be limited by means which do not impinge on that free will. God could accomplish this by making moral actions especially pleasurable, or evil action and suffering impossible by allowing free will but not allowing the ability to enact evil or impose suffering.<sup>[47]</sup>

Supporters of the free will explanation state that that would no longer be free will.<sup>[39][40]</sup> Critics respond that this view seems to imply it would be similarly wrong to try to reduce suffering and evil in these ways, a position which few would advocate.<sup>[48]</sup>

A third challenge to the free will defence is [natural evil](#). By definition, moral evil results from human action, but natural evil results from natural processes that cause natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions or earthquakes.<sup>[49]</sup> Advocates of the free will response to evil propose various explanations of natural evils. Alvin Plantinga, following Augustine of Hippo,<sup>[50]</sup> and others have argued that natural evils are caused by the free choices of supernatural beings such as [demons](#).<sup>[51]</sup> Others have argued

- that natural evils are the result of the [fall of man](#), which corrupted the perfect world created by God<sup>[52]</sup> or
- that natural evils are the result of [natural laws](#)<sup>[53]</sup> or
- that natural evils provide us with a knowledge of evil which makes our free choices more significant than they would otherwise be, and so our free will more valuable<sup>[54]</sup> or
- that natural evils are a mechanism of divine punishment for moral evils that humans have committed, and so the natural evil is justified.<sup>[55]</sup>

There is also debate regarding the compatibility of moral free will (to select good or evil action) with the absence of evil from heaven,<sup>[56][57]</sup> with God’s omniscience and with his omnibenevolence.<sup>[3]</sup>

#### **Free will and animal suffering**

One of the weaknesses of the free will defense is its inapplicability or contradictory applicability with respect to evils faced by animals and the consequent animal suffering. Some scholars, such as David Griffin, state that the free will, or the assumption of greater good through free will, does not apply to animals.<sup>[58][59]</sup> In contrast, a few

scholars while accepting that “free will” applies in a human context, have posited an alternative “free creatures” defense, stating that animals too benefit from their physical freedom though that comes with the cost of dangers they continuously face.<sup>[60]</sup>

The “free creatures” defense has also been criticized, in the case of caged, domesticated and farmed animals who are not free and many of whom have historically experienced evil and suffering from abuse by their owners. Further, even animals and living creatures in the wild face horrendous evils and suffering – such as burn and slow death after natural fires or other natural disasters or from predatory injuries – and it is unclear, state Bishop and Perszyk, why an all-loving God would create such free creatures prone to intense suffering.<sup>[60]</sup> Another line of extended criticism of free will defense has been that if God is perfectly powerful, knowing and loving, then he could have actualized a world with free creatures without moral evil where everyone chooses good, is always full of loving-kindness, is compassionate, always non-violent and full of joy, where earth were just like the monotheistic concept of [heaven](#). If God did create a heaven with his love, an all-loving and always-loving God could have created an earth without evil and suffering for animals and human beings just like heaven.<sup>[61]</sup>

## Soul-making or Irenaean theodicy

The soul-making or Irenaean theodicy is named after the 2nd century French theologian [Irenaeus](#), whose ideas were adopted in Eastern Christianity.<sup>[62]</sup> It has been discussed by [John Hick](#), and the Irenaean theodicy asserts that evil and [suffering](#) are necessary for spiritual growth, for man to discover his soul, and God allows evil for spiritual growth of human beings.<sup>[62]</sup>

The Irenaean theodicy has been challenged with the assertion that many evils do not seem to promote spiritual growth, and can be positively destructive of the human spirit. Hick acknowledges that this process often fails in our world.<sup>[63]</sup> A second issue concerns the distribution of evils suffered: were it true that God permitted evil in order to facilitate spiritual growth, then we would expect evil to disproportionately befall those in poor spiritual health. This does not seem to be the case, as the decadent enjoy lives of luxury which insulate them from evil, whereas many of the pious are poor, and are well acquainted with worldly evils.<sup>[64]</sup> Thirdly, states Kane, human character can be developed directly or in constructive and nurturing loving ways, and it is unclear why God would consider or allow evil and suffering to be necessary or the preferred way to spiritual growth.<sup>[65]</sup> Further, horrendous suffering often leads to dehumanization, its victims in truth do not grow spiritually but become vindictive and spiritually worse.<sup>[66]</sup>

This reconciliation of the problem of evil and God, states Creegan, also fails to explain the need or rationale for evil inflicted on animals and resultant animal suffering, because “there is no evidence at all that suffering improves the character of animals, or is evidence of soul-making in them”.<sup>[66]</sup>

## Afterlife

[Thomas Aquinas](#) suggested the [afterlife](#) theodicy to address the problem of evil and to justifying the existence of evil.<sup>[67]</sup> The premise behind this theodicy has been that afterlife is unending, human life short, and God allows evil and suffering in order to judge and grant everlasting heaven or hell based on human moral actions and human suffering.<sup>[67][68][69]</sup> Aquinas went further and suggested that the afterlife is the “greater good” that justifies the evil and suffering in current life.<sup>[67]</sup> Christian author [Randy Alcorn](#) argues that the joys of [heaven](#) will compensate for the sufferings on earth.<sup>[70]</sup>

Stephen Maitzen has called this the “Heaven Swamps Everything” theodicy, and argues that it is false because it conflates compensation and justification.<sup>[68][71]</sup>

The second failure of the afterlife theodicy is in its inability to reconcile the suffering faced by small babies and innocent children from diseases, abuse and injury in war or terror attacks, since “human moral actions” are not to be expected from babies and children.<sup>[72]</sup> Similarly, moral actions and the concept of choice does not apply to the problem of evil applied to animal suffering from natural evil and the actions of human beings.<sup>[72][73]</sup>

## Deny evil exists

In the second century, Christian theologians attempted to reconcile the problem of evil with an omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent God, by denying that evil exists. Among these theologians, [Clement of Alexandria](#) offered several theodicies, of which one was called “privation theory of evil” which was adopted thereafter.<sup>[74]</sup> The other is a more modern version of “deny evil”, suggested by Christian Science, wherein the perception of evil is described as a form of illusion.<sup>[75]</sup>

### Evil as the absence of good (Privation Theory)

The early version of “deny evil” is called the “privation theory of evil”, so named because it described evil as a form of “lack, loss or privation”. One of the earliest proponents of this theory was the 2nd-century Clement of Alexandria, who according to Joseph Kelly,<sup>[74]</sup> stated that “since God is completely good, he could not have created evil; but if God did not create evil, then it cannot exist”. Evil, according to Clement, does not exist as a positive, but exists as a negative or as a “lack of good”.<sup>[74]</sup> Clement’s idea was criticised for its inability to explain suffering in the world, if evil did not exist. He was also pressed by Gnostics scholars with the question as to why God did not create creatures that “did not lack the good”. Clement attempted to answer these questions ontologically through dualism, an idea found in the Platonic school,<sup>[76]</sup> that is by presenting two realities, one of God and Truth, another of human and perceived experience.<sup>[77]</sup>

The fifth-century theologian [Augustine of Hippo](#) adopted the privation theory, and in his *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love*, maintained that evil exists only as “absence of the good”, that vices are nothing but the privations of natural good.<sup>[76]</sup> Evil is not a substance, states Augustine, it is nothing more than “loss of good”.<sup>[78]</sup> God does not participate in evil, God is perfection, His creation is perfection, stated Augustine.<sup>[78]</sup> According to the privation theory, it is the absence of the good, that explains sin and moral evil.<sup>[78]</sup>

This view has been criticized as merely substituting definition, of evil with “loss of good”, of “problem of evil and suffering” with the “problem of loss of good and suffering”, but it neither addresses the issue from the theoretical point of view nor from the experiential point of view.<sup>[79]</sup> Scholars who criticize the privation theory state that murder, rape, terror, pain and suffering are real life events for the victim, and cannot be denied as mere “lack of good”.<sup>[80]</sup> Augustine, states Pereira, accepted suffering exists and was aware that the privation theory was not a solution to the problem of evil.<sup>[79]</sup>

### Evil as illusory

An alternative modern version of the privation theory is by [Christian Science](#), which asserts that evils such as suffering and disease only appear to be real, but in truth are illusions, and in reality evil does not exist.<sup>[75]</sup> The theologians of Christian Science, states Stephen Gottschalk, posit that the Spirit is of infinite might, mortal human beings fail to grasp this and focus instead on evil and suffering that have no real existence as “a power, person or principle opposed to God”.<sup>[81]</sup>

The illusion version of privation theory theodicy has been critiqued for denying the reality of crimes, wars, terror, sickness, injury, death, suffering and pain to the victim.<sup>[81]</sup> Further, adds Millard Erickson, the illusion argument merely shifts the problem to a new problem, as to why God would create this “illusion” of crimes, wars, terror, sickness, injury, death, suffering and pain; and why doesn’t God stop this “illusion”.<sup>[82]</sup>

## Turning the tables

A different approach to the problem of evil is to turn the tables by suggesting that any argument from evil is self-refuting, in that its conclusion would necessitate the falsity of one of its premises. One response – called the defensive response<sup>[83]</sup> – has been to assert the opposite, and to point out that the assertion “evil exists” implies

an ethical standard against which moral value is determined, and then to argue that this standard implies the existence of God.<sup>[84]</sup>

The standard criticism of this view is that an argument from evil is not necessarily a presentation of the views of its proponent, but is instead intended to show how premises which the theist is inclined to believe lead him or her to the conclusion that God does not exist. A second criticism is that “evil” is inferred from the “suffering” of the victims, not from “ethical standard” for the evil actor.<sup>[85][86]</sup> This argument was expounded upon by David Hume.<sup>[83]</sup>

## Hidden reasons

A variant of above defenses is that the problem of evil is derived from probability judgments since they rest on the claim that, even after careful reflection, one can see no good reason for co-existence of God and of evil. The [inference](#) from this claim to the general statement that there exists unnecessary evil is [inductive](#) in nature and it is this inductive step that sets the evidential argument apart from the logical argument.<sup>[2]</sup>

The hidden reasons defense asserts that there exists the logical possibility of hidden or unknown reasons for the existence of evil along with the existence of an almighty, all-knowing, all-benevolent, all-powerful God. Not knowing the reason does not necessarily mean that the reason does not exist.<sup>[1][2]</sup> This argument has been challenged with the assertion that the hidden reasons premise is as plausible as the premise that God does not exist or is not “an almighty, all-knowing, all-benevolent, all-powerful”. Similarly, for every hidden argument that completely or partially justifies observed evils it is equally likely that there is a hidden argument that actually makes the observed evils worse than they appear without hidden arguments, or that the hidden reasons may result in additional contradictions.<sup>[1][87]</sup> As such, from an inductive viewpoint hidden arguments will neutralize one another.<sup>[1]</sup>

A sub-variant of the “hidden reasons” defense is called the “PHOG” – profoundly hidden outweighing goods – defense.<sup>[87]</sup> The PHOG defense, states Bryan Frances, not only leaves the co-existence of God and human suffering unanswered, but raises questions about why animals and other life forms have to suffer from natural evil, or from abuse (animal slaughter, animal cruelty) by some human beings, where hidden moral lessons, hidden social good and such hidden reasons to reconcile God with the problem of evil do not apply.<sup>[87]</sup>

## Previous lives and karma

The theory of [karma](#) refers to the spiritual principle of cause and effect where intent and actions of an individual (cause) influence the future of that individual (effect).<sup>[88]</sup> The problem of evil, in the context of karma, has been long discussed in Indian religions including Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism, both in its theistic and non-theistic schools; for example, in Uttara Mīmāṃsā Sutras Book 2 Chapter 1,<sup>[89][90]</sup> the 8th century arguments by Adi Sankara in *Brahmasutrabhasya* where he posits that God cannot reasonably be the cause of the world because there exists moral evil, inequality, cruelty and suffering in the world,<sup>[91][92]</sup> and the 11th century theodicy discussion by Ramanuja in *Sribhasya*.<sup>[93]</sup>

Many Indian religions place greater emphasis on developing the karma principle for first cause and innate justice with Man as focus, rather than developing religious principles with the nature and powers of God and divine judgment as focus.<sup>[94]</sup> Karma theory of Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism is not static, but dynamic wherein living beings with intent or without intent, but with words and actions continuously create new karma, and it is this that they believe to be in part the source of good or evil in the world.<sup>[95]</sup> These religions also believe that past lives or past actions in current life create current circumstances, which also contributes to either. Other scholars<sup>[96]</sup> suggest that nontheistic Indian religious traditions do not assume an omnibenevolent creator, and some<sup>[97]</sup> theistic schools do not define or characterize their god(s) as monotheistic Western religions do and the deities have colorful, complex personalities; the Indian deities are personal and cosmic facilitators, and in some schools conceptualized like Plato’s [Demiurge](#).<sup>[93]</sup> Therefore, the problem of theodicy in many schools of major Indian religions is not significant, or at least is of a different nature than in Western religions.<sup>[98]</sup>

According to Arthur Herman, karma-transmigration theory solves all three historical formulations to the problem of evil while acknowledging the theodicy insights of Sankara and Ramanuja.<sup>[13]</sup>

## Pandeism

**Pandeism** is a modern theory that unites deism and pantheism, and asserts that God created the universe but during creation became the universe.<sup>[99]</sup> In pandeism, God is no superintending, heavenly power, capable of hourly intervention into earthly affairs. No longer existing “above,” God *cannot* intervene from above and cannot be blamed for failing to do so. God, in pandeism, was omnipotent and omnibenevolent, but in the form of universe is no longer omnipotent, omnibenevolent.<sup>[100]:76–77</sup>

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# COMMENTARY ON GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ (PART 1)

Leibniz was above all things a metaphysician. That does not mean that his head was in the clouds, or that the particular sciences lacked interest for him. Not at all—he felt a lively concern for theological debate, he was a mathematician of the first rank, he made original contributions to physics, he gave a realistic attention to moral psychology. But he was incapable of looking at the objects of any special enquiry without seeing them as aspects or parts of one intelligible universe. He strove constantly after system, and the instrument on which his effort relied was the speculative reason. He embodied in an extreme form the spirit of his age. Nothing could be less like the spirit of ours. To many people now alive metaphysics means a body of wild and meaningless assertions resting on spurious argument. A professor of metaphysics may nowadays be held to deal handsomely with the duties of his chair if he is prepared to handle metaphysical statements at all, though it be only for the purpose of getting rid of them, by showing them up as confused forms of something else. A chair in metaphysical philosophy becomes analogous to a chair in tropical diseases: what is taught from it is not the propagation but the cure.

Confidence in metaphysical construction has ebbed and flowed through philosophical history; periods of speculation have been followed by periods of criticism. The tide will flow again, but it has [8]not turned yet, and such metaphysicians as survive scarcely venture further than to argue a case for the possibility of their art. It would be an embarrassing task to open an approach to Leibnizian metaphysics from the present metaphysical position, if there is a present position. If we want an agreed starting-point, it will have to be historical.

The historical importance of Leibniz’s ideas is anyhow unmistakable. If metaphysical thinking is nonsensical, its empire over the human imagination must still be confessed; if it is as chimerical a science as alchemy, it is no less fertile in by-products of importance. And if we are to consider Leibniz historically, we cannot do better than take up his *Theodicy*, for two reasons. It was the only one of his main philosophical works to be published in his lifetime, so that it was a principal means of his direct influence; the Leibniz his own age knew was the Leibniz of the *Theodicy*. Then in the second place, the *Theodicy* itself is peculiarly rich in historical material. It reflects the world of men and books which Leibniz knew; it expresses the theological setting of metaphysical speculation which still predominated in the first years of the eighteenth century.

Leibniz is remembered for his philosophy; he was not a professional philosopher. He was offered academic chairs, but he declined them. He was a gentleman, a person of means, librarian to a reigning prince, and frequently employed in state affairs of trust and importance. The librarian might at any moment become the political secretary, and offer his own contributions to policy. Leibniz was for the greater part of his active life the learned and confidential servant of the House of Brunswick; when the Duke had nothing better to do with him, he set him to research into ducal history. If Leibniz had a profession in literature, it was history rather than philosophy. He was even more closely bound to the interests of his prince than John Locke was to those of the

Prince of Orange. The Houses of Orange and of Brunswick were on the same side in the principal contest which divided Europe, the battle between Louis XIV and his enemies. It was a turning-point of the struggle when the Prince of Orange supplanted Louis's Stuart friends on the English throne. It was a continuation of the same movement, when Leibniz's master, George I, succeeded to the same throne, and frustrated the restoration of the Stuart heir. Locke returned to England in the wake of the Prince [9]of Orange, and became the representative thinker of the régime. Leibniz wished to come to the English court of George I, but was unkindly ordered to attend to the duties of his librarianship. So he remained in Hanover. He was then an old man, and before the tide of favour had turned, he died.

Posterity has reckoned Locke and Leibniz the heads of rival sects, but politically they were on the same side. As against Louis's political absolutism and enforced religious uniformity, both championed religious toleration and the freedom of the mind. Their theological liberalism was political prudence; it was not necessarily for that reason the less personally sincere. They had too much wisdom to meet bigotry with bigotry, or set Protestant intolerance against Catholic absolutism. But they had too much sympathy with the spirit of Europe to react into free thinking or to make a frontal attack on revealed truth. They took their stand on a fundamental Christian theism, the common religion of all good men; they repudiated the negative enormities of Hobbes and Spinoza.

The Christian was to hold a position covered by three lines of defences. The base line was to be the substance of Christian theism and of Christian morals, and it was to be held by the forces of sheer reason, without aid from scriptural revelation. The middle line was laid down by the general sense of Scripture, and the defence of it was this. 'Scriptural doctrine is reconcilable with the findings of sheer reason, but it goes beyond them. We believe the Scriptures, because they are authenticated by marks of supernatural intervention in the circumstances of their origin. We believe them, but reason controls our interpretation of them.' There remained the most forward and the most hazardous line: the special positions which a Church, a sect, or an individual might found upon the scriptural revelation. A prudent man would not hold his advance positions in the same force or defend them with the same obstinacy as either of the lines behind them. He could argue for them, but he could not require assent to them.

One cannot help feeling, indeed, the readiness of these writers to fall back, not only from the front line to the middle line, but from the middle line itself to the base line. Leibniz, for example, writes with perfect seriousness and decency about the Christian scheme of redemption, but it hardly looks like being for him a crucial deliverance from perdition. It is not the intervention of Mercy, [10]by which alone He possesses himself of us: it is one of the ways in which supreme Benevolence carries out a cosmic policy; and God's benevolence is known by pure reason, and apart from Christian revelation.

In one politically important particular the theological attitude of Leibniz differed from that of Locke. Both stood for toleration and for the minimizing of the differences between the sects. This was a serious enough matter in England, but it was an even more serious matter in Germany. For Germany was divided between Catholics and Protestants; effective toleration must embrace them both. English toleration might indulge a harmless Catholic minority, while rejecting the Catholic régime as the embodiment of intolerance. But this was not practical politics on the Continent; you must tolerate Catholicism on an equal footing, and come to terms with Catholic régimes. Leibniz was not going to damn the Pope with true Protestant fervour. It was his consistent aim to show that his theological principles were as serviceable to Catholic thinkers as to the doctors of his own church. On some points, indeed, he found his most solid support from Catholics; in other places there are hints of a joint Catholic-Lutheran front against Calvinism. But on the whole Leibniz's writings suggest that the important decisions cut across all the Churches, and not between them.

Leibniz was impelled to a compromise with 'popery', not only by the religious divisions of Germany, but (at one stage) by the political weakness of the German Protestant States. At the point of Louis XIV's highest success, the Protestant princes had no hope but in Catholic Austria, and Austria was distracted by Turkish pressure in the rear. Leibniz hoped to relieve the situation by preaching a crusade. Could not the Christian princes sink their differences and unite against the infidel? And could not the Christian alliance be cemented by theological agreement? Hence Leibniz's famous negotiation with Bossuet for a basis of Catholic-Lutheran concord. It was plainly destined to fail; and it was bound to recoil upon its author. How could he be a true Protestant who treated the differences with the Catholics as non-essentials? How could he have touched pitch and taken no defilement? Leibniz was generally admired, but he was not widely trusted. As a mere politician, he may be judged to have over-reached himself.

It has been the object of the preceding paragraphs to show that [11]Leibniz the politician and Leibniz the theologian were one and the same person; not at all to suggest that his rational theology was just political expediency. We may apply to him a parody of his own doctrine, the pre-established harmony between nature and grace. Everything happens as though Leibniz were a liberal politician, and his theology expressed his politics.

Yes, but equally, everything happens as though Leibniz were a philosophical theologian, and his politics expressed his theology. His appreciation of Catholic speculation was natural and sincere; his dogmatic ancestry is to be looked for in Thomism and Catholic humanism as much as anywhere. Above all, he had himself a liberal and generous mind. It gave him pleasure to appreciate good wherever he could see it, and to discover a soul of truth in every opinion.

From the moment when Leibniz became aware of himself as an independent thinker, he was the man of a doctrine. Sometimes he called it 'my principles', sometimes 'the new system', sometimes 'pre-established harmony'. It could be quite briefly expressed; he was always ready to oblige his friends with a summary statement, either in a letter or an enclosed memorandum, and several such have come down to us. The doctrine may have been in Leibniz's view simple, but it was applicable to every department of human speculation or enquiry. It provided a new alphabet of philosophical ideas, and everything in heaven and earth could be expressed in it; not only could be, but ought to be, and Leibniz showed tireless energy in working out restatements of standing problems.

As a man with an idea, with a philosophical nostrum, Leibniz may be compared to Bishop Berkeley. There was never any more doubt that Leibniz was a Leibnizian than that Berkeley was a Berkeleian. But there is no comparison between the two men in the width of their range. About many things Berkeley never took the trouble to Berkeleianize. To take the most surprising instance of his neglect—he assured the world that his whole doctrine pointed to, and hung upon, theology. But what sort of a theology? He scarcely took the first steps in the formulation of it. He preferred to keep on defending and explaining his *esse est percipi*. With Leibniz it is wholly different; he carries his new torch into every corner, to illuminate the dark questions.

The wide applicability of pre-established harmony might come home to its inventor as a rich surprise. The reflective historian will [12]find it less surprising, for he will suspect that the applications were in view from the start. What was Leibniz thinking of when the new principle flashed upon him? What was he *not* thinking of? He had a many-sided mind. If the origins of the principle were complex, little wonder that its applications were manifold. Every expositor of Leibniz who does not wish to be endlessly tedious must concentrate attention on one aspect of Leibniz's principle, and one source of its origin. We will here give an account of the matter which, we trust, will go most directly to the heart of it, but we will make no claims to sufficient interpretation of Leibniz's thought-processes.

Leibniz, then, like all the philosophers of the seventeenth century, was reforming scholasticism in the light of a new physical science. The science was mathematical in its form, mechanistical in its doctrine, and unanswerable in its evidence—it got results. But it was metaphysically intractable, and the doctrines of infinite and finite substance which it generated furnish a gallery of metaphysical grotesques; unless we are to except Leibniz; his system is, if nothing else, a miracle of ingenuity, and there are moments when we are in danger of believing it.

It is a natural mistake for the student of seventeenth-century thought to underestimate the tenacity of scholastic Aristotelianism. Descartes, we all know, was reared in it, but then Descartes overthrew it; and he had done his work and died by the time that Leibniz was of an age to philosophize at all. We expect to see Leibniz starting on his shoulders and climbing on from there. We are disappointed. Leibniz himself tells us that he was raised in the scholastic teaching. His acquaintance with Descartes's opinions was second-hand, and they were retailed to him only that they might be derided. He agreed, like an amiable youth, with his preceptors.

The next phase of his development gave him a direct knowledge of Cartesian writings, and of other modern books beside, such as those of the atomist Gassendi. He was delighted with what he read, because of its fertility in the field of physics and mathematics; and for a short time he was an enthusiastic modern. But presently he became dissatisfied. The new systems did not go far enough, they were still scientifically inadequate. At the same time they went too far, and carried metaphysical paradox beyond the limits of human credulity.

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There is no mystery about Leibniz's scientific objections to the new philosophers. If he condemned them here, it was on the basis of scientific thought and observation. Descartes's formulation of the laws of motion could, for example, be refuted by physical experiment; and if his general view of physical nature was bound up with it, then so much the worse for the Cartesian philosophy. But whence came Leibniz's more strictly metaphysical objections? Where had he learned that standard of metaphysical adequacy which showed up the inadequacy of the new metaphysicians? His own disciples might be satisfied to reply, that he learnt it from Reason herself; but the answer will not pass with us. Leibniz reasoned, indeed, but he did not reason from nowhere, nor would he

have got anywhere if he had. His conception of metaphysical reason was what his early scholastic training had made it.

There are certain absurd opinions which we are sure we have been taught, although, when put to it, we find it hard to name the teacher. Among them is something of this sort. 'Leibniz was a scholarly and sympathetic thinker. He had more sense of history than his contemporaries, and he was instinctively eclectic. He believed he could learn something from each of his great predecessors. We see him reaching back to cull a notion from Plato or from Aristotle; he even found something of use in the scholastics. In particular, he picked out the Aristotelian "entelechy" to stop a gap in the philosophy of his own age.' What this form of statement ignores is that Leibniz was a scholastic: a scholastic endeavouring, like Descartes before him, to revolutionize scholasticism. The word 'entelechy' was, indeed, a piece of antiquity which Leibniz revived, but the thing for which it stood was the most familiar of current scholastic conceptions. 'Entelechy' means active principle of wholeness or completion in an individual thing. Scholasticism was content to talk about it under the name of 'substantial form' or 'formal cause'. But the scholastic interpretation of the idea was hopelessly discredited by the new science, and the scholastic terms shared the discredit of scholastic doctrine. Leibniz wanted a term with a more general sound. 'There is an *X*', he wanted to say, 'which scholasticism has defined as substantial form, but I am going to give a new definition of it.' Entelechy was a useful name for *X*, the more so as it had the authority of Aristotle, the master of scholasticism.

Under the name of entelechy Leibniz was upholding the soul of [14]scholastic doctrine, while retrenching the limbs and outward flourishes. The doctrine of substantial form which he learnt in his youth had had *something* in it; he could not settle down in the principles of Descartes or of Gassendi, because both ignored this vital *something*. Since the requirements of a new science would not allow a return to sheer scholasticism, it was necessary to find a fresh philosophy, in which entelechy and mechanism might be accommodated side by side.

If one had asked any 'modern' of the seventeenth century to name the 'ancient' doctrine he most abominated, he would most likely have replied, 'Substantial form'. Let us recall what was rejected under this name, and why.

The medieval account of physical nature had been dominated by what we may call common-sense biology. Biology, indeed, is the science of the living, and the medievals were no more inclined than we are to endow all physical bodies with life. What they did do was to take living bodies as typical, and to treat other bodies as imperfectly analogous to them. Such an approach was *a priori* reasonable enough. For we may be expected to know best the physical being closest to our own; and we, at any rate, are alive. Why not argue from the better known to the less known, from the nearer to the more remote, interpreting other things by the formula of our own being, and allowing whatever discount is necessary for their degree of unlikeness to us?

Common-sense biology reasons as follows. In a living body there is a certain pattern of organized parts, a certain rhythm of successive motions, and a certain range of characteristic activities. The pattern, the sheer anatomy, is basic; but it cannot long continue to exist (outside a refrigerator) without accompanying vital rhythms in heart, respiration and digestion. Nor do these perform their parts without the intermittent support of variable but still characteristic activities: dogs not only breathe and digest, they run about, hunt their food, look for mates, bark at cats, and so on. The anatomical pattern, the vital rhythm, and the characteristic acts together express dogginess; they reveal the specific form of the dog. They *reveal* it; exactly what the specific form *consisted in* was the subject of much medieval speculation. It need not concern us here.

Taking the form of the species for granted, common-sense biology proceeds to ask how it comes to be in a given instance, say [15]in the dog Toby. Before this dog was born or thought of, his form or species was displayed in each of his parents. And now it looks as though the form of dog had detached itself from them through the generative act, and set up anew on its own account. How does it do that? By getting hold of some materials in which to express itself. At first it takes them from the body of the mother, afterwards it collects them from a wider environment, and what the dog eats becomes the dog.

What, then, is the relation of the assimilated materials to the dog-form which assimilates them? Before assimilation, they have their own form. Before the dog eats the leg of mutton, it has the form given to it by its place in the body of a sheep. What happens to the mutton? Is it without remainder transubstantiated from sheep into dog? It loses all its distinctively sheep-like characteristics but there may be some more basically material characteristics which it preserves. They underlay the structure of the mutton, and they continue to underlie the structure of the dog's flesh which supplants it. Whatever these characteristics may be, let us call them common material characteristics, and let us say that they belong to or compose a common material nature.

The common material nature has its own way of existing, and perhaps its own principles of physical action. We may suppose that we know much or that we know little about it. This one thing at least we know, that it is capable of becoming alternatively either mutton or dog's flesh. It is not essential to it to be mutton, or mutton it would always be; nor dog's flesh, or it would always be dog's flesh. It is capable of becoming either, according as it is captured by one or other system of formal organization. So the voters who are to go to the polls are, by their common nature, Englishmen; they are essentially neither Socialist curs nor Conservative sheep, but intrinsically capable of becoming either, if they become captured by either system of party organization.

According to this way of thinking, there is a certain *looseness* about the relation of the common material nature to the higher forms of organization capable of capturing it. Considered in itself alone, it is perhaps to be seen as governed by absolutely determined laws of its own. It is heavy, then it will fall unless obstructed; it is solid, then it will resist intrusions. But considered as material for organization by higher forms, it is indeterminate. It acts in one sort of way under the persuasion of the sheep-form, and [16]in another sort of way under the persuasion of the dog-form, and we cannot tell how it will act until we know which form is going to capture it. No amount of study bestowed on the common material nature will enable us to judge how it will behave under the persuasion of the higher organizing form. The only way to discover that is to examine the higher form itself.

Every form, then, will really be the object of a distinct science. The form of the sheep and the form of the dog have much in common, but that merely happens to be so; we cannot depend upon it, or risk inferences from sheep to dog: we must examine each in itself; we shall really need a science of probatology about sheep, and cynology about dogs. Again, the common material nature has its own principles of being and action, so it will need a science of itself, which we may call *hylology*. Each of these sciences is mistress in her own province; but how many there are, and how puzzlingly they overlap! So long as we remain within the province of a single science, we may be able to think rigorously, everything will be 'tight'. But as soon as we consider border-issues between one province and another, farewell to exactitude: everything will be 'loose'. We can think out *hylology* till we are blue in the face, but we shall never discover anything about the entry of material elements into higher organizations, or how they behave when they get there. We may form perfect definitions and descriptions of the form of the dog as such, and still derive no rules for telling what elements of matter will enter into the body of a given dog or how they will be placed when they do. All we can be sure of is, that the dog-form will keep itself going in, and by means of, the material it embodies—unless the dog dies. But what happens to the matter in the body of the dog is 'accidental' to the nature of the matter; and the use of this matter, rather than of some other equally suitable, is accidental to the nature of the dog.

No account of material events can dispense with accidental relations altogether. We must at least recognize that there are accidental relations between particular things. Accident in the sense of brute fact had to be acknowledged even by the tidiest and most dogmatic atomism of the last century. That atomism must allow it to be accidental, in this sense, that the space surrounding any given atom was occupied by other atoms in a given manner. It belonged neither to the nature of space to be occupied by just those atoms in just those places, nor to the nature of the atoms to [17]be distributed just like that over space; and so in a certain sense the environment of any atom was an accidental environment. That is, the particular arrangement of the environment was accidental. The nature of the environment was not accidental at all. It was proper to the nature of the atom to be in interaction with other atoms over a spatial field, and it never encountered in the fellow-denizens of space any other nature but its own. It was not subject to the accident of meeting strange natures, nor of becoming suddenly subject to strange or unequal laws of interaction. All interactions, being with its own kind, were reciprocal and obedient to a single set of calculable laws.

But the medieval philosophy had asserted accidental relations between distinct sorts of *natures*, the form of living dog and the form of dead matter, for example. No one could know *a priori* what effect an accidental relation would produce, and all accidental relations between different pairs of natures were different: at the most there was analogy between them. Every different nature had to be separately observed, and when you had observed them all, you could still simply write an inventory of them, you could not hope to rationalize your body of knowledge. Let us narrow the field and consider what this doctrine allows us to know about the wood of a certain kind of tree. We shall begin by observing the impressions it makes on our several senses, and we shall attribute to it a substantial form such as naturally to give rise to these impressions, without, perhaps, being so rash as to claim a knowledge of what this substantial form is. Still we do not know what its capacities of physical action and passion may be. We shall find them out by observing it in relation to different 'natures'. It turns out to be combustible by fire, resistant to water, tractable to the carpenter's tools, intractable to his digestive organs, harmless to ostriches, nourishing to wood-beetles. Each of these capacities of the wood is distinct; we cannot relate them intelligibly to one another, nor deduce them from the assumed fundamental 'woodiness'.

We can now see why 'substantial forms' were the *bêtes noires* of the seventeenth-century philosophers. It was because they turned nature into an unmanageable jungle, in which trees, bushes, and parasites of a thousand kinds wildly interlaced. There was nothing for it, if science was to proceed, but to clear the ground and replant with spruce in rows: to postulate a single uniform nature, of which there should be a single science. Now neither probatology [18] nor cynology could hope to be universal—the world is not all sheep nor all dog: it would have to be hylology; for the world is, in its spatial aspect, all material. Let us say, then, that there is one uniform material nature of things, and that everything else consists in the arrangements of the basic material nature; as the show of towers and mountains in the sunset results simply from an arrangement of vapours. And let us suppose that the interactions of the parts of matter are all like those which we can observe in dead manipulable bodies—in mechanism, in fact. Such was the postulate of the new philosophers, and it yielded them results.

It yielded them results, and that was highly gratifying. But what, meanwhile, had happened to those palpable facts of common experience from which the whole philosophy of substantial forms had taken its rise? Is the wholeness of a living thing the mere resultant of the orderly operations of its parts? Is a bee no more essentially one than a swarm is? Is the life of a living animal indistinguishable from the rhythm of a going watch, except in degree of complication and subtlety of contrivance? And if an animal's body, say my own, is simply an agglomerate of minute interacting material units, and its wholeness is merely accidental and apparent, how is my conscious mind to be adjusted to it? For my consciousness appears to identify itself with that whole vital pattern which used to be called the substantial form. We are now told that the pattern is nothing real or active, but the mere accidental resultant of distinct interacting forces: it does no work, it exercises no influence or control, it *is* nothing. How then can it be the vehicle and instrument of my conscious soul? It cannot. Then is my soul homeless? Or is it to be identified with the activity and fortunes of a single atomic constituent of my body, a single cog in the animal clockwork? If so, how irrational! For the soul does not experience itself as the soul of one minute part, but as the soul of the body.

Such questions rose thick and fast in the minds of the seventeenth-century philosophers. It will cause us no great surprise that Leibniz should have quickly felt that the Formal Principle of Aristotle and of the Scholastic philosophy must be by hook or by crook reintroduced—not as the detested *substantial form*, but under a name by which it might hope to smell more sweet, *entelechy*.

Nothing so tellingly revealed the difficulties of the new philosophy [19] in dealing with living bodies as the insufficiency of the solutions Descartes had proposed. He had boldly declared the unity of animal life to be purely mechanical, and denied that brutes had souls at all, or any sensation. He had to admit soul in man, but he still denied the substantial unity of the human body. It was put together like a watch, it was many things, not one: if Descartes had lived in our time, he would have been delighted to compare it with a telephone system, the nerves taking the place of the wires, and being so arranged that all currents of 'animal spirit' flowing in them converged upon a single unit, a gland at the base of the brain. In this unit, or in the convergence of all the motions upon it, the 'unity' of the body virtually consisted; and the soul was incarnate, not in the plurality of members (for how could it, being one, indwell many things?), but in the single gland.

Even so, the relation between the soul and the gland was absolutely unintelligible, as Descartes disarmingly confessed. Incarnation was all very well in the old philosophy: those who had allowed the interaction of disparate natures throughout the physical world need find no particular difficulty about the special case of it provided by incarnation. Why should not a form of conscious life so interact with what would otherwise be dead matter as to 'indwell' it? But the very principle of the new philosophy disallowed the interaction of disparate natures, because such an interaction did not allow of exact formulation, it was a 'loose' and not a 'tight' relation.

From a purely practical point of view the much derided pineal gland theory would serve. If we could be content to view Descartes as a man who wanted to make the world safe for physical science, then there would be a good deal to be said for his doctrine. In the old philosophy exact science had been frustrated by the hypothesis of loose relations all over the field of nature. Descartes had cleared them from as much of the field as science was then in a position to investigate; he allowed only one such relation to subsist, the one which experience appeared unmistakably to force upon us—that between our own mind and its bodily vehicle. He had exorcized the spirits from the rest of nature; and though there was a spirit here which could not be exorcized, the philosophic conjurer had nevertheless confined it and its unaccountable pranks within a minutely narrow magic circle: all mind could do [20] was to turn the one tiny switch at the centre of its animal telephone system. It could create no energy—it could merely redirect the currents actually flowing.

Practically this might do, but speculatively it was most disturbing. For if the 'loose relation' had to be admitted in one instance, it was admitted in principle; and one could not get rid of the suspicion that it would turn up elsewhere, and that the banishment of it from every other field represented a convenient pragmatic postulate

rather than a solid metaphysical truth. Moreover, the correlation of the unitary soul with the unitary gland might do justice to a mechanistical philosophy, but it did not do justice to the soul's own consciousness of itself. The soul's consciousness is the 'idea' or 'representation' of the life of the whole body, certainly not of the life of the pineal gland nor, as the unreflective nowadays would say, of the brain. I am not conscious in, or of, my brain except when I have a headache; consciousness is in my eyes and finger-tips and so on. It is physically true, no doubt, that consciousness in and of my finger-tips is not possible without the functioning of my brain; but that is a poor reason for locating the consciousness in the brain. The filament of the electric bulb will not be incandescent apart from the functioning of the dynamo; but that is a poor reason for saying that the incandescence is in the dynamo.

Certainly the area of representation in our mind is not simply equivalent to the area of our body. But in so far as the confines of mental representation part company with the confines of the body, it is not that they may contract and fall back upon the pineal gland, but that they may expand and advance over the surrounding world. The mind does not represent its own body merely, it represents the world in so far as the world affects that body or is physically reproduced in it. The mind has no observable natural relation to the pineal gland. It has only two natural relations: to its body as a whole and to its effective environment. What Descartes had really done was to pretend that the soul was related to the pineal gland as it is in fact related to its whole body; and then that it was related to the bodily members as in fact it is related to outer environment. The members became an inner environment, known only in so far as they affected the pineal gland; just as the outer environment in its turn was to be known only in so far as it affected the members.

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This doctrine of a double environment was wholly artificial. It was forced on Descartes by the requirements of mechanistical science: if the members were simply a plurality of things, they must really be parts of environment; the body which the soul indwelt must be a body; presumably, then, the pineal gland. An untenable compromise, surely, between admitting and denying the reality of the soul's incarnation.

What, then, was to be done? Descartes's rivals and successors attempted several solutions, which it would be too long to examine here. They dissatisfied Leibniz and they have certainly no less dissatisfied posterity. It will be enough for us here to consider what Leibniz did. He admitted, to begin with, the psychological fact. The unity of consciousness is the representation of a plurality—the plurality of the members, and through them the plurality of the world. Here, surely, was the very principle the new philosophy needed for the reconciliation of substantial unity with mechanical plurality of parts. For it is directly evident to us that consciousness focuses the plurality of environing things in a unity of representation. This is no philosophical theory, it is a simple fact. Our body, then, as a physical system is a mechanical plurality; as focused in consciousness it is a unity of 'idea'.

Very well: but we have not got far yet. For the old difficulty still remains—it is purely arbitrary, after all, that a unitary consciousness should be attached to, and represent, a mechanical collection of things which happen to interact in a sort of pattern. If there is a consciousness attached to human bodies, then why not to systems of clockwork? If the body is *represented* as unity, it must surely be because it *is* unity, as the old philosophy had held. But how can we reintroduce unity into the body without reintroducing substantial form, and destroying the mechanistical plurality which the new science demanded?

It is at this point that Leibniz produces the speculative postulate of his system. Why not reverse the relation, and make the members represent the mind as the mind represents the members? For then the unity of person represented in the mind will become something actual in the members also.

Representation appears to common sense to be a one-way sort of traffic. If my mind represents my bodily members, something happens to my mind, for it becomes a representation of such members in such a state; but nothing happens to the members by [22]their being so represented in the mind. The mental representation obeys the bodily facts; the bodily facts do not obey the mental representation. It seems nonsense to say that my members obey my mind *because* they are mirrored in it. And yet my members do obey my mind, or at least common sense supposes so. Sometimes my mind, instead of representing the state my members are in, represents a state which it intends that they shall be in, for example, that my hand should go through the motion of writing these words. And my hand obeys; its action becomes the moving diagram of my thought, my thought is represented or expressed in the manual act. Here the relation of mind and members appears to be reversed: instead of its representing them, they represent it. With this representation it is the opposite of what it was with the other. By the members' being represented in the mind, something happened to the mind, and nothing to the members; by the mind's being represented in the members something happens to the members and nothing to the mind.

Why should not we take this seriously? Why not allow that there is two-way traffic—by one relation the mind represents the members, by another the members represent the mind? But then again, how can we take it seriously? For representation, in the required sense, is a mental act; brute matter can represent nothing, only mind can represent. And the members are brute matter. But are they? How do we know that? By brute matter we understand extended lumps of stuff, interacting with one another mechanically, as do, for example, two cogs in a piece of clockwork. But this is a large-scale view. The cogs are themselves composed of interrelated parts and those parts of others, and so on *ad infinitum*. Who knows what the ultimate constituents really are? The ‘modern’ philosophers, certainly, have proposed no hypothesis about them which even looks like making sense. They have supposed that the apparently inert lumps, the cogs, are composed of parts themselves equally inert, and that by subdivision we shall still reach nothing but the inert. But this supposition is in flat contradiction with what physical theory demands. We have to allow the reality of *force* in physics. Now the force which large-scale bodies display may easily be the block-effect of activity in their minute real constituents. If not, where does it come from? Let it be supposed, then, that these minute real constituents are active because they are alive, because they are minds; for indeed we have [23]no notion of activity other than the perception we have of our own. We have no notion of it except as something mental. On the hypothesis that the constituents of active body are also mental, this limitation in our conception of activity need cause us neither sorrow nor surprise.

The mind-units which make up body will not of course be developed and fully conscious minds like yours or mine, and it is only for want of a better word that we call them minds at all. They will be mere unselfconscious representations of their physical environment, as it might be seen from the physical point to which they belong by a human mind paying no attention at all to its own seeing. How many of these rudimentary ‘minds’ will there be in my body? As many as you like—as many as it is possible there should be—say an infinite number and have done with it.

We may now observe how this hypothesis introduces real formal unity without prejudicing mechanical plurality. Each of the mind-units in my body is itself and substantially distinct. But since each, in its own way and according to its own position, represents the superior and more developed mind which I call ‘me’, they will order themselves according to a common form. The order is real, not accidental: it is like the order of troops on a parade-ground. Each man is a distinct active unit, but each is really expressing by his action the mind of the officer in command. He is expressing no less his relation to the other men in the ranks—to obey the officer is to keep in step with them. So the metaphysical units of the body, being all minds, represent one another as well as the dominant mind: one another co-ordinately, the dominant mind subordinately.

But if the metaphysically real units of the body are of the nature of mind, then *the* mind is a mind among minds, a spirit-atom among spirit-atoms. What then constitutes its superiority or dominance, and makes it a mind *par excellence*? Well, what constitutes the officer an officer? Two things: a more developed mentality and the fact of being obeyed. In military life these two factors are not always perfectly proportioned to one another, but in the order of Leibniz’s universe they are. A fuller power to represent the universe is necessarily combined with dominance over an organized troop of members; for the mind knows the universe only in so far as the universe is expressed in its body. [24]That is what the *finitude* of the mind means. Only an infinite mind appreciates the whole plurality of things in themselves; a finite mind perceives them in so far as mirrored in the physical being of an organized body of members. The more adequate the mirror, the more adequate the representation: the more highly organized the body, the more developed the mind.

The developed mind has an elaborate body; but the least developed mind has still some body, or it would lack any mirror whatever through which to represent the world. This means, in effect, that Leibniz’s system is not an unmitigated spiritual atomism. For though the spiritual atoms, or monads, are the ultimate constituents out of which nature is composed, they stand composed together from the beginning in a minimal order which cannot be broken up. Each monad, if it is to be anything at all, must be a continuing finite representation of the universe, and to be that it must have a body, that is to say, it must have other monads in a permanent relation of mutual correspondence with it. And if you said to Leibniz, ‘But surely any physical body can be broken up, and this must mean the dissolution of the organic relation between its monadical constituents,’ he would take refuge in the infinitesimal. The wonders revealed by that new miracle, the microscope, suggested what the intrinsic divisibility of space itself suggests—whatever organization is broken up, there will still be a minute organization within each of the fragments which remains unbroken—and so *ad infinitum*. You will never come down to loose monads, monads out of all organization. You will never disembodify the monads, and so remove their representative power; you will only reduce their bodies and so impoverish their representative power. In this sense no animal dies and no animal is generated. Death is the reduction and generation the enrichment of some existing monad’s body; and, by being that, is the enrichment or the reduction of the monad’s mental life.

'But,' our common sense protests, 'it is too great a strain on our credulity to make the real nature of things so utterly different from what sense and science make of them. If the real universe is what you say it is, why do our minds represent it to us as they do?' The philosopher's answer is, 'Because they *represent* it. According to the truth of things, each monad is simply its own mental life, its own world-view, its own thoughts and desires. To know things as they are would be simultaneously to live over, as though from [25]within and by a miracle of sympathy, the biographies of an infinite number of distinct monads. This is absolutely impossible. Our senses represent the coexistent families of monads *in the gross*, and therefore conventionally; what is in fact the mutual representation of monads in ordered systems, is represented as the mechanical interaction of spatially extended and material parts.' This does not mean that science is overthrown. The physical world-view is in terms of the convention of representation, but it is not, for all that, illusory. It can, ideally, be made as true as it is capable of being. There is no reason whatever for confusing the 'well-grounded seemings' of the apparent physical world with the fantastic seemings of dream and hallucination.

So far the argument seems to draw whatever cogency it has from the simplicity and naturalness of the notion of representation. The nature of idea, it is assumed, is to represent plurality in a unified view. If idea did not represent, it would not be idea. And since there *is* idea (for our minds at least exist and are made up of idea) there is representation. It belongs to idea to represent, and since the whole world has now been interpreted as a system of mutually representing ideations, or ideators, it might seem that all their mutual relations are perfectly natural, a harmony of agreement which could not be other than it is. But if so, why does Leibniz keep saying that the harmony is *pre-established*, by special and infinitely elaborate divine decrees?

Leibniz himself says that the very nature of representation excludes interaction. By representing environment a mind does not do anything to environment, that is plain. But it is no less plain that environment does nothing to it, either. The act of representing is simply the act of the mind; it represents *in view of* environment, of course, but not under the causal influence of environment. Representation is a business carried on by the mind on its own account, and in virtue of its innate power to represent.

Very well; but does this consideration really drive us into theology? Is not Leibniz the victim of a familiar fallacy, that of incompletely stated alternatives? '*Either* finite beings interact *or else* they do not directly condition one another. Monads do not interact, therefore they do not directly condition one another. How then explain the actual conformity of their mutual representation, without recourse to divine fore-ordaining?' It seems sufficient to introduce a further alternative in the first line of the argument, [26]and we are rid of the theology. Things may condition the action of a further thing, without acting upon it. It acts of itself, but it acts in view of what they are. We are tempted to conclude that Leibniz has introduced the *Deus ex machina* with the fatal facility of his age. 'Where a little further meditation on the characters in the play would furnish a natural *dénouement*, he swings divine intervention on to the scene by wires from the ceiling. It is easy for us to reconstruct for him the end of the piece without recourse to stage-machines.'

Is it? No, I fear it is not. There is really no avoiding the pre-established harmony. And so we shall discover, if we pursue our train of reflexion a little further. It is natural, we were saying, than an idea should represent an environment; indeed, it *is* the representation of one. Given no environment to represent, it would be empty, a mere capacity for representation. Then every idea or ideator, taken merely in itself, *is* an empty capacity. But of what is the environment of each made up? According to the Leibnitian theory, of further ideas or ideators: of empty capacities, therefore. Then no idea will either be anything in itself, or find anything in its neighbours to represent. An unhappy predicament, like that of a literary clique in which all the members are adepts at discussing one another's ideas—only that unfortunately none of them are provided with any; or like the shaky economics of the fabled Irish village where they all lived by taking in one another's washing.

It is useless, then, to conceive representations as simply coming into existence in response to environment, and modelling themselves on environment. They must all mutually reflect environment or they would not be representations; but they must also exist as themselves and in their own right or there would be no environment for them mutually to represent. Since the world is infinitely various, each representor must have its own distinct character or nature, as our minds have: that is to say, it must represent in its own individual way; and all these endlessly various representations must be so constituted as to form a mutually reflecting harmony. Considered as a representation, each monadical existence simply reflects the universe after its own manner. But considered as something to be represented by the others, it is a self-existent mental life, or world of ideas. Now when we are considering the fact of representation, that which is to be represented comes first and the representation follows upon it. [27]Thus in considering the Leibnitian universe, we must begin with the monads as self-existent mental lives, or worlds of ideas; their representation of one another comes second. Nothing surely, then, but omnipotent creative wisdom could have pre-established between so many distinct given mental worlds that harmony which constitutes their mutual representation.

Our common-sense pluralistic thinking escapes from the need of the pre-established harmony by distinguishing what we are from what we do. Let the world be made up of a plurality of agents in a 'loose' order, with room to manoeuvre and to adjust themselves to one another. Then, by good luck or good management, through friction and disaster, by trial and error, by accident or invention, they may work out for themselves a harmony of *action*. There is no need for divine preordaining here. But on Leibniz's view what the monads do is to represent, and what they are is representation; there is no ultimate distinction between what they are and what they do: all that they do belongs to what they are. The whole system of action in each monad, which fits with such infinite complexity the system of action in each other monad, is precisely the existence of that monad, and apart from it the monad is not. The monads do not *achieve* a harmony, they *are* a harmony, and therefore they are pre-established in harmony.

Leibniz denied that he invoked God to intervene in nature, or that there was anything arbitrary or artificial about his physical theology. He was simply analysing nature and finding it to be a system of mutual representation; he was analysing mutual representation and finding it to be of its nature intrinsically pre-established, and therefore God-dependent. He was not adding anything to mutual representation, he was just showing what it necessarily contained or implied. At least he was doing nothing worse than recognized scholastic practice. Scholastic Aristotelianism explained all natural causality as response to stimulus, and then had to postulate a stimulus which stimulated without being stimulated, and this was God. Apart from this supreme and first stimulus nothing would in fact be moving. The Aristotelians claimed simply to be analysing the nature of physical motion as they perceived it, and to find the necessity of perpetually applied divine stimulation implicit in it. No violence was thereby done to the system of physical motion nor was anything brought in from [28]without to patch it up; it was simply found to be of its own nature God-dependent.

It seems as though the reproachful description '*Deus ex machina*' should be reserved for more arbitrary expedients than Aristotle's or Leibniz's, say for the occasionalist theory. Occasionalism appeared to introduce God that he might make physical matter do what it had no natural tendency to do, viz. to obey the volitions of finite mind. Ideas, on the other hand, have a natural tendency to represent one another, for to be an idea is to be a representation; God is not introduced by Leibniz to make them correspond, he is introduced to work a system in which they shall correspond. This may not be *Deus-ex-machina philosophy*, but it is *physical theology*; that is to say, it treats divine action as one factor among the factors which together constitute the working of the natural system. And this appears to be perhaps unscientific, certainly blasphemous: God's action cannot be a factor among factors; the Creator works through and in all creaturely action equally; we can never say 'This is the creature, and that is God' of distinguishable causalities in the natural world. The creature is, in its creaturely action, self-sufficient: but because a creature, insufficient to itself throughout, and sustained by its Creator both in existence and in action.

The only acceptable argument for theism is that which corresponds to the religious consciousness, and builds upon the insufficiency of finite existence throughout, because it is finite. All arguments to God's existence from a particular gap in our account of the world of finites are to be rejected. They do not indicate God, they indicate the failure of our power to analyse the world-order. When Leibniz discovered that his system of mutual representations needed to be pre-established, he ought to have seen that he had come up a cul-de-sac and backed out; he ought not to have said, 'With the help of God I will leap over the wall.'

If we condemn Leibniz for writing physical theology, we condemn not him but his age. No contemporary practice was any better, and much of it a good deal worse, as Leibniz liked somewhat complacently to point out. And because he comes to theology through physical theology, that does not mean that all his theology was physical theology and as such to be written off. On the contrary, Leibniz is led to wrestle with many problems which beset any philosophical theism of the Christian type. This is particularly [29]so in the *Theodicy*, as its many citations of theologians suggest. His discussions never lack ingenuity, and the system of creation and providence in which they result has much of that luminous serenity which colours the best works of the Age of Reason.

Every theistic philosopher is bound, with whatever cautions, to conceive God by the analogy of the human mind. When Leibniz declares the harmony of monads to be pre-established by God, he is invoking the image of intelligent human pre-arrangement. Nor is he content simply to leave it at that: he endeavours as well as he may to conceive the sort of act by which God pre-arranges; and this involves the detailed adaptation for theological purposes of Leibnizian doctrine about the human mind.

The human mind, as we have seen, is the mind predominant in a certain system of 'minds', viz. in those which constitute the members of the human body. If we call it predominant, we mean that its system of ideas is more developed than theirs, so that there are more points in which each of them conforms to it than in which it conforms to any one of them. The conception of a divine pre-establishing mind will be analogous. It will be the

conception of a mind *absolutely* dominant, to whose ideas, that is to say, the whole system simply corresponds, without any reciprocating correspondence on his side. In a certain sense this is to make God the 'Mind of the World'; and yet the associations of the phrase are misleading. It suggests that the world is an organism or body in which the divine mind is incarnate, and on which he relies for his representations. But that is nonsense; the world is not a body, nor is it organic to God. Absolute dominance involves absolute transcendence: if everything in the world without remainder simply obeys the divine thoughts, that is only another way of saying that the world is the creature of God; the whole system is pre-established by him who is absolute Being and perfectly independent of the world.

Of createdness, or pre-establishedness, there is no more to be said: we can think of it as nothing but the pure or absolute case of subjection to dominant mind. It is no use asking further *how* God's thoughts are obeyed in the existence and action of things. What we can and must enquire into further, is the nature of the divine thoughts which are thus obeyed. They must be understood to be volitions or decrees. There are indeed two ways in which things obey the divine thought, and correspondingly two sorts of divine [30]thoughts that they obey. In so far as created things conform to the mere universal principles of reason, they obey a reasonableness which is an inherent characteristic of the divine mind itself. If God wills the existence of any creature, that creature's existence must observe the limits prescribed by eternal reason: it cannot, for example, both have and lack a certain characteristic in the same sense and at the same time; nor can it contain two parts and two parts which are not also countable as one part and three parts. Finite things, if they exist at all, must thus conform to the reasonableness of the divine nature, but what the divine reasonableness thus prescribes is highly general: we can deduce from it only certain laws which any finite things must obey, we can never deduce from it which finite things there are to be, nor indeed that there are to be any. Finite things are particular and individual: each of them might have been other than it is or, to speak more properly, instead of any one of them there might have existed something else; it was, according to the mere principles of eternal reason, equally possible. But if so, the whole universe, being made up of things each of which might be otherwise, might as a whole be otherwise. Therefore the divine thoughts which it obeys by existing have the nature of *choices* or *decrees*.

What material does the finite mind supply for an analogical picture of the infinite mind making choices or decrees? If we use such language of God, we are using language which has its first and natural application to ourselves. We all of us choose, and those of us who are in authority make decrees. What is to choose? It involves a real freedom in the mind. A finite mind, let us remember, is nothing but a self-operating succession of perceptions, ideas, or representations. With regard to some of our ideas we have no freedom, those, for example, which represent to us our body. We think of them as constituting our given substance. They are sheer datum for us, and so are those reflexions of our environment which they mediate to us. They make up a closely packed and confused mass; they persevere in their being with an obstinate innate force, the spiritual counterpart of the force which we have to recognize in things as physically interpreted. Being real spiritual force, it is quasi-voluntary, and indeed do we not love our own existence and, in a sense, will it in all its necessary circumstances? But if we can be said to will to be ourselves and to enact with native force what our body and its environment makes [31]us, we are merely willing to conform to the conditions of our existence; we are making no choice. When, however, we think freely or perform deliberate acts, there is not only force but choice in our activity. Choice between what? Between alternative possibilities arising out of our situation. And choice in virtue of what? In virtue of the appeal exercised by one alternative as seemingly better.

Can we adapt our scheme of choice to the description of God's creative decrees? We will take the second point in it first: our choice is in virtue of the appeal of the seeming best. Surely the only corrective necessary in applying this to God is the omission of the word 'seeming'. His choice is in virtue of the appeal of the simply best. The other point causes more trouble. We choose between possibilities which arise for us out of our situation in the system of the existing world. But as the world does not exist before God's creative choices, he is in no world-situation, and no alternative possibilities can arise out of it, between which he should have to choose. But if God does not choose between intrinsic possibilities of some kind, his choice becomes something absolutely meaningless to us—it is not a choice at all, it is an arbitrary and unintelligible *fiat*.

Leibniz's solution is this: what are mere possibilities of thought for us are possibilities of action for God. For a human subject, possibilities of action are limited to what arises out of his actual situation, but possibilities for thought are not so limited. I can conceive a world different in many respects from this world, in which, for example, vegetables should be gifted with thought and speech; but I can do nothing towards bringing it about. My imaginary world is practically impossible but speculatively possible, in the sense that it contradicts no single principle of necessary and immutable reason. I, indeed, can explore only a very little way into the region of sheer speculative possibility; God does not explore it, he simply possesses it all: the whole region of the possible is but a part of the content of his infinite mind. So among all possible creatures he chooses the best and creates it.

But the whole realm of the possible is an actual infinity of ideas. Out of the consideration of an infinity of ideas, how can God arrive at a choice? Why not? His mind is not, of course, discursive; he does not successively turn over the leaves of an infinite book of sample worlds, for then he would never come to the end [32]of it. Embracing infinite possibility in the single act of his mind, he settles his will with intuitive immediacy upon the best. The inferior, the monstrous, the absurd is not a wilderness through which he painfully threads his way, it is that from which he immediately turns; his wisdom is his elimination of it.

But in so applying the scheme of choice to God's act, have we not invalidated its application to our own? For if God has chosen the whole form and fabric of the world, he has chosen everything in it, including the choices we shall make. And if our choices have already been chosen for us by God, it would seem to follow that they are not real open choices on our part at all, but are pre-determined. And if they are pre-determined, it would seem that they are not really even choices, for a determined choice is not a choice. But if we do not ourselves exercise real choice in any degree, then we have no clue to what any choice would be: and if so, we have no power of conceiving divine choice, either; and so the whole argument cuts its own throat.

There are two possible lines of escape from this predicament. One is to define human choice in such a sense that it allows of pre-determination without ceasing to be choice; and this is Leibniz's method, and it can be studied at length in the *Theodicy*. He certainly makes the very best he can of it, and it hardly seems that any of those contemporaries whose views he criticizes was in a position to answer him. The alternative method is to make the most of the negative element involved in all theology. After all, we do not positively or adequately understand the nature of infinite creative will. Perhaps it is precisely the transcendent glory of divine freedom to be able to work infallibly through free instruments. But so mystical a paradox is not the sort of thing we can expect to appeal to a late-seventeenth-century philosopher.

One criticism of Leibniz's argument we cannot refrain from making. He allows himself too easy a triumph when he says that the only alternative to a choice determined by a prevailing inclination towards one proposal is a choice of mere caprice. There is a sort of choice Leibniz never so much as considers and which appears at least to fall quite outside his categories, and that is the sort of choice exercised in artistic creativity. In such choice we freely feel after the shaping of a scheme, we do not arbitrate simply between shaped and given possible schemes. And perhaps some such element enters into all our choices, since our life is to [33]some extent freely designed by ourselves. If so, our minds are even more akin to the divine mind than Leibniz realized. For the sort of choice we are now referring to seems to be an intuitive turning away from an infinite, or at least indefinite, range of less attractive possibility. And such is the nature of the divine creative choice. The consequence of such a line of speculation would be, that the divine mind designs more through us, and less simply for us, than Leibniz allowed: the 'harmony' into which we enter would be no longer simply 'pre-established'. Leibniz, in fact, could have nothing to do with such a suggestion, and he would have found it easy to be ironical about it if his contemporaries had proposed it.

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## COMMENTARY ON GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ (PART 2)

II

Leibniz wrote two books; a considerable number of articles in learned periodicals; and an enormous number of unpublished notes, papers and letters, preserved in the archives of the Electors of Hanover not because of the philosophical significance of some of them, but because of the political importance of most of them. From among this great mass various excerpts of philosophical interest have been made by successive editors of Leibniz's works. It may be that the most profound understanding of his mind is to be derived from some of these pieces, but if we wish to consider the public history of Leibniz, we may set them aside.

Of the two books, one was published, and the other never was. The *New Essays* remained in Leibniz's desk, the *Theodicy* saw the light. And so, to his own and the succeeding generation, Leibniz was known as the author of the *Theodicy*.

The articles in journals form the immediate background to the two books. In 1696 Leibniz heard that a French translation of Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* was being prepared at Amsterdam. He wrote some polite comments on Locke's great work, and published them. He also sent them to Locke, hoping that Locke would write a reply, and that Leibniz's reflexions and Locke's reply might be appended to the projected French translation. But Locke set Leibniz's comments aside. Leibniz, not to be defeated, set to work upon the *New Essays*, in which the whole substance of Locke's book is systematically discussed in dialogue. The *New Essays* were written in 1703. But meanwhile a painful [34]dispute had broken out between Leibniz and the disciples of Locke and Newton, in which the English, and perhaps Newton himself, were much to blame, and Leibniz thought it impolitic to publish his book. It was not issued until long after his death, in the middle of the century.

The discussion with Locke was a failure: Locke would not play, and the book in which the whole controversy was to be systematized never appeared. The discussion with Bayle, on the other hand, was a model of what a discussion should be. Bayle played up tirelessly, and was never embarrassingly profound; he provided just the sort of objections most useful for drawing forth illuminating expositions; he was as good as a fictitious character in a philosophical dialogue. And the book in which the controversy was systematized duly appeared with great éclat.

Here is the history of the controversy. In 1695 Leibniz was forty-nine years old. He had just emerged from a period of close employment under his prince's commands, and he thought fit to try his metaphysical principles upon the polite world and see what would come of it. He therefore published an article in the *Journal des Savants* under the title: 'New System of Nature and of the Communication of Substances, as well as of the Union between Soul and Body'. In the same year Foucher published an article in the *Journal* controverting Leibniz; and in the next year Leibniz replied with an 'Explanation'. A second explanation in the same year appeared in Basnage's *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, in answer to reflexions by the editor. M. Pierre Bayle had all these articles before him when he inserted a note on Leibniz's doctrine in his article on 'Rorarius', in the first edition of his *Historical and Critical Dictionary*. The point of connexion between Rorarius and Leibniz was no more than this, that both held views about the souls of beasts.

Pierre Bayle was the son of a Calvinist pastor, early converted to Catholicism, but recovered to his old faith after a short time. He held academic employments in Switzerland and Holland; he promoted and edited the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, and he produced that extraordinary work the *Historical and Critical Dictionary*. The notices it contains of authors and thinkers are little more than pegs upon which Bayle could hang his philosophical reflexions. He could write an intelligent discussion on any opinion; what he could not do was to reconcile the points of [35]view from which he felt impelled to write upon this author and that. His was not a systematic mind. So far as he had a philosophical opinion, he was a Cartesian; in theology he was an orthodox Calvinist. He could not reconcile his theology with his Cartesianism and he did not try to. He made a merit of the oppositions of faith to reason and reason to itself, so that he could throw himself upon a meritorious and voluntary faith.

There is nothing original in this position. It was characteristic of decadent scholasticism, it squared with Luther's exaggerations about the impotence of reason in fallen man, and Pascal had given his own highly personal twist to it. Bayle has been hailed as a forerunner of Voltairean scepticism. It would be truer to say that a Voltairean sceptic could read Bayle's discussions in his own sense and for his own purposes if he wished. But Bayle was not a sceptic. It is hard to say what he was; his whole position as between faith and reason is hopelessly confused. He was a scholar, a wit, and a philosophical sparring-partner of so perfectly convenient a kind that if we had not evidence of his historical reality, we might have suspected Leibniz of inventing him.

In the first edition of his *Dictionary*, under the article 'Rorarius', Bayle gave a very fair account of Leibniz's doctrine concerning the souls of animals, as it could be collected from his article in the *Journal des Savants*, 27 June 1695. He then proceeded to comment upon it in the following terms:

'There are some things in Mr. Leibniz's hypothesis that are liable to some difficulties, though they show the great extent of his genius. He will have it, for example, that the soul of a dog acts independently of outward bodies; that *it stands upon its own bottom, by a perfect spontaneity with respect to itself, and yet with a perfect conformity to outward things*.... That *its internal perceptions arise from its original constitution, that is to say, the representative constitution (capable of expressing beings outside itself in relation to its organs) which was bestowed upon it from the time of its creation, and makes its individual character* (*Journal des Savants*, 4 July 1695). From whence it results that it would feel hunger and thirst at such and such an hour, though there were not any one body in the

universe, and *though nothing should exist but God and that soul*. He has explained (*Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, Feb. 1696) his thought by the example of two pendulums that should perfectly agree: that is, he supposes that according to the particular laws which put the soul upon [36]action, it must feel hunger at such an hour; and that according to the particular laws which direct the motion of matter, the body which is united to that soul must be modified at that same hour as it is modified when the soul is hungry. I will forbear preferring this system to that of occasional causes till the learned author has perfected it. I cannot apprehend the connexion of internal and spontaneous actions which would have this effect, that the soul of a dog would feel pain immediately after having felt joy, though it were alone in the universe. I understand why a dog passes immediately from pleasure to pain when, being very hungry and eating a piece of bread, he is suddenly struck with a cudgel. But I cannot apprehend that his soul should be so framed that at the very moment of his being beaten he should feel pain though he were not beaten, and though he should continue to eat bread without any trouble or hindrance. Nor do I see how the spontaneity of that soul should be consistent with the sense of pain, and in general with any displeasing perceptions.

'Besides, the reason why this learned man does not like the Cartesian system seems to me to be a false supposition; for it cannot be said that the system of occasional causes brings in God acting by a miracle (ibid.), *Deum ex machina*, in the mutual dependency of the body and soul: for since God does only intervene according to general laws, he cannot be said to act in an extraordinary manner. Does the internal and active virtue communicated to the forms of bodies according to M. Leibniz know the train of actions which it is to produce? By no means; for we know by experience that we are ignorant whether we shall have such and such perceptions in an hour's time. It were therefore necessary that the forms should be directed by some internal principle in the production of their acts. But this would be *Deus ex machina*, as much as in the system of occasional causes. In fine, as he supposes with great reason that all souls are simple and indivisible, it cannot be apprehended how they can be compared with a pendulum, that is, how by their original constitution they can diversify their operations by using the spontaneous activity bestowed upon them by their Creator. It may clearly be conceived that a simple being will always act in a uniform manner, if no external cause hinders it. If it were composed of several pieces, as a machine, it would act different ways, because the peculiar activity of each piece might change every moment the progress of [37]others; but how will you find in a simple substance the cause of a change of operation?'

Leibniz published a reply to Bayle in the *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants* for July 1698. As in all his references to Bayle, he is studiously polite and repays compliment for compliment. The following are perhaps the principal points of his answer.

1. On the example of the dog:

(a) How should it of itself change its sentiment, since everything left to itself continues in the state in which it is? Because the state may be a state of *change*, as in a moving body which, unless hindered, continues to move. And such is the nature of simple substances—they continue to evolve steadily.

(b) Would it really feel as though beaten if it were not beaten, since Leibniz says that the action of every substance takes place as though nothing existed but God and itself? Leibniz replies that his remark refers to the causality behind an action, not to the reasons for it. The spontaneous action of the dog, which leads to the feeling of pain, is only decreed to be what it is, for the reason that the dog is part of a world of mutually reflecting substances, a world which also includes the cudgel.

(c) Why should the dog ever be displeased *spontaneously*? Leibniz distinguishes the spontaneous from the voluntary: many things occur in the mind, of itself, but not chosen by it.

2. On Cartesianism and miracle:

Cartesianism in the form of occasionalism *does* involve miracle, for though God is said by it to act according to laws in conforming body and mind to one another, he thereby causes them to act beyond their natural capacities.

3. On the problem, how can the simple act otherwise than uniformly?

Leibniz distinguishes: some uniform action is monotonous, but some is not. A point moves uniformly in describing a parabola, for it constantly fulfils the formula of the curve. But it does not move monotonously, for the curve constantly varies. Such is the uniformity of the action of simple substances.

Bayle read this reply, and was pleased but not satisfied with it. In the second edition of the dictionary, under the same article 'Rorarius', he added the following note:

'I declare first of all that I am very glad I have proposed some small difficulties against the system of that great philosopher, [38]since they have occasioned some answers whereby that subject has been made clearer to me, and which have given me a more distinct notion of what is most to be admired in it. I look now upon that new system as an important conquest, which enlarges the bounds of philosophy. We had only two hypotheses, that of the Schools and that of the Cartesians: the one was a *way of influence* of the body upon the soul and of the soul upon the body; the other was a *way of assistance* or occasional causality. But here is a new acquisition, a new hypothesis, which may be called, as Fr. Lami styles it, a *way of pre-established harmony*. We are beholden for it to M. Leibniz, and it is impossible to conceive anything that gives us a nobler idea of the power and wisdom of the Author of all things. This, together with the advantage of setting aside all notions of a miraculous conduct, would engage me to prefer this new system to that of the Cartesians, if I could conceive any possibility in the *way of pre-established harmony*.

'I desire the reader to take notice that though I confess that this way removes all notions of a miraculous conduct, yet I do not retract what I have said formerly, that the system of occasional causes does not bring in God acting miraculously. (See M. Leibniz's article in *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, July 1698.) I am as much persuaded as ever I was that an action cannot be said to be miraculous, unless God produces it as an exception to the general laws; and that everything of which he is immediately the author according to those laws is distinct from a miracle properly so called. But being willing to cut off from this dispute as many things as I possibly can, I consent it should be said that the surest way of removing all notions that include a miracle is to suppose that all created substances are actively the immediate causes of the effects of nature. I will therefore lay aside what I might reply to that part of M. Leibniz's answer.

'I will also omit all objections which are not more contrary to his opinion than to that of some other philosophers. I will not therefore propose the difficulties that may be raised against the supposition that a creature can receive from God the power of moving itself. They are strong and almost unanswerable, but M. Leibniz's system does not lie more open to them than that of the Aristotelians; nay, I do not know whether the Cartesians would presume to say that God cannot communicate to our souls a power of acting. If they say so, how can they own that Adam sinned? [39]And if they dare not say so they weaken the arguments whereby they endeavour to prove that matter is not capable of any activity. Nor do I believe that it is more difficult for M. Leibniz than for the Cartesians or other philosophers, to free himself from the objection of a fatal mechanism which destroys human liberty. Wherefore, waiving this, I shall only speak of what is peculiar to the system of the *pre-established harmony*.

'I. My first observation shall be, that it raises the power and wisdom of the divine art above everything that can be conceived. Fancy to yourself a ship which, without having any sense or knowledge, and without being directed by any created or uncreated being, has the power of moving itself so seasonably as to have always the wind favourable, to avoid currents and rocks, to cast anchor where it ought to be done, and to retire into a harbour precisely when it is necessary. Suppose such a ship sails in that manner for several years successively, being always turned and situated as it ought to be, according to the several changes of the air and the different situations of seas and lands; you will acknowledge that God, notwithstanding his infinite power, cannot communicate such a faculty to a ship; or rather you will say that the nature of a ship is not capable of receiving it from God. And yet what M. Leibniz supposes about the machine of a human body is more admirable and more surprising than all this. Let us apply his system concerning the union of the soul with the body to the person of Julius Caesar.

'II. We must say according to this system that the body of Julius Caesar did so exercise its moving faculty that from its birth to its death it went through continual changes which did most exactly answer the perpetual changes of a certain soul which it did not know and which made no impression on it. We must say that the rule according to which that faculty of Caesar's body performed such actions was such, that he would have gone to the Senate upon such a day and at such an hour, that he would have spoken there such and such words, etc., though God had willed to annihilate his soul the next day after it was created. We must say that this moving power did change and modify itself exactly according to the volubility of the thoughts of that ambitious man, and that it was affected precisely in a certain manner rather than in another, because the soul of Caesar passed from a certain thought to another. Can a blind power modify itself so exactly [40]by virtue of an impression communicated thirty or forty years before and never renewed since, but left to itself, without ever knowing what it is to do? Is not this much more incomprehensible than the navigation I spoke of in the foregoing paragraph?

'III. The difficulty will be greater still, if it be considered that the human machine contains an almost infinite number of organs, and that it is continually exposed to the shock of the bodies that surround it,<sup>[1]</sup> and which by an innumerable variety of shakings produce in it a thousand sorts of modifications. How is it possible to conceive that this *pre-established harmony* should never be disordered, but go on still during the longest life of a man, notwithstanding the infinite varieties of the reciprocal action of so many organs upon one another, which are

surrounded on all sides with infinite corpuscles, sometimes hot and sometimes cold, sometimes dry and sometimes moist, and always acting, and pricking the nerves a thousand different ways? Suppose that the multiplicity of organs and of external agents be a necessary instrument of the almost infinite variety of changes in a human body: will that variety have the exactness here required? Will it never disturb the correspondence of those changes with the changes of the soul? This seems to be altogether impossible.

[1] 'According to M. Leibniz what is active in every substance ought to be reduced to a true unity. Since therefore the body of every man is composed of several substances, each of them ought to have a principle of action really distinct from the principle of each of the others. He will have the action of every principle to be spontaneous. Now this must vary the effects *ad infinitum*, and confound them. For the impression of the neighbouring bodies must needs put some constraint upon the natural spontaneity of every one of them.'

'IV. It is in vain to have recourse to the power of God, in order to maintain that brutes are mere machines; it is in vain to say that God was able to make machines so artfully contrived that the voice of a man, the reflected light of an object, etc., will strike them exactly where it is necessary, that they may move in a given manner. This supposition is rejected by everybody except some Cartesians; and no Cartesian would admit it if it were to be extended to man; that is, if anyone were to assert that God was able to form such bodies as would mechanically do whatever we see other men do. By denying this we do not pretend to limit the power and knowledge of God: we only mean that the nature of things does not permit that the faculties imparted to a creature should not be necessarily confined within certain bounds. The [41]actions of creatures must be necessarily proportioned to their essential state, and performed according to the character belonging to each machine; for according to the maxim of the philosophers, whatever is received is proportionate to the capacity of the subject that receives it. We may therefore reject M. Leibniz's hypothesis as being impossible, since it is liable to greater difficulties than that of the Cartesians, which makes beasts to be mere machines. It puts a perpetual harmony between two beings, which do not act one upon another; whereas if servants were mere machines, and should punctually obey their masters' command, it could not be said that they do it without a real action of their masters upon them; for their masters would speak words and make signs which would really shake and move the organs of the servants.

'V. Now let us consider the soul of Julius Caesar, and we shall find the thing more impossible still. That soul was in the world without being exposed to the influence of any spirit. The power it received from God was the only principle of the actions it produced at every moment: and if those actions were different one from another, it was not because some of them were produced by the united influence of some springs which did not contribute to the production of others, for the soul of man is simple, indivisible and immaterial. M. Leibniz owns it; and if he did not acknowledge it, but if, on the contrary, he should suppose with most philosophers and some of the most excellent metaphysicians of our age (Mr. Locke, for instance) that a compound of several material parts placed and disposed in a certain manner, is capable of thinking, his hypothesis would appear to be on that very ground absolutely impossible, and I could refute it several other ways; which I need not mention since he acknowledges the immateriality of our soul and builds upon it.

'Let us return to the soul of Julius Caesar, and call it an immaterial automaton (M. Leibniz's own phrase), and compare it with an atom of Epicurus; I mean an atom surrounded with a vacuum on all sides, and which will never meet any other atom. This is a very just comparison: for this atom, on the one hand, has a natural power of moving itself and exerts it without any assistance, and without being retarded or hindered by anything; and, on the other hand, the soul of Caesar is a spirit which has received the faculty of producing thoughts, and exerts it without [42]the influence of any other spirit or of any body. It is neither assisted nor thwarted by anything whatsoever. If you consult the common notions and the ideas of order, you will find that this atom can never stop, and that having been in motion in the foregoing moment, it will continue in it at the present moment and in all the moments that shall follow, and that it will always move in the same manner. This is the consequence of an axiom approved by M. Leibniz: *since a thing does always remain in the same state wherein it happens to be, unless it receives some alteration from some other thing ... we conclude*, says he, *not only that a body which is at rest will always be at rest, but that a body in motion will always keep that motion or change, that is, the same swiftness and the same direction, unless something happens to hinder it.* (M. Leibniz, *ibid.*)

'Everyone clearly sees that this atom, whether it moves by an innate power, as Democritus and Epicurus would have it, or by a power received from the Creator, will always move in the same line equally and after a uniform manner, without ever turning or going back. Epicurus was laughed at, when he invented the motion of declination; it was a needless supposition, which he wanted in order to get out of the labyrinth of a fatal necessity; and he could give no reason for this new part of his system. It was inconsistent with the clearest notions of our minds: for it is evident that an atom which describes a straight line for the space of two days cannot turn away at the beginning of a third, unless it meets with some obstacle, or has a mind all of a sudden to go out of its road, or contains some spring which begins to play at that very moment. The first of these reasons cannot be admitted in a

vacuum. The second is impossible, since an atom has not the faculty of thinking. And the third is likewise impossible in a corpuscle that is a perfect unity. I must make some use of all this.

'VI. Caesar's soul is a being to which unity belongs in a strict sense. The faculty of producing thoughts is a property of its nature (so M. Leibniz), which it has received from God, both as to possession and exercise. If the first thought it produces is a sense of pleasure, there is no reason why the second should not likewise be a sense of pleasure; for when the total cause of an effect remains the same, the effect cannot be altered. Now this soul, at the second moment of its existence, does not receive a new faculty of thinking; it only preserves the faculty it had at the first moment, and it is as independent of the concurrence of any other cause at the second [43]moment as it was at the first. It must therefore produce again at the second moment the same thought it had produced just before. If it be objected that it ought to be in a state of change, and that it would not be in such a state, in the case that I have supposed; I answer that its change will be like the change of the atom; for an atom which continually moves in the same line acquires a new situation at every moment, but it is like the preceding situation. A soul may therefore continue in its state of change, if it does but produce a new thought like the preceding.

'But suppose it to be not confined within such narrow bounds; it must be granted at least that its going from one thought to another implies some reason of affinity. If I suppose that in a certain moment the soul of Caesar sees a tree with leaves and blossoms, I can conceive that it does immediately desire to see one that has only leaves, and then one that has only blossoms, and that it will thus successively produce several images arising from one another; but one cannot conceive the odd change of thoughts, which have no affinity with, but are even contrary to, one another, and which are so common in men's souls. One cannot apprehend how God could place in the soul of Julius Caesar the principle of what I am going to say. He was without doubt pricked with a pin more than once, when he was sucking; and therefore according to M. Leibniz's hypothesis which I am here considering, his soul must have produced in itself a sense of pain immediately after the pleasant sensations of the sweetness of the milk, which it had enjoyed for the space of two or three minutes. By what springs was it determined to interrupt its pleasures and to give itself all of a sudden a sense of pain, without receiving any intimation of preparing itself to change, and without any new alteration in its substance? If you run over the life of that Roman emperor, every page will afford you matter for a stronger objection than this is.

'VII. The thing would be less incomprehensible if it were supposed that the soul of man is not one spirit but rather a multitude of spirits, each of which has its functions, that begin and end precisely as the changes made in a human body require. By virtue of this supposition it should be said that something analogous to a great number of wheels and springs, or of matters that ferment, disposed according to the changes of our machine, awakens or lulls asleep for a certain time the action of each of those spirits. But then the soul of man would be no longer a single substance [44]but an *ens per aggregationem*, a collection and heap of substances just like all material beings. We are here in quest of a single being, which produces in itself sometimes joy, sometimes pain, etc., and not of many beings, one of which produces hope, another despair, etc.

'In these observations I have merely cleared and unfolded those which M. Leibniz has done me the honour to examine: and now I shall make some reflexions upon his answers.

'VIII. He says (*ibid.*, p. 332) that *the law of the change which happens in the substance of the animal transports him from pleasure to pain at the very moment that a solution of continuity is made in his body; because the law of the indivisible substance of that animal is to represent what is done in his body as we experience it, and even to represent in some manner, and with respect to that body, whatever is done in the world.* These words are a very good explication of the grounds of this system; they are, as it were, the unfolding and key of it; but at the same time they are the very things at which the objections of those who take this system to be impossible are levelled. The law M. Leibniz speaks of supposes a decree of God, and shows wherein this system agrees with that of occasional causes. Those two systems agree in this point, that there are laws according to which the soul of man is *to represent what is done in the body of man, as we experience it.* But they disagree as to the manner of executing those laws. The Cartesians say that God executes them; M. Leibniz will have it, that the soul itself does it; which appears to me impossible, because the soul has not the necessary instruments for such an execution. Now however infinite the power and knowledge of God be, he cannot perform with a machine deprived of a certain piece, what requires the concurrence of such a piece. He must supply that defect; but then the effect would be produced by him and not by the machine. I shall show that the soul has not the instruments requisite for the divine law we speak of, and in order to do it I shall make use of a comparison.

'Fancy to yourself an animal created by God and designed to sing continually. It will always sing, that is most certain; but if God designs him a certain tablature, he must necessarily either put it before his eyes or imprint it upon his memory or dispose his muscles in such a manner that according to the laws of mechanism one certain note will always come after another, agreeably to the order of the tablature. Without this one cannot apprehend

[45]that the animal can always follow the whole set of the notes appointed him by God. Let us apply this to man's soul. M. Leibniz will have it that it has received not only the power of producing thoughts continually, but also the faculty of following always a certain set of thoughts, which answers the continual changes that happen in the machine of the body. This set of thoughts is like the tablature prescribed to the singing animal above mentioned. Can the soul change its perceptions or modifications at every moment according to such a set of thoughts, without knowing the series of the notes, and actually thinking upon them? But experience teaches us that it knows nothing of it. Were it not at least necessary that in default of such a knowledge, there should be in the soul a set of particular instruments, each of which would be a necessary cause of such and such a thought? Must they not be so placed and disposed as to operate precisely one after another, according to the correspondence *pre-established* between the changes of the body and the thoughts of the soul? but it is most certain that an immaterial simple and indivisible substance cannot be made up of such an innumerable multitude of particular instruments placed one before another, according to the order of the tablature in question. It is not therefore possible that a human soul should execute that law.

'M. Leibniz supposes that the soul does not distinctly know its future perceptions, *but that it perceives them confusedly*, and that *there are in each substance traces of whatever hath happened, or shall happen to it: but that an infinite multitude of perceptions hinders us from distinguishing them. The present state of each substance is a natural consequence of its preceding state. The soul, though never so simple, has always a sentiment composed of several perceptions at one time: which answers our end as well as though it were composed of pieces, like a machine. For each foregoing perception has an influence on those that follow agreeably to a law of order, which is in perceptions as well as in motions... The perceptions that are together in one and the same soul at the same time, including an infinite multitude of little and indistinguishable sentiments that are to be unfolded, we need not wonder at the infinite variety of what is to result from it in time. This is only a consequence of the representative nature of the soul, which is, to express what happens and what will happen in its body, by the connexion and correspondence of all the parts of the world.* I have but little to say in answer to this: I shall only observe that this supposition when sufficiently cleared is the right way of solving all [46]the difficulties. M. Leibniz, through the penetration of his great genius, has very well conceived the extent and strength of this objection, and what remedy ought to be applied to the main inconveniency. I do not doubt but that he will smooth the rough parts of his system, and teach us some excellent things about the nature of spirits. Nobody can travel more usefully or more safely than he in the intellectual world. I hope that his curious explanations will remove all the impossibilities which I have hitherto found in his system, and that he will solidly remove my difficulties, as well as those of Father Lami. And these hopes made me say before, without designing to pass a compliment upon that learned man, that his system ought to be looked upon as an important conquest.

'He will not be much embarrassed by this, viz. that whereas according to the supposition of the Cartesians there is but one general law for the union of spirits and bodies, he will have it that God gives a particular law to each spirit; from whence it seems to result that the primitive constitution of each spirit is specifically different from all others. Do not the Thomists say, that there are as many species as individuals in angelic nature?'

Leibniz acknowledged Bayle's note in a further reply, which is written as though for publication. It was communicated to Bayle, but it was not in fact published. It is dated 1702. It may be found in the standard collections of Leibniz's philosophical works. It reads almost like a sketch for the *Theodicy*.

The principal point developed by Leibniz is the richness of content which, according to him, is to be found in each 'simple substance'. Its simplicity is more like the infinitely rich simplicity of the divine Being, than like the simplicity of the atom of Epicurus, with which Bayle had chosen to compare it. It contains a condensation in confused idea of the whole universe: and its essence is from the first defined by the part it is to play in the total harmony.

As to the musical score ('tablature of notes') which the individual soul plays from, in order to perform its ordained part in the universal harmony, this 'score' is to be found in the confused or implicit ideas at any moment present, from which an omniscient observer could always deduce what is to happen next. To the objection 'But the created soul is not an omniscient observer, [47]and if it cannot read the score, the score is useless to it', Leibniz replies by affirming that much spontaneous action arises from subjective and yet unperceived reasons, as we are all perfectly aware, once we attend to the relevant facts. All he claims to be doing is to generalize this observation. All events whatsoever arise from the 'interpretation of the score' by monads, but very little of this 'interpretation' is in the least conscious.

Leibniz passes from the remarks about his own doctrine under the article 'Rorarius' to other articles of Bayle's dictionary, and touches the question of the origin of evil, and other matters which receive their fuller treatment in the *Theodicy*.

In the same year Leibniz wrote a very friendly letter to Bayle himself, offering further explanations of disputed points. He concluded it with a paragraph of some personal interest, comparing himself the historian-philosopher with Bayle the philosophic lexicographer, and revealing by the way his attitude to philosophy, science and history:

'We have good reason to admire, Sir, the way in which your striking reflexions on the deepest questions of philosophy remain unhindered by your boundless researches into matters of fact. I too am not always able to excuse myself from discussions of the sort, and have even been obliged to descend to questions of genealogy, which would be still more trifling, were it not that the interests of States frequently depend upon them. I have worked much on the history of Germany in so far as it bears upon these countries, a study which has furnished me with some observations belonging to general history. So I have learnt not to neglect the knowledge of sheer facts. But if the choice were open to me, I should prefer natural history to political, and the customs and laws God has established in nature, to what is observed among mankind.'

Leibniz now conceived the idea of putting together all the passages in Bayle's works which interested him, and writing a systematic answer to them. Before he had leisure to finish the task, Bayle died. The work nevertheless appeared in 1710 as the Essays in *Theodicy*.

[49]

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# GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ: THEODICY (PREFACE)

## PREFACE

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It has ever been seen that men in general have resorted to outward forms for the expression of their religion: sound piety, that is to say, light and virtue, has never been the portion of the many. One should not wonder at this, nothing is so much in accord with human weakness. We are impressed by what is outward, while the inner essence of things requires consideration of such a kind as few persons are fitted to give. As true piety consists in principles and practice, the outward forms of religion imitate these, and are of two kinds: the one kind consists in ceremonial practices, and the other in the formularies of belief. Ceremonies resemble virtuous actions, and formularies are like shadows of the truth and approach, more or less, the true light. All these outward forms would be commendable if those who invented them had rendered them appropriate to maintain and to express that which they imitate—if religious ceremonies, ecclesiastical discipline, the rules of communities, human laws were always like a hedge round the divine law, to withdraw us from any approach to vice, to inure us to the good and to make us familiar with virtue. That was the aim of Moses and of other good lawgivers, of the wise men who founded religious orders, and above all of Jesus Christ, divine founder of the purest and most enlightened religion. It is just the same with the formularies of [50]belief: they would be valid provided there were nothing in them inconsistent with truth unto salvation, even though the full truth concerned were not there. But it happens only too often that religion is choked in ceremonial, and that the divine light is obscured by the opinions of men.

The pagans, who inhabited the earth before Christianity was founded, had only one kind of outward form: they had ceremonies in their worship, but they had no articles of faith and had never dreamed of drawing up formularies for their dogmatic theology. They knew not whether their gods were real persons or symbols of the forces of Nature, as the sun, the planets, the elements. Their mysteries consisted not in difficult dogmas but in certain secret observances, whence the profane, namely those who were not initiated, were excluded. These observances were very often ridiculous and absurd, and it was necessary to conceal them in order to guard them against contempt. The pagans had their superstitions: they boasted of miracles, everything with them was full of oracles, auguries, portents, divinations; the priests invented signs of the anger or of the goodness of the gods, whose interpreters they claimed to be. This tended to sway minds through fear and hope concerning human

events; but the great future of another life was scarce envisaged; one did not trouble to impart to men true notions of God and of the soul.

Of all ancient peoples, it appears that the Hebrews alone had public dogmas for their religion. Abraham and Moses established the belief in one God, source of all good, author of all things. The Hebrews speak of him in a manner worthy of the Supreme Substance; and one wonders at seeing the inhabitants of one small region of the earth more enlightened than the rest of the human race. Peradventure the wise men of other nations have sometimes said the same, but they have not had the good fortune to find a sufficient following and to convert the dogma into law. Nevertheless Moses had not inserted in his laws the doctrine of the immortality of souls: it was consistent with his ideas, it was taught by oral tradition; but it was not proclaimed for popular acceptance until Jesus Christ lifted the veil, and, without having force in his hand, taught with all the force of a lawgiver that immortal souls pass into another life, wherein they shall receive the wages of their deeds. Moses had already expressed the beautiful conceptions of the greatness and the goodness of God, whereto many civilized [51]peoples to-day assent; but Jesus Christ demonstrated fully the results of these ideas, proclaiming that divine goodness and justice are shown forth to perfection in God's designs for the souls of men.

I refrain from considering here the other points of the Christian doctrine, and I will show only how Jesus Christ brought about the conversion of natural religion into law, and gained for it the authority of a public dogma. He alone did that which so many philosophers had endeavoured in vain to do; and Christians having at last gained the upper hand in the Roman Empire, the master of the greater part of the known earth, the religion of the wise men became that of the nations. Later also Mahomet showed no divergence from the great dogmas of natural theology: his followers spread them abroad even among the most remote races of Asia and of Africa, whither Christianity had not been carried; and they abolished in many countries heathen superstitions which were contrary to the true doctrine of the unity of God and the immortality of souls.

It is clear that Jesus Christ, completing what Moses had begun, wished that the Divinity should be the object not only of our fear and veneration but also of our love and devotion. Thus he made men happy by anticipation, and gave them here on earth a foretaste of future felicity. For there is nothing so agreeable as loving that which is worthy of love. Love is that mental state which makes us take pleasure in the perfections of the object of our love, and there is nothing more perfect than God, nor any greater delight than in him. To love him it suffices to contemplate his perfections, a thing easy indeed, because we find the ideas of these within ourselves. The perfections of God are those of our souls, but he possesses them in boundless measure; he is an Ocean, whereof to us only drops have been granted; there is in us some power, some knowledge, some goodness, but in God they are all in their entirety. Order, proportions, harmony delight us; painting and music are samples of these: God is all order; he always keeps truth of proportions, he makes universal harmony; all beauty is an effusion of his rays.

It follows manifestly that true piety and even true felicity consist in the love of God, but a love so enlightened that its fervour is attended by insight. This kind of love begets that pleasure in good actions which gives relief to virtue, and, relating all to God as to the centre, transports the human to the divine. For in doing [52]one's duty, in obeying reason, one carries out the orders of Supreme Reason. One directs all one's intentions to the common good, which is no other than the glory of God. Thus one finds that there is no greater individual interest than to espouse that of the community, and one gains satisfaction for oneself by taking pleasure in the acquisition of true benefits for men. Whether one succeeds therein or not, one is content with what comes to pass, being once resigned to the will of God and knowing that what he wills is best. But before he declares his will by the event one endeavours to find it out by doing that which appears most in accord with his commands. When we are in this state of mind, we are not disheartened by ill success, we regret only our faults; and the ungrateful ways of men cause no relaxation in the exercise of our kindly disposition. Our charity is humble and full of moderation, it presumes not to domineer; attentive alike to our own faults and to the talents of others, we are inclined to criticize our own actions and to excuse and vindicate those of others. We must work out our own perfection and do wrong to no man. There is no piety where there is not charity; and without being kindly and beneficent one cannot show sincere religion.

Good disposition, favourable upbringing, association with pious and virtuous persons may contribute much towards such a propitious condition for our souls; but most securely are they grounded therein by good principles. I have already said that insight must be joined to fervour, that the perfecting of our understanding must accomplish the perfecting of our will. The practices of virtue, as well as those of vice, may be the effect of a mere habit, one may acquire a taste for them; but when virtue is reasonable, when it is related to God, who is the supreme reason of things, it is founded on knowledge. One cannot love God without knowing his perfections, and this knowledge contains the principles of true piety. The purpose of religion should be to imprint these principles upon our souls: but in some strange way it has happened all too often that men, that teachers of religion have

strayed far from this purpose. Contrary to the intention of our divine Master, devotion has been reduced to ceremonies and doctrine has been cumbered with formulae. All too often these ceremonies have not been well fitted to maintain the exercise of virtue, and the formulae sometimes have not been lucid. Can one believe it? Some Christians have imagined that they could be [53]devout without loving their neighbour, and pious without loving God; or else people have thought that they could love their neighbour without serving him and could love God without knowing him. Many centuries have passed without recognition of this defect by the people at large; and there are still great traces of the reign of darkness. There are divers persons who speak much of piety, of devotion, of religion, who are even busied with the teaching of such things, and who yet prove to be by no means versed in the divine perfections. They ill understand the goodness and the justice of the Sovereign of the universe; they imagine a God who deserves neither to be imitated nor to be loved. This indeed seemed to me dangerous in its effect, since it is of serious moment that the very source of piety should be preserved from infection. The old errors of those who arraigned the Divinity or who made thereof an evil principle have been renewed sometimes in our own days: people have pleaded the irresistible power of God when it was a question rather of presenting his supreme goodness; and they have assumed a despotic power when they should rather have conceived of a power ordered by the most perfect wisdom. I have observed that these opinions, apt to do harm, rested especially on confused notions which had been formed concerning freedom, necessity and destiny; and I have taken up my pen more than once on such an occasion to give explanations on these important matters. But finally I have been compelled to gather up my thoughts on all these connected questions, and to impart them to the public. It is this that I have undertaken in the Essays which I offer here, on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil.

There are two famous labyrinths where our reason very often goes astray: one concerns the great question of the Free and the Necessary, above all in the production and the origin of Evil; the other consists in the discussion of continuity and of the indivisibles which appear to be the elements thereof, and where the consideration of the infinite must enter in. The first perplexes almost all the human race, the other exercises philosophers only. I shall have perchance at another time an opportunity to declare myself on the second, and to point out that, for lack of a true conception of the nature of substance and matter, people have taken up false positions leading to insurmountable difficulties, difficulties which should properly be applied to the overthrow of these very [54]positions. But if the knowledge of continuity is important for speculative enquiry, that of necessity is none the less so for practical application; and it, together with the questions therewith connected, to wit, the freedom of man and the justice of God, forms the object of this treatise.

Men have been perplexed in well-nigh every age by a sophism which the ancients called the 'Lazy Reason', because it tended towards doing nothing, or at least towards being careful for nothing and only following inclination for the pleasure of the moment. For, they said, if the future is necessary, that which must happen will happen, whatever I may do. Now the future (so they said) is necessary, whether because the Divinity foresees everything, and even pre-establishes it by the control of all things in the universe; or because everything happens of necessity, through the concatenation of causes; or finally, through the very nature of truth, which is determinate in the assertions that can be made on future events, as it is in all assertions, since the assertion must always be true or false in itself, even though we know not always which it is. And all these reasons for determination which appear different converge finally like lines upon one and the same centre; for there is a truth in the future event which is predetermined by the causes, and God pre-establishes it in establishing the causes.

The false conception of necessity, being applied in practice, has given rise to what I call *Fatum Mahometanum*, fate after the Turkish fashion, because it is said of the Turks that they do not shun danger or even abandon places infected with plague, owing to their use of such reasoning as that just recorded. For what is called *Fatum Stoicum* was not so black as it is painted: it did not divert men from the care of their affairs, but it tended to give them tranquillity in regard to events, through the consideration of necessity, which renders our anxieties and our vexations needless. In which respect these philosophers were not far removed from the teaching of our Lord, who deprecates these anxieties in regard to the morrow, comparing them with the needless trouble a man would give himself in labouring to increase his stature.

It is true that the teachings of the Stoics (and perhaps also of some famous philosophers of our time), confining themselves to this alleged necessity, can only impart a forced patience; whereas our Lord inspires thoughts more sublime, and even instructs us in the means of gaining contentment by assuring us that since God, [55]being altogether good and wise, has care for everything, even so far as not to neglect one hair of our head, our confidence in him ought to be entire. And thus we should see, if we were capable of understanding him, that it is not even possible to wish for anything better (as much in general as for ourselves) than what he does. It is as if one said to men: Do your duty and be content with that which shall come of it, not only because you cannot resist divine providence, or the nature of things (which may suffice for tranquillity, but not for contentment), but also because you have to do with a good master. And that is what may be called *Fatum Christianum*.

Nevertheless it happens that most men, and even Christians, introduce into their dealings some mixture of fate after the Turkish fashion, although they do not sufficiently acknowledge it. It is true that they are not inactive or negligent when obvious perils or great and manifest hopes present themselves; for they will not fail to abandon a house that is about to fall and to turn aside from a precipice they see in their path; and they will burrow in the earth to dig up a treasure half uncovered, without waiting for fate to finish dislodging it. But when the good or the evil is remote and uncertain and the remedy painful or little to our taste, the lazy reason seems to us to be valid. For example, when it is a question of preserving one's health and even one's life by good diet, people to whom one gives advice thereupon very often answer that our days are numbered and that it avails nothing to try to struggle against that which God destines for us. But these same persons run to even the most absurd remedies when the evil they had neglected draws near. One reasons in somewhat the same way when the question for consideration is somewhat thorny, as for instance when one asks oneself, *quod vitae sectabor iter?* what profession one must choose; when it is a question of a marriage being arranged, of a war being undertaken, of a battle being fought; for in these cases many will be inclined to evade the difficulty of consideration and abandon themselves to fate or to inclination, as if reason should not be employed except in easy cases. One will then all too often reason in the Turkish fashion (although this way is wrongly termed trusting in providence, a thing that in reality occurs only when one has done one's duty) and one will employ the lazy reason, derived from the idea of inevitable fate, to relieve oneself of the need to reason properly. [56] One will thus overlook the fact that if this argument contrary to the practice of reason were valid, it would always hold good, whether the consideration were easy or not. This laziness is to some extent the source of the superstitious practices of fortune-tellers, which meet with just such credulity as men show towards the philosopher's stone, because they would fain have short cuts to the attainment of happiness without trouble.

I do not speak here of those who throw themselves upon fortune because they have been happy before, as if there were something permanent therein. Their argument from the past to the future has just as slight a foundation as the principles of astrology and of other kinds of divination. They overlook the fact that there is usually an ebb and flow in fortune, *una marea*, as Italians playing basset are wont to call it. With regard to this they make their own particular observations, which I would, nevertheless, counsel none to trust too much. Yet this confidence that people have in their fortune serves often to give courage to men, and above all to soldiers, and causes them to have indeed that good fortune they ascribe to themselves. Even so do predictions often cause that to happen which has been foretold, as it is supposed that the opinion the Mahometans hold on fate makes them resolute. Thus even errors have their use at times, but generally as providing a remedy for other errors: and truth is unquestionably better.

But it is taking an unfair advantage of this alleged necessity of fate to employ it in excuse for our vices and our libertinism. I have often heard it said by smart young persons, who wished to play the freethinker, that it is useless to preach virtue, to censure vice, to create hopes of reward and fears of punishment, since it may be said of the book of destiny, that what is written is written, and that our behaviour can change nothing therein. Thus, they would say, it were best to follow one's inclination, dwelling only upon such things as may content us in the present. They did not reflect upon the strange consequences of this argument, which would prove too much, since it would prove (for instance) that one should take a pleasant beverage even though one knows it is poisoned. For the same reason (if it were valid) I could say: if it is written in the records of the Parcae that poison will kill me now or will do me harm, this will happen even though I were not to take this beverage; and if this is not written, it will not happen even though I should take this same beverage; consequently I shall be [57] able to follow with impunity my inclination to take what is pleasing, however injurious it may be; the result of which reasoning is an obvious absurdity. This objection disconcerted them a little, but they always reverted to their argument, phrased in different ways, until they were brought to understand where the fault of the sophism lies. It is untrue that the event happens whatever one may do: it will happen because one does what leads thereto; and if the event is written beforehand, the cause that will make it happen is written also. Thus the connexion of effects and causes, so far from establishing the doctrine of a necessity detrimental to conduct, serves to overthrow it.

Yet, without having evil intentions inclined towards libertinism, one may envisage differently the strange consequences of an inevitable necessity, considering that it would destroy the freedom of the will, so essential to the morality of action: for justice and injustice, praise and blame, punishment and reward cannot attach to necessary actions, and nobody will be under obligation to do the impossible or to abstain from doing what is absolutely necessary. Without any intention of abusing this consideration in order to favour irregularity, one will nevertheless not escape embarrassment sometimes, when it comes to a question of judging the actions of others, or rather of answering objections, amongst which there are some even concerned with the actions of God, whereof I will speak presently. And as an insuperable necessity would open the door to impiety, whether through the impunity one could thence infer or the hopelessness of any attempt to resist a torrent that sweeps everything along with it, it is important to note the different degrees of necessity, and to show that there are some which cannot do harm, as there are others which cannot be admitted without giving rise to evil consequences.

Some go even further: not content with using the pretext of necessity to prove that virtue and vice do neither good nor ill, they have the hardihood to make the Divinity accessory to their licentious way of life, and they imitate the pagans of old, who ascribed to the gods the cause of their crimes, as if a divinity drove them to do evil. The philosophy of Christians, which recognizes better than that of the ancients the dependence of things upon the first Author and his co-operation with all the actions of creatures, appears to have increased this difficulty. Some able men in our own time have gone so far as to deny all [58]action to creatures, and M. Bayle, who tended a little towards this extraordinary opinion, made use of it to restore the lapsed dogma of the two principles, or two gods, the one good, the other evil, as if this dogma were a better solution to the difficulties over the origin of evil. Yet again he acknowledges that it is an indefensible opinion and that the oneness of the Principle is incontestably founded on *a priori* reasons; but he wishes to infer that our Reason is confounded and cannot meet her own objections, and that one should disregard them and hold fast the revealed dogmas, which teach us the existence of one God altogether good, altogether powerful and altogether wise. But many readers, convinced of the irrefutable nature of his objections and believing them to be at least as strong as the proofs for the truth of religion, would draw dangerous conclusions.

Even though there were no co-operation by God in evil actions, one could not help finding difficulty in the fact that he foresees them and that, being able to prevent them through his omnipotence, he yet permits them. This is why some philosophers and even some theologians have rather chosen to deny to God any knowledge of the detail of things and, above all, of future events, than to admit what they believed repellent to his goodness. The Socinians and Conrad Vorstius lean towards that side; and Thomas Bonartes, an English Jesuit disguised under a pseudonym but exceedingly learned, who wrote a book *De Concordia Scientiae cum Fide*, of which I will speak later, appears to hint at this also.

They are doubtless much mistaken; but others are not less so who, convinced that nothing comes to pass save by the will and the power of God, ascribe to him intentions and actions so unworthy of the greatest and the best of all beings that one would say these authors have indeed renounced the dogma which recognizes God's justice and goodness. They thought that, being supreme Master of the universe, he could without any detriment to his holiness cause sins to be committed, simply at his will and pleasure, or in order that he might have the pleasure of punishing; and even that he could take pleasure in eternally afflicting innocent people without doing any injustice, because no one has the right or the power to control his actions. Some even have gone so far as to say that God acts thus indeed; and on the plea that we are as nothing in comparison with him, they liken us to earthworms which men crush without heeding as they walk, or in general to [59]animals that are not of our species and which we do not scruple to ill-treat.

I believe that many persons otherwise of good intentions are misled by these ideas, because they have not sufficient knowledge of their consequences. They do not see that, properly speaking, God's justice is thus overthrown. For what idea shall we form of such a justice as has only will for its rule, that is to say, where the will is not guided by the rules of good and even tends directly towards evil? Unless it be the idea contained in that tyrannical definition by Thrasymachus in Plato, which designated as *just* that which pleases the stronger. Such indeed is the position taken up, albeit unwittingly, by those who rest all obligation upon constraint, and in consequence take power as the gauge of right. But one will soon abandon maxims so strange and so unfit to make men good and charitable through the imitation of God. For one will reflect that a God who would take pleasure in the misfortune of others cannot be distinguished from the evil principle of the Manichaeans, assuming that this principle had become sole master of the universe; and that in consequence one must attribute to the true God sentiments that render him worthy to be called the good Principle.

Happily these extravagant dogmas scarce obtain any longer among theologians. Nevertheless some astute persons, who are pleased to make difficulties, revive them: they seek to increase our perplexity by uniting the controversies aroused by Christian theology to the disputes of philosophy. Philosophers have considered the questions of necessity, of freedom and of the origin of evil; theologians have added thereto those of original sin, of grace and of predestination. The original corruption of the human race, coming from the first sin, appears to us to have imposed a natural necessity to sin without the succour of divine grace: but necessity being incompatible with punishment, it will be inferred that a sufficient grace ought to have been given to all men; which does not seem to be in conformity with experience.

But the difficulty is great, above all, in relation to God's dispositions for the salvation of men. There are few saved or chosen; therefore the choice of many is not God's decreed will. And since it is admitted that those whom he has chosen deserve it no more than the rest, and are not even fundamentally less evil, the goodness which they have coming only from the gift of God, the difficulty [60]is increased. Where is, then, his justice (people will say), or at the least, where is his goodness? Partiality, or respect of persons, goes against justice, and he who without cause sets bounds to his goodness cannot have it in sufficient measure. It is true that those who are not chosen

are lost by their own fault: they lack good will or living faith; but it rested with God alone to grant it them. We know that besides inward grace there are usually outward circumstances which distinguish men, and that training, conversation, example often correct or corrupt natural disposition. Now that God should call forth circumstances favourable to some and abandon others to experiences which contribute to their misfortune, will not that give us cause for astonishment? And it is not enough (so it seems) to say with some that inward grace is universal and equal for all. For these same authors are obliged to resort to the exclamations of St. Paul, and to say: 'O the depth!' when they consider how men are distinguished by what we may call outward graces, that is, by graces appearing in the diversity of circumstances which God calls forth, whereof men are not the masters, and which have nevertheless so great an influence upon all that concerns their salvation.

Nor will it help us to say with St. Augustine that, all men being involved in the damnation caused by the sin of Adam, God might have left them all in their misery; and that thus his goodness alone induces him to deliver some of them. For not only is it strange that the sin of another should condemn anyone, but there still remains the question why God does not deliver all—why he delivers the lesser number and why some in preference to others. He is in truth their master, but he is a good and just master; his power is absolute, but his wisdom permits not that he exercise that power in an arbitrary and despotic way, which would be tyrannous indeed.

Moreover, the fall of the first man having happened only with God's permission, and God having resolved to permit it only when once he had considered its consequences, which are the corruption of the mass of the human race and the choice of a small number of elect, with the abandonment of all the rest, it is useless to conceal the difficulty by limiting one's view to the mass already corrupt. One must, in spite of oneself, go back to the knowledge of the consequences of the first sin, preceding the decree whereby God permitted it, and whereby he permitted simultaneously that [61]the damned should be involved in the mass of perdition and should not be delivered: for God and the sage make no resolve without considering its consequences.

I hope to remove all these difficulties. I will point out that absolute necessity, which is called also logical and metaphysical and sometimes geometrical, and which would alone be formidable in this connexion, does not exist in free actions, and that thus freedom is exempt not only from constraint but also from real necessity. I will show that God himself, although he always chooses the best, does not act by an absolute necessity, and that the laws of nature laid down by God, founded upon the fitness of things, keep the mean between geometrical truths, absolutely necessary, and arbitrary decrees; which M. Bayle and other modern philosophers have not sufficiently understood. Further I will show that there is an indifference in freedom, because there is no absolute necessity for one course or the other; but yet that there is never an indifference of perfect equipoise. And I will demonstrate that there is in free actions a perfect spontaneity beyond all that has been conceived hitherto. Finally I will make it plain that the hypothetical and the moral necessity which subsist in free actions are open to no objection, and that the 'Lazy Reason' is a pure sophism.

Likewise concerning the origin of evil in its relation to God, I offer a vindication of his perfections that shall extol not less his holiness, his justice and his goodness than his greatness, his power and his independence. I show how it is possible for everything to depend upon God, for him to co-operate in all the actions of creatures, even, if you will, to create these creatures continually, and nevertheless not to be the author of sin. Here also it is demonstrated how the privative nature of evil should be understood. Much more than that, I explain how evil has a source other than the will of God, and that one is right therefore to say of moral evil that God wills it not, but simply permits it. Most important of all, however, I show that it has been possible for God to permit sin and misery, and even to co-operate therein and promote it, without detriment to his holiness and his supreme goodness: although, generally speaking, he could have avoided all these evils.

Concerning grace and predestination, I justify the most debatable assertions, as for instance: that we are converted only [62]through the prevenient grace of God and that we cannot do good except with his aid; that God wills the salvation of all men and that he condemns only those whose will is evil; that he gives to all a sufficient grace provided they wish to use it; that, Jesus Christ being the source and the centre of election, God destined the elect for salvation, because he foresaw that they would cling with a lively faith to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Yet it is true that this reason for election is not the final reason, and that this very pre-vision is still a consequence of God's anterior decree. Faith likewise is a gift of God, who has predestinated the faith of the elect, for reasons lying in a superior decree which dispenses grace and circumstance in accordance with God's supreme wisdom.

Now, as one of the most gifted men of our time, whose eloquence was as great as his acumen and who gave great proofs of his vast erudition, had applied himself with a strange predilection to call attention to all the difficulties on this subject which I have just touched in general, I found a fine field for exercise in considering the question with him in detail. I acknowledge that M. Bayle (for it is easy to see that I speak of him) has on his side all the advantages except that of the root of the matter, but I hope that truth (which he acknowledges himself to be

on our side) by its very plainness, and provided it be fittingly set forth, will prevail over all the ornaments of eloquence and erudition. My hope for success therein is all the greater because it is the cause of God I plead, and because one of the maxims here upheld states that God's help is never lacking for those that lack not good will. The author of this discourse believes that he has given proof of this good will in the attention he has brought to bear upon this subject. He has meditated upon it since his youth; he has conferred with some of the foremost men of the time; and he has schooled himself by the reading of good authors. And the success which God has given him (according to the opinion of sundry competent judges) in certain other profound meditations, of which some have much influence on this subject, gives him peradventure some right to claim the attention of readers who love truth and are fitted to search after it.

The author had, moreover, particular and weighty reasons inducing him to take pen in hand for discussion of this subject. Conversations which he had concerning the same with literary and court personages, in Germany and in France, and especially [63]with one of the greatest and most accomplished of princesses, have repeatedly prompted him to this course. He had had the honour of expressing his opinions to this Princess upon divers passages of the admirable *Dictionary* of M. Bayle, wherein religion and reason appear as adversaries, and where M. Bayle wishes to silence reason after having made it speak too loud: which he calls the triumph of faith. The present author declared there and then that he was of a different opinion, but that he was nevertheless well pleased that a man of such great genius had brought about an occasion for going deeply into these subjects, subjects as important as they are difficult. He admitted having examined them also for some long time already, and having sometimes been minded to publish upon this matter some reflexions whose chief aim should be such knowledge of God as is needed to awaken piety and to foster virtue. This Princess exhorted and urged him to carry out his long-cherished intention, and some friends added their persuasions. He was all the more tempted to accede to their requests since he had reason to hope that in the sequel to his investigation M. Bayle's genius would greatly aid him to give the subject such illumination as it might receive with his support. But divers obstacles intervened, and the death of the incomparable Queen was not the least. It happened, however, that M. Bayle was attacked by excellent men who set themselves to examine the same subject; he answered them fully and always ingeniously. I followed their dispute, and was even on the point of being involved therein. This is how it came about.

I had published a new system, which seemed well adapted to explain the union of the soul and the body: it met with considerable applause even from those who were not in agreement with it, and certain competent persons testified that they had already been of my opinion, without having reached so distinct an explanation, before they saw what I had written on the matter. M. Bayle examined it in his *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, article 'Rorarius'. He thought that my expositions were worthy of further development; he drew attention to their usefulness in various connexions, and he laid stress upon what might still cause difficulty. I could not but reply in a suitable way to expressions so civil and to reflexions so instructive as his. In order to turn them to greater account, I published some elucidations in the *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, July 1698. M. Bayle replied to them in the [64]second edition of his *Dictionary*. I sent him a rejoinder which has not yet been published; I know not whether he ever made a further reply.

Meanwhile it happened that M. le Clerc had inserted in his *Select Library* an extract from the *Intellectual System* of the late Mr. Cudworth, and had explained therein certain 'plastic natures' which this admirable author applied to the formation of animals. M. Bayle believed (see the continuation of *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*, ch. 21, art. 11) that, these natures being without cognition, in establishing them one weakened the argument which proves, through the marvellous formation of things, that the universe must have an intelligent Cause. M. le Clerc replied (4th art. of the 5th vol. of his *Select Library*) that these natures required to be directed by divine wisdom. M. Bayle insisted (7th article of the *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, August 1704) that direction alone was not sufficient for a cause devoid of cognition, unless one took the cause to be a mere instrument of God, in which case direction would be needless. My system was touched upon in passing; and that gave me an opportunity to send a short essay to the illustrious author of the *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savants*, which he inserted in the month of May 1705, art. 9. In this I endeavoured to make clear that in reality mechanism is sufficient to produce the organic bodies of animals, without any need of other plastic natures, provided there be added thereto the *preformation* already completely organic in the seeds of the bodies that come into existence, contained in those of the bodies whence they spring, right back to the primary seeds. This could only proceed from the Author of things, infinitely powerful and infinitely wise, who, creating all in the beginning in due order, had *pre-established* there all order and artifice that was to be. There is no chaos in the inward nature of things, and there is organism everywhere in a matter whose disposition proceeds from God. More and more of it would come to light if we pressed closer our examination of the anatomy of bodies; and we should continue to observe it even if we could go on to infinity, like Nature, and make subdivision as continuous in our knowledge as Nature has made it in fact.

In order to explain this marvel of the formation of animals, I made use of a Pre-established Harmony, that is to say, of the same means I had used to explain another marvel, namely the [65]correspondence of soul with body, wherein I proved the uniformity and the fecundity of the principles I had employed. It seems that this reminded M. Bayle of my system of accounting for this correspondence, which he had examined formerly. He declared (in chapter 180 of his *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, p. 1253) that he did not believe God could give to matter or to any other cause the faculty of becoming organic without communicating to it the idea and the knowledge of organic nature. Also he was not yet disposed to believe that God, with all his power over Nature and with all the foreknowledge which he has of the contingencies that may arrive, could have so disposed things that by the laws of mechanics alone a vessel (for instance) should go to its port of destination without being steered during its passage by some intelligent guide. I was surprised to see that limits were placed on the power of God, without the adduction of any proof and without indication that there was any contradiction to be feared on the side of the object or any imperfection on God's side. Whereas I had shown before in my Rejoinder that even men often produce through automata something like the movements that come from reason, and that even a finite mind (but one far above ours) could accomplish what M. Bayle thinks impossible to the Divinity. Moreover, as God orders all things at once beforehand, the accuracy of the path of this vessel would be no more strange than that of a fuse passing along a cord in fireworks, since the whole disposition of things preserves a perfect harmony between them by means of their influence one upon the other.

This declaration of M. Bayle pledged me to an answer. I therefore purposed to point out to him, that unless it be said that God forms organic bodies himself by a perpetual miracle, or that he has entrusted this care to intelligences whose power and knowledge are almost divine, we must hold the opinion that God *performed* things in such sort that new organisms are only a mechanical consequence of a preceding organic constitution. Even so do butterflies come out of silkworms, an instance where M. Swammerdam has shown that there is nothing but development. And I would have added that nothing is better qualified than the preformation of plants and of animals to confirm my System of Pre-established Harmony between the soul and the body. For in this the body is prompted by its original constitution to carry out with the help of external things all that it does in accordance with the [66]will of the soul. So the seeds by their original constitution carry out naturally the intentions of God, by an artifice greater still than that which causes our body to perform everything in conformity with our will. And since M. Bayle himself deems with reason that there is more artifice in the organism of animals than in the most beautiful poem in the world or in the most admirable invention whereof the human mind is capable, it follows that my system of the connexion between the body and the soul is as intelligible as the general opinion on the formation of animals. For this opinion (which appears to me true) states in effect that the wisdom of God has so made Nature that it is competent in virtue of its laws to form animals; I explain this opinion and throw more light upon the possibility of it through the system of preformation. Whereafter there will be no cause for surprise that God has so made the body that by virtue of its own laws it can carry out the intentions of the reasoning soul: for all that the reasoning soul can demand of the body is less difficult than the organization which God has demanded of the seeds. M. Bayle says (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 182, p. 1294) that it is only very recently there have been people who have understood that the formation of living bodies cannot be a natural process. This he could say also (in accordance with his principles) of the communication between the soul and the body, since God effects this whole communication in the system of occasional causes to which this author subscribes. But I admit the supernatural here only in the beginning of things, in respect of the first formation of animals or in respect of the original constitution of pre-established harmony between the soul and the body. Once that has come to pass, I hold that the formation of animals and the relation between the soul and the body are something as natural now as the other most ordinary operations of Nature. A close parallel is afforded by people's ordinary thinking about the instinct and the marvellous behaviour of brutes. One recognizes reason there not in the brutes but in him who created them. I am, then, of the general opinion in this respect; but I hope that my explanation will have added clearness and lucidity, and even a more ample range, to that opinion.

Now when preparing to justify my system in face of the new difficulties of M. Bayle, I purposed at the same time to communicate to him the ideas which I had had for some time already, on [67]the difficulties put forward by him in opposition to those who endeavour to reconcile reason with faith in regard to the existence of evil. Indeed, there are perhaps few persons who have toiled more than I in this matter. Hardly had I gained some tolerable understanding of Latin writings when I had an opportunity of turning over books in a library. I flitted from book to book, and since subjects for meditation pleased me as much as histories and fables, I was charmed by the work of Laurentius Valla against Boethius and by that of Luther against Erasmus, although I was well aware that they had need of some mitigation. I did not omit books of controversy, and amongst other writings of this nature the records of the Montbéliard Conversation, which had revived the dispute, appeared to me instructive. Nor did I neglect the teachings of our theologians: and the study of their opponents, far from disturbing me, served to strengthen me in the moderate opinions of the Churches of the Augsburg Confession. I had opportunity on my journeys to confer with some excellent men of different parties, for instance with Bishop Peter von Wallenburg, Suffragan of Mainz, with Herr Johann Ludwig Fabricius, premier theologian of Heidelberg, and finally with the

celebrated M. Arnauld. To him I even tendered a Latin Dialogue of my own composition upon this subject, about the year 1673, wherein already I laid it down that God, having chosen the most perfect of all possible worlds, had been prompted by his wisdom to permit the evil which was bound up with it, but which still did not prevent this world from being, all things considered, the best that could be chosen. I have also since read many and various good authors on these subjects, and I have endeavoured to make progress in the knowledge that seems to me proper for banishing all that could have obscured the idea of supreme perfection which must be acknowledged in God. I have not neglected to examine the most rigorous authors, who have extended furthest the doctrine of the necessity of things, as for instance Hobbes and Spinoza, of whom the former advocated this absolute necessity not only in his *Physical Elements* and elsewhere, but also in a special book against Bishop Bramhall. And Spinoza insists more or less (like an ancient Peripatetic philosopher named Strato) that all has come from the first cause or from primitive Nature by a blind and geometrical necessity, with complete absence of capacity for choice, for goodness and for understanding in this first source of things.

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I have found the means, so it seems to me, of demonstrating the contrary in a way that gives one a clear insight into the inward essence of the matter. For having made new discoveries on the nature of active force and the laws of motion, I have shown that they have no geometrical necessity, as Spinoza appears to have believed they had. Neither, as I have made plain, are they purely arbitrary, even though this be the opinion of M. Bayle and of some modern philosophers: but they are dependent upon the fitness of things as I have already pointed out above, or upon that which I call the 'principle of the best'. Moreover one recognizes therein, as in every other thing, the marks of the first substance, whose productions bear the stamp of a supreme wisdom and make the most perfect of harmonies. I have shown also that this harmony connects both the future with the past and the present with the absent. The first kind of connexion unites times, and the other places. This second connexion is displayed in the union of the soul with the body, and in general in the communication of true substances with one another and with material phenomena. But the first takes place in the preformation of organic bodies, or rather of all bodies, since there is organism everywhere, although all masses do not compose organic bodies. So a pond may very well be full of fish or of other organic bodies, although it is not itself an animal or organic body, but only a mass that contains them. Thus I had endeavoured to build upon such foundations, established in a conclusive manner, a complete body of the main articles of knowledge that reason pure and simple can impart to us, a body whereof all the parts were properly connected and capable of meeting the most important difficulties of the ancients and the moderns. I had also in consequence formed for myself a certain system concerning the freedom of man and the cooperation of God. This system appeared to me to be such as would in no wise offend reason and faith; and I desired to submit it to the scrutiny of M. Bayle, as well as of those who are in controversy with him. Now he has departed from us, and such a loss is no small one, a writer whose learning and acumen few have equalled. But since the subject is under consideration and men of talent are still occupied with it, while the public also follows it attentively, I take this to be a fitting moment for the publication of certain of my ideas.

It will perhaps be well to add the observation, before finishing this preface, that in denying the physical influence of the soul upon [69]the body or of the body upon the soul, that is, an influence causing the one to disturb the laws of the other, I by no means deny the union of the one with the other which forms of them a suppositum; but this union is something metaphysical, which changes nothing in the phenomena. This is what I have already said in reply to the objection raised against me, in the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, by the Reverend Father de Tournemine, whose wit and learning are of no ordinary mould. And for this reason one may say also in a metaphysical sense that the soul acts upon the body and the body upon the soul. Moreover, it is true that the soul is the Entelechy or the active principle, whereas the corporeal alone or the mere material contains only the passive. Consequently the principle of action is in the soul, as I have explained more than once in the *Leipzig Journal*. More especially does this appear in my answer to the late Herr Sturm, philosopher and mathematician of Altorf, where I have even demonstrated that, if bodies contained only the passive, their different conditions would be indistinguishable. Also I take this opportunity to say that, having heard of some objections made by the gifted author of the book on *Self-knowledge*, in that same book, to my System of Pre-established Harmony, I sent a reply to Paris, showing that he has attributed to me opinions I am far from holding. On another matter recently I met with like treatment at the hands of an anonymous Doctor of the Sorbonne. And these misconceptions would have become plain to the reader at the outset if my own words, which were being taken in evidence, had been quoted.

This tendency of men to make mistakes in presenting the opinions of others leads me to observe also, that when I said somewhere that man helps himself in conversion through the succour of grace, I mean only that he derives advantage from it through the cessation of the resistance overcome, but without any cooperation on his part: just as there is no co-operation in ice when it is broken. For conversion is purely the work of God's grace, wherein man co-operates only by resisting it; but human resistance is more or less great according to the persons and the occasions. Circumstances also contribute more or less to our attention and to the motions that arise in the soul;

and the co-operation of all these things, together with the strength of the impression and the condition of the will, determines the operation of grace, although not rendering it necessary. I have expounded sufficiently elsewhere<sup>[70]</sup> that in relation to matters of salvation unregenerate man is to be considered as dead; and I greatly approve the manner wherein the theologians of the Augsburg Confession declare themselves on this subject. Yet this corruption of unregenerate man is, it must be added, no hindrance to his possession of true moral virtues and his performance of good actions in his civic life, actions which spring from a good principle, without any evil intention and without mixture of actual sin. Wherein I hope I shall be forgiven, if I have dared to diverge from the opinion of St. Augustine: he was doubtless a great man, of admirable intelligence, but inclined sometimes, as it seems, to exaggerate things, above all in the heat of his controversies. I greatly esteem some persons who profess to be disciples of St. Augustine, amongst others the Reverend Father Quênel, a worthy successor of the great Arnauld in the pursuit of controversies that have embroiled them with the most famous of Societies. But I have found that usually in disputes between people of conspicuous merit (of whom there are doubtless some here in both parties) there is right on both sides, although in different points, and it is rather in the matter of defence than attack, although the natural malevolence of the human heart generally renders attack more agreeable to the reader than defence. I hope that the Reverend Father Ptolemei, who does his Society credit and is occupied in filling the gaps left by the famous Bellarmine, will give us, concerning all of that, some explanations worthy of his acumen and his knowledge, and I even dare to add, his moderation. And one must believe that among the theologians of the Augsburg Confession there will arise some new Chemnitz or some new Callixtus; even as one is justified in thinking that men like Usserius or Daillé will again appear among the Reformed, and that all will work more and more to remove the misconceptions wherewith this matter is charged. For the rest I shall be well pleased that those who shall wish to examine it closely read the objections with the answers I have given thereto, formulated in the small treatise I have placed at the end of the work by way of summary. I have endeavoured to forestall some new objections. I have explained, for instance, why I have taken the antecedent and consequent will as preliminary and final, after the example of Thomas, of Scotus and others; how it is possible that there be incomparably more good in the glory of all the saved than there is evil in the misery of all the damned, <sup>[71]</sup> despite that there are more of the latter; how, in saying that evil has been permitted as a *conditio sine qua non* of good, I mean not according to the principle of necessity, but according to the principle of the fitness of things. Furthermore I show that the predetermination I admit is such as always to predispose, but never to necessitate, and that God will not refuse the requisite new light to those who have made a good use of that which they had. Other elucidations besides I have endeavoured to give on some difficulties which have been put before me of late. I have, moreover, followed the advice of some friends who thought it fitting that I should add two appendices: the one treats of the controversy carried on between Mr. Hobbes and Bishop Bramhall touching Freedom and Necessity, the other of the learned work on *The Origin of Evil*, published a short time ago in England.

Finally I have endeavoured in all things to consider edification: and if I have conceded something to curiosity, it is because I thought it necessary to relieve a subject whose seriousness may cause discouragement. It is with that in view that I have introduced into this dissertation the pleasing chimera of a certain astronomical theology, having no ground for apprehension that it will ensnare anyone and deeming that to tell it and refute it is the same thing. Fiction for fiction, instead of imagining that the planets were suns, one might conceive that they were masses melted in the sun and thrown out, and that would destroy the foundation of this hypothetical theology. The ancient error of the two principles, which the Orientals distinguished by the names Oromasdes and Arimanius, caused me to explain a conjecture on the primitive history of peoples. It appears indeed probable that these were the names of two great contemporary princes, the one monarch of a part of upper Asia, where there have since been others of this name, the other king of the Scythian Celts who made incursions into the states of the former, and who was also named amongst the divinities of Germania. It seems, indeed, that Zoroaster used the names of these princes as symbols of the invisible powers which their exploits made them resemble in the ideas of Asiatics. Yet elsewhere, according to the accounts of Arab authors, who in this might well be better informed than the Greeks, it appears from detailed records of ancient oriental history, that this Zerdust or Zoroaster, whom they make contemporary with the great Darius, did not look upon these two <sup>[72]</sup> principles as completely primitive and independent, but as dependent upon one supreme and single principle. They relate that he believed, in conformity with the cosmogony of Moses, that God, who is without an equal, created all and separated the light from the darkness; that the light conformed with his original design, but that the darkness came as a consequence, even as the shadow follows the body, and that this is nothing but privation. Such a thesis would clear this ancient author of the errors the Greeks imputed to him. His great learning caused the Orientals to compare him with the Mercury or Hermes of the Egyptians and Greeks; just as the northern peoples compared their Wodan or Odin to this same Mercury. That is why Mercredi (Wednesday), or the day of Mercury, was called Wodansdag by the northern peoples, but day of Zerdust by the Asiatics, since it is named Zarschamba or Dsearschambe by the Turks and the Persians, Zerda by the Hungarians from the north-east, and Sreda by the Slavs from the heart of Great Russia, as far as the Wends of the Luneburg region, the Slavs having learnt the name also from the Orientals. These observations will perhaps not be displeasing to the curious. And I flatter myself that the small

dialogue ending the Essays written to oppose M. Bayle will give some satisfaction to those who are well pleased to see difficult but important truths set forth in an easy and familiar way. I have written in a foreign language at the risk of making many errors in it, because that language has been recently used by others in treating of my subject, and because it is more generally read by those whom one would wish to benefit by this small work. It is to be hoped that the language errors will be pardoned: they are to be attributed not only to the printer and the copyist, but also to the haste of the author, who has been much distracted from his task. If, moreover, any error has crept into the ideas expressed, the author will be the first to correct it, once he has been better informed: he has given elsewhere such indications of his love of truth that he hopes this declaration will not be regarded as merely an empty phrase.

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## GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ: THEODICY (PART 1)

1. Having so settled the rights of faith and of reason as rather to place reason at the service of faith than in opposition to it, we shall see how they exercise these rights to support and harmonize what the light of nature and the light of revelation teach us of God and of man in relation to evil. The *difficulties* are distinguishable into two classes. The one kind springs from man's freedom, which appears incompatible with the divine nature; and nevertheless freedom is deemed necessary, in order that man may be deemed guilty and open to punishment. The other kind concerns the conduct of God, and seems to make him participate too much in the existence of evil, even though man be free and participate also therein. And this conduct appears contrary to the goodness, the holiness and the justice of God, since God co-operates in evil as well physical as moral, and co-operates in each of them both morally and physically; and since it seems that these evils are manifested in the order of nature as well as in that of grace, and in the future and eternal life as well as, nay, more than, in this transitory life.

2. To present these difficulties in brief, it must be observed that freedom is opposed, to all appearance, by determination or certainty of any kind whatever; and nevertheless the common dogma of our philosophers states that the truth of contingent futurities is [124]determined. The foreknowledge of God renders all the future certain and determined, but his providence and his foreordination, whereon foreknowledge itself appears founded, do much more: for God is not as a man, able to look upon events with unconcern and to suspend his judgement, since nothing exists save as a result of the decrees of his will and through the action of his power. And even though one leave out of account the co-operation of God, all is perfectly connected in the order of things, since nothing can come to pass unless there be a cause so disposed as to produce the effect, this taking place no less in voluntary than in all other actions. According to which it appears that man is compelled to do the good and evil that he does, and in consequence that he deserves therefor neither recompense nor chastisement: thus is the morality of actions destroyed and all justice, divine and human, shaken.

3. But even though one should grant to man this freedom wherewith he arrays himself to his own hurt, the conduct of God could not but provide matter for a criticism supported by the presumptuous ignorance of men, who would wish to exculpate themselves wholly or in part at the expense of God. It is objected that all the reality and what is termed the substance of the act in sin itself is a production of God, since all creatures and all their actions derive from him that reality they have. Whence one could infer not only that he is the physical cause of sin, but also that he is its moral cause, since he acts with perfect freedom and does nothing without a complete knowledge of the thing and the consequences that it may have. Nor is it enough to say that God has made for himself a law to co-operate with the wills or resolutions of man, whether we express ourselves in terms of the common opinion or in terms of the system of occasional causes. Not only will it be found strange that he should have made such a law for himself, of whose results he was not ignorant, but the principal difficulty is that it seems the evil will itself cannot exist without co-operation, and even without some predetermination, on his part, which contributes towards begetting this will in man or in some other rational creature. For an action is not, for being evil, the less dependent on God. Whence one will come at last to the conclusion that God does all, the good and the evil, indifferently; unless one pretend with the Manichaeans that there are two principles, the one good and the other evil. Moreover, according to the general [125]opinion of the theologians and philosophers, conservation being a perpetual creation, it will be said that man is perpetually created corrupt and erring. There are,

furthermore, modern Cartesians who claim that God is the sole agent, of whom created beings are only the purely passive organs; and M. Bayle builds not a little upon that idea.

4. But even granting that God should co-operate in actions only with a general co-operation, or even not at all, at least in those that are bad, it suffices, so it is said, to inculcate him and to render him the moral cause that nothing comes to pass without his permission. To say nothing of the fall of the angels, he knows all that which will come to pass, if, having created man, he places him in such and such circumstances; and he places him there notwithstanding. Man is exposed to a temptation to which it is known that he will succumb, thereby causing an infinitude of frightful evils, by which the whole human race will be infected and brought as it were into a necessity of sinning, a state which is named 'original sin'. Thus the world will be brought into a strange confusion, by this means death and diseases being introduced, with a thousand other misfortunes and miseries that in general afflict the good and the bad; wickedness will even hold sway and virtue will be oppressed on earth, so that it will scarce appear that a providence governs affairs. But it is much worse when one considers the life to come, since but a small number of men will be saved and since all the rest will perish eternally. Furthermore these men destined for salvation will have been withdrawn from the corrupt mass through an unreasoning election, whether it be said that God in choosing them has had regard to their future actions, to their faith or to their works, or one claim that he has been pleased to give them these good qualities and these actions because he has predestined them to salvation. For though it be said in the most lenient system that God wished to save all men, and though in the other systems commonly accepted it be granted, that he has made his Son take human nature upon him to expiate their sins, so that all they who shall believe in him with a lively and final faith shall be saved, it still remains true that this lively faith is a gift of God; that we are dead to all good works; that even our will itself must be aroused by a prevenient grace, and that God gives us the power to will and to do. And whether that be done through a grace efficacious of itself, that is to say, through a divine inward motion [126] which wholly determines our will to the good that it does; or whether there be only a sufficient grace, but such as does not fail to attain its end, and to become efficacious in the inward and outward circumstances wherein the man is and has been placed by God: one must return to the same conclusion that God is the final reason of salvation, of grace, of faith and of election in Jesus Christ. And be the election the cause or the result of God's design to give faith, it still remains true that he gives faith or salvation to whom he pleases, without any discernible reason for his choice, which falls upon but few men.

5. So it is a terrible judgement that God, giving his only Son for the whole human race and being the sole author and master of the salvation of men, yet saves so few of them and abandons all others to the devil his enemy, who torments them eternally and makes them curse their Creator, though they have all been created to diffuse and show forth his goodness, his justice and his other perfections. And this outcome inspires all the more horror, as the sole cause why all these men are wretched to all eternity is God's having exposed their parents to a temptation that he knew they would not resist; as this sin is inherent and imputed to men before their will has participated in it; as this hereditary vice impels their will to commit actual sins; and as countless men, in childhood or maturity, that have never heard or have not heard enough of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, die before receiving the necessary succour for their withdrawal from this abyss of sin. These men too are condemned to be for ever rebellious against God and plunged in the most horrible miseries, with the wickedest of all creatures, though in essence they have not been more wicked than others, and several among them have perchance been less guilty than some of that little number of elect, who were saved by a grace without reason, and who thereby enjoy an eternal felicity which they had not deserved. Such in brief are the difficulties touched upon by sundry persons; but M. Bayle was one who insisted on them the most, as will appear subsequently when we examine his passages. I think that now I have recorded the main essence of these difficulties: but I have deemed it fitting to refrain from some expressions and exaggerations which might have caused offence, while not rendering the objections any stronger.

6. Let us now turn the medal and let us also point out what can be said in answer to those objections; and here a course of [127] explanation through fuller dissertation will be necessary: for many difficulties can be opened up in few words, but for their discussion one must dilate upon them. Our end is to banish from men the false ideas that represent God to them as an absolute prince employing a despotic power, unfitted to be loved and unworthy of being loved. These notions are the more evil in relation to God inasmuch as the essence of piety is not only to fear him but also to love him above all things: and that cannot come about unless there be knowledge of his perfections capable of arousing the love which he deserves, and which makes the felicity of those that love him. Feeling ourselves animated by a zeal such as cannot fail to please him, we have cause to hope that he will enlighten us, and that he will himself aid us in the execution of a project undertaken for his glory and for the good of men. A cause so good gives confidence: if there are plausible appearances against us there are proofs on our side, and I would dare to say to an adversary:

*Aspice, quam mage sit nostrum penetrabile telum.*

7. *God is the first reason of things*: for such things as are bounded, as all that which we see and experience, are contingent and have nothing in them to render their existence necessary, it being plain that time, space and matter, united and uniform in themselves and indifferent to everything, might have received entirely other motions and shapes, and in another order. Therefore one must seek the reason for the existence of the world, which is the whole assemblage of *contingent* things, and seek it in the substance which carries with it the reason for its existence, and which in consequence is *necessary* and eternal. Moreover, this cause must be intelligent: for this existing world being contingent and an infinity of other worlds being equally possible, and holding, so to say, equal claim to existence with it, the cause of the world must needs have had regard or reference to all these possible worlds in order to fix upon one of them. This regard or relation of an existent substance to simple possibilities can be nothing other than the *understanding* which has the ideas of them, while to fix upon one of them can be nothing other than the act of the *will* which chooses. It is the *power* of this substance that renders its will efficacious. Power relates to *being*, wisdom or understanding to *truth*, and will to *good*. And this intelligent cause ought to be infinite in all ways, and absolutely perfect in *power*, in *wisdom* and in *goodness*, since it [128] relates to all that which is possible. Furthermore, since all is connected together, there is no ground for admitting more than *one*. Its understanding is the source of *essences*, and its will is the origin of *existences*. There in few words is the proof of one only God with his perfections, and through him of the origin of things.

8. Now this supreme wisdom, united to a goodness that is no less infinite, cannot but have chosen the best. For as a lesser evil is a kind of good, even so a lesser good is a kind of evil if it stands in the way of a greater good; and there would be something to correct in the actions of God if it were possible to do better. As in mathematics, when there is no maximum nor minimum, in short nothing distinguished, everything is done equally, or when that is not possible nothing at all is done: so it may be said likewise in respect of perfect wisdom, which is no less orderly than mathematics, that if there were not the best (*optimum*) among all possible worlds, God would not have produced any. I call 'World' the whole succession and the whole agglomeration of all existent things, lest it be said that several worlds could have existed in different times and different places. For they must needs be reckoned all together as one world or, if you will, as one Universe. And even though one should fill all times and all places, it still remains true that one might have filled them in innumerable ways, and that there is an infinitude of possible worlds among which God must needs have chosen the best, since he does nothing without acting in accordance with supreme reason.

9. Some adversary not being able to answer this argument will perchance answer the conclusion by a counter-argument, saying that the world could have been without sin and without sufferings; but I deny that then it would have been *better*. For it must be known that all things are *connected* in each one of the possible worlds: the universe, whatever it may be, is all of one piece, like an ocean: the least movement extends its effect there to any distance whatsoever, even though this effect become less perceptible in proportion to the distance. Therein God has ordered all things beforehand once for all, having foreseen prayers, good and bad actions, and all the rest; and each thing *as an idea* has contributed, before its existence, to the resolution that has been made upon the existence of all things; so that nothing can be changed in the universe (any more than in a number) save its essence or, if you will, save its *numerical individuality*. Thus, if the smallest evil [129] that comes to pass in the world were missing in it, it would no longer be this world; which, with nothing omitted and all allowance made, was found the best by the Creator who chose it.

10. It is true that one may imagine possible worlds without sin and without unhappiness, and one could make some like Utopian or Sevarambian romances: but these same worlds again would be very inferior to ours in goodness. I cannot show you this in detail. For can I know and can I present infinities to you and compare them together? But you must judge with me *ab effectu*, since God has chosen this world as it is. We know, moreover, that often an evil brings forth a good whereto one would not have attained without that evil. Often indeed two evils have made one great good:

*Et si fata volunt, bina venena juvant.*

Even so two liquids sometimes produce a solid, witness the spirit of wine and spirit of urine mixed by Van Helmont; or so do two cold and dark bodies produce a great fire, witness an acid solution and an aromatic oil combined by Herr Hoffmann. A general makes sometimes a fortunate mistake which brings about the winning of a great battle; and do they not sing on the eve of Easter, in the churches of the Roman rite:

*O certe necessarium Adae peccatum, quod Christi morte deletum est!*

*O felix culpa, quae talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem!*

11. The illustrious prelates of the Gallican church who wrote to Pope Innocent XII against Cardinal Sfondrati's book on predestination, being of the principles of St. Augustine, have said things well fitted to elucidate this great point. The cardinal appears to prefer even to the Kingdom of Heaven the state of children dying without baptism, because sin is the greatest of evils, and they have died innocent of all actual sin. More will be said of that below. The prelates have observed that this opinion is ill founded. The apostle, they say (Rom. iii. 8), is right to disapprove of the doing of evil that good may come, but one cannot disapprove that God, through his exceeding power, derive from the permitting of sins greater goods than such as occurred before the sins. It is not that we ought to take pleasure in sin, God forbid! but that we believe the same apostle when he says (Rom. v. 20) [130]that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; and we remember that we have gained Jesus Christ himself by reason of sin. Thus we see that the opinion of these prelates tends to maintain that a sequence of things where sin enters in may have been and has been, in effect, better than another sequence without sin.

12. Use has ever been made of comparisons taken from the pleasures of the senses when these are mingled with that which borders on pain, to prove that there is something of like nature in intellectual pleasures. A little acid, sharpness or bitterness is often more pleasing than sugar; shadows enhance colours; and even a dissonance in the right place gives relief to harmony. We wish to be terrified by rope-dancers on the point of falling and we wish that tragedies shall well-nigh cause us to weep. Do men relish health enough, or thank God enough for it, without having ever been sick? And is it not most often necessary that a little evil render the good more discernible, that is to say, greater?

13. But it will be said that evils are great and many in number in comparison with the good: that is erroneous. It is only want of attention that diminishes our good, and this attention must be given to us through some admixture of evils. If we were usually sick and seldom in good health, we should be wonderfully sensible of that great good and we should be less sensible of our evils. But is it not better, notwithstanding, that health should be usual and sickness the exception? Let us then by our reflexion supply what is lacking in our perception, in order to make the good of health more discernible. Had we not the knowledge of the life to come, I believe there would be few persons who, being at the point of death, were not content to take up life again, on condition of passing through the same amount of good and evil, provided always that it were not the same kind: one would be content with variety, without requiring a better condition than that wherein one had been.

14. When one considers also the fragility of the human body, one looks in wonder at the wisdom and the goodness of the Author of Nature, who has made the body so enduring and its condition so tolerable. That has often made me say that I am not astonished men are sometimes sick, but that I am astonished they are sick so little and not always. This also ought to make us the more esteem the divine contrivance of the mechanism of animals, whose Author [131]has made machines so fragile and so subject to corruption and yet so capable of maintaining themselves: for it is Nature which cures us rather than medicine. Now this very fragility is a consequence of the nature of things, unless we are to will that this kind of creature, reasoning and clothed in flesh and bones, be not in the world. But that, to all appearance, would be a defect which some philosophers of old would have called *vacuum formarum*, a gap in the order of species.

15. Those whose humour it is to be well satisfied with Nature and with fortune and not to complain about them, even though they should not be the best endowed, appear to me preferable to the other sort; for besides that these complaints are ill founded, it is in effect murmuring against the orders of providence. One must not readily be among the malcontents in the State where one is, and one must not be so at all in the city of God, wherein one can only wrongfully be of their number. The books of human misery, such as that of Pope Innocent III, to me seem not of the most serviceable: evils are doubled by being given an attention that ought to be averted from them, to be turned towards the good which by far preponderates. Even less do I approve books such as that of Abbé Esprit, *On the Falsity of Human Virtues*, of which we have lately been given a summary: for such a book serves to turn everything wrong side out, and cause men to be such as it represents them.

16. It must be confessed, however, that there are disorders in this life, which appear especially in the prosperity of sundry evil men and in the misfortune of many good people. There is a German proverb which even grants the advantage to the evil ones, as if they were commonly the most fortunate:

*Je krümmer Holz, je bessere Krücke:*

*Je ärger Schalck, je grösser Glücke.*

And it were to be desired that this saying of Horace should be true in our eyes:

*Raro antecedentem scelestum*

*Deseruit pede poena claudo.*

Yet it often comes to pass also, though this perchance not the most often,

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*That in the world's eyes Heaven is justified,*

and that one may say with Claudian:

*Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini poena tumultum,*

*Absolvitque deos...*

17. But even though that should not happen here, the remedy is all prepared in the other life: religion and reason itself teach us that, and we must not murmur against a respite which the supreme wisdom has thought fit to grant to men for repentance. Yet there objections multiply on another side, when one considers salvation and damnation: for it appears strange that, even in the great future of eternity, evil should have the advantage over good, under the supreme authority of him who is the sovereign good, since there will be many that are called and few that are chosen or are saved. It is true that one sees from some lines of Prudentius (Hymn. ante Somnum),

*Idem tamen benignus*

*Ultor retundit iram,*

*Paucosque non piorum*

*Patitur perire in aevum,*

that divers men believed in his time that the number of those wicked enough to be damned would be very small. To some indeed it seems that men believed at that time in a sphere between Hell and Paradise; that this same Prudentius speaks as if he were satisfied with this sphere; that St. Gregory of Nyssa also inclines in that direction, and that St. Jerome leans towards the opinion according whereunto all Christians would finally be taken into grace. A saying of St. Paul which he himself gives out as mysterious, stating that all Israel will be saved, has provided much food for reflexion. Sundry pious persons, learned also, but daring, have revived the opinion of Origen, who maintains that good will predominate in due time, in all and everywhere, and that all rational creatures, even the bad angels, will become at last holy and blessed. The book of the eternal Gospel, published lately in German and supported by a great and learned work entitled 'Αποκαταστασις παντων, has caused much stir over this great paradox. M. le Clerc also has ingeniously pleaded the cause of the Origenists, but without declaring himself for them.

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18. There is a man of wit who, pushing my principle of harmony even to arbitrary suppositions that I in no wise approve, has created for himself a theology well-nigh astronomical. He believes that the present confusion in this world below began when the Presiding Angel of the globe of the earth, which was still a sun (that is, a star that was fixed and luminous of itself) committed a sin with some lesser angels of his department, perhaps rising inopportunately against an angel of a greater sun; that simultaneously, by the Pre-established Harmony of the Realms of Nature and of Grace, and consequently by natural causes occurring at the appointed time, our globe was covered with stains, rendered opaque and driven from its place; which has made it become a wandering star or planet, that is, a Satellite of another sun, and even perhaps of that one whose superiority its angel refused to recognize; and that therein consists the fall of Lucifer. Now the chief of the bad angels, who in Holy Scripture is named the prince, and even the god of this world, being, with the angels of his train, envious of that rational animal which walks on the surface of this globe, and which God has set up there perhaps to compensate himself for their fall, strives to render it accessory in their crimes and a participator in their misfortunes. Whereupon Jesus Christ came to save men. He is the eternal Son of God, even as he is his only Son; but (according to some ancient Christians, and according to the author of this hypothesis) having taken upon him at first, from the beginning of things, the most excellent nature among created beings, to bring them all to perfection, he set himself amongst them: and this is the second filiation, whereby he is the first-born of all creatures. This is he whom the Cabalists called Adam Kadmon. Haply he had planted his tabernacle in that great sun which illumines us; but he came at last into this globe where we are, he was born of the Virgin, and took human nature upon him

to save mankind from the hands of their enemy and his. And when the time of judgement shall draw near, when the present face of our globe shall be about to perish, he will return to it in visible form, thence to withdraw the good, transplanting them, it may be, into the sun, and to punish here the wicked with the demons that have allured them; then the globe of the earth will begin to burn and will be perhaps a comet. This fire will last for aeons upon aeons. The tail of the comet is intended by the smoke which will rise incessantly, according to the Apocalypse, and this fire will be [134]hell, or the second death whereof Holy Scripture speaks. But at last hell will render up its dead, death itself will be destroyed; reason and peace will begin to hold sway again in the spirits that had been perverted; they will be sensible of their error, they will adore their Creator, and will even begin to love him all the more for seeing the greatness of the abyss whence they emerge. Simultaneously (by virtue of the *harmonic parallelism* of the Realms of Nature and of Grace) this long and great conflagration will have purged the earth's globe of its stains. It will become again a sun; its Presiding Angel will resume his place with the angels of his train; humans that were damned shall be with them numbered amongst the good angels; this chief of our globe shall render homage to the Messiah, chief of created beings. The glory of this angel reconciled shall be greater than it was before his fall.

*Inque Deos iterum factorum lege receptus*

*Aureus aeternum noster regnabit Apollo.*

The vision seemed to me pleasing, and worthy of a follower of Origen: but we have no need of such hypothesis or fictions, where Wit plays a greater part than Revelation, and which even Reason cannot turn to account. For it does not appear that there is one principal place in the known universe deserving in preference to the rest to be the seat of the eldest of created beings; and the sun of our system at least is not it.

19. Holding then to the established doctrine that the number of men damned eternally will be incomparably greater than that of the saved, we must say that the evil could not but seem to be almost as nothing in comparison with the good, when one contemplates the true vastness of the city of God. Coelius Secundus Curio wrote a little book, *De Amplitudine Regni Coelestis*, which was reprinted not long since; but he is indeed far from having apprehended the compass of the kingdom of heaven. The ancients had puny ideas on the works of God, and St. Augustine, for want of knowing modern discoveries, was at a loss when there was question of explaining the prevalence of evil. It seemed to the ancients that there was only one earth inhabited, and even of that men held the antipodes in dread: the remainder of the world was, according to them, a few shining globes and a few crystalline spheres. To-day, whatever bounds are given or not given to the universe, it must be acknowledged that there is an infinite number of globes, as great [135]as and greater than ours, which have as much right as it to hold rational inhabitants, though it follows not at all that they are human. It is only one planet, that is to say one of the six principal satellites of our sun; and as all fixed stars are suns also, we see how small a thing our earth is in relation to visible things, since it is only an appendix of one amongst them. It may be that all suns are peopled only by blessed creatures, and nothing constrains us to think that many are damned, for few instances or few samples suffice to show the advantage which good extracts from evil. Moreover, since there is no reason for the belief that there are stars everywhere, is it not possible that there may be a great space beyond the region of the stars? Whether it be the Empyrean Heaven, or not, this immense space encircling all this region may in any case be filled with happiness and glory. It can be imagined as like the Ocean, whither flow the rivers of all blessed creatures, when they shall have reached their perfection in the system of the stars. What will become of the consideration of our globe and its inhabitants? Will it not be something incomparably less than a physical point, since our earth is as a point in comparison with the distance of some fixed stars? Thus since the proportion of that part of the universe which we know is almost lost in nothingness compared with that which is unknown, and which we yet have cause to assume, and since all the evils that may be raised in objection before us are in this near nothingness, haply it may be that all evils are almost nothingness in comparison with the good things which are in the universe.

20. But it is necessary also to meet the more speculative and metaphysical difficulties which have been mentioned, and which concern the cause of evil. The question is asked first of all, whence does evil come? *Si Deus est, unde malum? Si non est, unde bonum?* The ancients attributed the cause of evil to *matter*, which they believed uncreate and independent of God: but we, who derive all being from God, where shall we find the source of evil? The answer is, that it must be sought in the ideal nature of the creature, in so far as this nature is contained in the eternal verities which are in the understanding of God, independently of his will. For we must consider that there is an *original imperfection in the creature* before sin, because the creature is limited in its essence; whence ensues that it cannot know all, and that it can deceive itself and commit other errors. Plato said in *Timaeus* that the world originated in Understanding [136]united to Necessity. Others have united God and Nature. This can be given a reasonable meaning. God will be the Understanding; and the Necessity, that is, the essential nature of things, will be the object of the understanding, in so far as this object consists in the eternal

verities. But this object is inward and abides in the divine understanding. And therein is found not only the primitive form of good, but also the origin of evil: the Region of the Eternal Verities must be substituted for matter when we are concerned with seeking out the source of things.

This region is the ideal cause of evil (as it were) as well as of good: but, properly speaking, the formal character of evil has no *efficient* cause, for it consists in privation, as we shall see, namely, in that which the efficient cause does not bring about. That is why the Schoolmen are wont to call the cause of evil *deficient*.

21. Evil may be taken metaphysically, physically and morally. *Metaphysical evil* consists in mere imperfection, *physical evil* in suffering, and *moral evil* in sin. Now although physical evil and moral evil be not necessary, it is enough that by virtue of the eternal verities they be possible. And as this vast Region of Verities contains all possibilities it is necessary that there be an infinitude of possible worlds, that evil enter into divers of them, and that even the best of all contain a measure thereof. Thus has God been induced to permit evil.

22. But someone will say to me: why speak you to us of 'permitting'? Is it not God that doeth the evil and that willeth it? Here it will be necessary to explain what 'permission' is, so that it may be seen how this term is not employed without reason. But before that one must explain the nature of will, which has its own degrees. Taking it in the general sense, one may say that *will* consists in the inclination to do something in proportion to the good it contains. This will is called *antecedent* when it is detached, and considers each good separately in the capacity of a good. In this sense it may be said that God tends to all good, as good, *ad perfectionem simpliciter simplicem*, to speak like the Schoolmen, and that by an antecedent will. He is earnestly disposed to sanctify and to save all men, to exclude sin, and to prevent damnation. It may even be said that this will is efficacious *of itself (per se)*, that is, in such sort that the effect would ensue if there were not some stronger reason to prevent it: for this will does not pass into final exercise (*ad summum conatum*), else it would never fail to produce its [137]full effect, God being the master of all things. Success entire and infallible belongs only to the *consequent will*, as it is called. This it is which is complete; and in regard to it this rule obtains, that one never fails to do what one wills, when one has the power. Now this consequent will, final and decisive, results from the conflict of all the antecedent wills, of those which tend towards good, even as of those which repel evil; and from the concurrence of all these particular wills comes the total will. So in mechanics compound movement results from all the tendencies that concur in one and the same moving body, and satisfies each one equally, in so far as it is possible to do all at one time. It is as if the moving body took equal account of these tendencies, as I once showed in one of the Paris Journals (7 Sept. 1693), when giving the general law of the compositions of movement. In this sense also it may be said that the antecedent will is efficacious in a sense and even effective with success.

23. Thence it follows that God wills *antecedently* the good and *consequently* the best. And as for evil, God wills moral evil not at all, and physical evil or suffering he does not will absolutely. Thus it is that there is no absolute predestination to damnation; and one may say of physical evil, that God wills it often as a penalty owing to guilt, and often also as a means to an end, that is, to prevent greater evils or to obtain greater good. The penalty serves also for amendment and example. Evil often serves to make us savour good the more; sometimes too it contributes to a greater perfection in him who suffers it, as the seed that one sows is subject to a kind of corruption before it can germinate: this is a beautiful similitude, which Jesus Christ himself used.

24. Concerning sin or moral evil, although it happens very often that it may serve as a means of obtaining good or of preventing another evil, it is not this that renders it a sufficient object of the divine will or a legitimate object of a created will. It must only be admitted or *permitted* in so far as it is considered to be a certain consequence of an indispensable duty: as for instance if a man who was determined not to permit another's sin were to fail of his own duty, or as if an officer on guard at an important post were to leave it, especially in time of danger, in order to prevent a quarrel in the town between two soldiers of the garrison who wanted to kill each other.

25. The rule which states, *non esse facienda mala, ut eveniant bona*, and which even forbids the permission of a moral evil with the end [138]of obtaining a physical good, far from being violated, is here proved, and its source and its reason are demonstrated. One will not approve the action of a queen who, under the pretext of saving the State, commits or even permits a crime. The crime is certain and the evil for the State is open to question. Moreover, this manner of giving sanction to crimes, if it were accepted, would be worse than a disruption of some one country, which is liable enough to happen in any case, and would perchance happen all the more by reason of such means chosen to prevent it. But in relation to God nothing is open to question, nothing can be opposed to *the rule of the best*, which suffers neither exception nor dispensation. It is in this sense that God permits sin: for he would fail in what he owes to himself, in what he owes to his wisdom, his goodness, his perfection, if he followed not the grand result of all his tendencies to good, and if he chose not that which is absolutely the best, notwithstanding the evil of guilt, which is involved therein by the supreme necessity of the eternal verities. Hence the conclusion that God wills all good *in himself antecedently*, that he wills the best *consequently* as an *end*, that

he wills what is indifferent, and physical evil, sometimes as a *means*, but that he will only permit moral evil as the *sine quo non* or as a hypothetical necessity which connects it with the best. Therefore the *consequent will* of God, which has sin for its object, is only *permissive*.

26. It is again well to consider that moral evil is an evil so great only because it is a source of physical evils, a source existing in one of the most powerful of creatures, who is also most capable of causing those evils. For an evil will is in its department what the evil principle of the Manichaeans would be in the universe; and reason, which is an image of the Divinity, provides for evil souls great means of causing much evil. One single Caligula, one Nero, has caused more evil than an earthquake. An evil man takes pleasure in causing suffering and destruction, and for that there are only too many opportunities. But God being inclined to produce as much good as possible, and having all the knowledge and all the power necessary for that, it is impossible that in him there be fault, or guilt, or sin; and when he permits sin, it is wisdom, it is virtue.

27. It is indeed beyond question that we must refrain from preventing the sin of others when we cannot prevent their sin without sinning ourselves. But someone will perhaps bring up the [139]objection that it is God himself who acts and who effects all that is real in the sin of the creature. This objection leads us to consider the *physical co-operation* of God with the creature, after we have examined the *moral co-operation*, which was the more perplexing. Some have believed, with the celebrated Durand de Saint-Pourçain and Cardinal Aureolus, the famous Schoolman, that the co-operation of God with the creature (I mean the physical cooperation) is only general and mediate, and that God creates substances and gives them the force they need; and that thereafter he leaves them to themselves, and does naught but conserve them, without aiding them in their actions. This opinion has been refuted by the greater number of Scholastic theologians, and it appears that in the past it met with disapproval in the writings of Pelagius. Nevertheless a Capuchin named Louis Pereir of Dole, about the year 1630, wrote a book expressly to revive it, at least in relation to free actions. Some moderns incline thereto, and M. Bernier supports it in a little book on freedom and freewill. But one cannot say in relation to God what 'to conserve' is, without reverting to the general opinion. Also it must be taken into account that the action of God in conserving should have some reference to that which is conserved, according to what it is and to the state wherein it is; thus his action cannot be general or indeterminate. These generalities are abstractions not to be found in the truth of individual things, and the conservation of a man standing is different from the conservation of a man seated. This would not be so if conservation consisted only in the act of preventing and warding off some foreign cause which could destroy that which one wishes to conserve; as often happens when men conserve something. But apart from the fact that we are obliged ourselves sometimes to maintain that which we conserve, we must bear in mind that conservation by God consists in the perpetual immediate influence which the dependence of creatures demands. This dependence attaches not only to the substance but also to the action, and one can perhaps not explain it better than by saying, with theologians and philosophers in general, that it is a continued creation.

28. The objection will be made that God therefore now creates man a sinner, he that in the beginning created him innocent. But here it must be said, with regard to the moral aspect, that God being supremely wise cannot fail to observe certain laws, and to [140]act according to the rules, as well physical as moral, that wisdom has made him choose. And the same reason that has made him create man innocent, but liable to fall, makes him re-create man when he falls; for God's knowledge causes the future to be for him as the present, and prevents him from rescinding the resolutions made.

29. As for physical co-operation, here one must consider the truth which has made already so much stir in the Schools since St. Augustine declared it, that evil is a privation of being, whereas the action of God tends to the positive. This answer is accounted a quibble, and even something chimerical in the minds of many people. But here is an instance somewhat similar, which will serve to disabuse them.

30. The celebrated Kepler and M. Descartes (in his letters) after him have spoken of the 'natural inertia of bodies'; and it is something which may be regarded as a perfect image and even as a sample of the original limitation of creatures, to show that privation constitutes the formal character of the imperfections and disadvantages that are in substance as well as in its actions. Let us suppose that the current of one and the same river carried along with it various boats, which differ among themselves only in the cargo, some being laden with wood, others with stone, and some more, the others less. That being so, it will come about that the boats most heavily laden will go more slowly than the others, provided it be assumed that the wind or the oar, or some other similar means, assist them not at all. It is not, properly speaking, weight which is the cause of this retardation, since the boats are going down and not upwards; but it is the same cause which also increases the weight in bodies that have greater density, which are, that is to say, less porous and more charged with matter that is proper to them: for the matter which passes through the pores, not receiving the same movement, must not be taken into account. It is therefore matter itself which originally is inclined to slowness or privation of speed; not indeed of itself to lessen this speed,

having once received it, since that would be action, but to moderate by its receptivity the effect of the impression when it is to receive it. Consequently, since more matter is moved by the same force of the current when the boat is more laden, it is necessary that it go more slowly; and experiments on the impact of bodies, as well as reason, show that twice as much force must be [141]employed to give equal speed to a body of the same matter but of twice the size. But that indeed would not be necessary if the matter were absolutely indifferent to repose and to movement, and if it had not this natural inertia whereof we have just spoken to give it a kind of repugnance to being moved. Let us now compare the force which the current exercises on boats, and communicates to them, with the action of God, who produces and conserves whatever is positive in creatures, and gives them perfection, being and force: let us compare, I say, the inertia of matter with the natural imperfection of creatures, and the slowness of the laden boat with the defects to be found in the qualities and the action of the creature; and we shall find that there is nothing so just as this comparison. The current is the cause of the boat's movement, but not of its retardation; God is the cause of perfection in the nature and the actions of the creature, but the limitation of the receptivity of the creature is the cause of the defects there are in its action. Thus the Platonists, St. Augustine and the Schoolmen were right to say that God is the cause of the material element of evil which lies in the positive, and not of the formal element, which lies in privation. Even so one may say that the current is the cause of the material element of the retardation, but not of the formal: that is, it is the cause of the boat's speed without being the cause of the limits to this speed. And God is no more the cause of sin than the river's current is the cause of the retardation of the boat. Force also in relation to matter is as the spirit in relation to the flesh; the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak, and spirits act...

*quantum non noxia corpora tardant.*

31. There is, then, a wholly similar relation between such and such an action of God, and such and such a passion or reception of the creature, which in the ordinary course of things is perfected only in proportion to its 'receptivity', such is the term used. And when it is said that the creature depends upon God in so far as it exists and in so far as it acts, and even that conservation is a continual creation, this is true in that God gives ever to the creature and produces continually all that in it is positive, good and perfect, every perfect gift coming from the Father of lights. The imperfections, on the other hand, and the defects in operations spring from the original limitation that the creature could not but [142]receive with the first beginning of its being, through the ideal reasons which restrict it. For God could not give the creature all without making of it a God; therefore there must needs be different degrees in the perfection of things, and limitations also of every kind.

32. This consideration will serve also to satisfy some modern philosophers who go so far as to say that God is the only agent. It is true that God is the only one whose action is pure and without admixture of what is termed 'to suffer': but that does not preclude the creature's participation in actions, since *the action of the creature* is a modification of the substance, flowing naturally from it and containing a variation not only in the perfections that God has communicated to the creature, but also in the limitations that the creature, being what it is, brings with it. Thus we see that there is an actual distinction between the substance and its modification or accidents, contrary to the opinion of some moderns and in particular of the late Duke of Buckingham, who spoke of that in a little *Discourse on Religion* recently reprinted. Evil is therefore like darkness, and not only ignorance but also error and malice consist formally in a certain kind of privation. Here is an example of error which we have already employed. I see a tower which from a distance appears round although it is square. The thought that the tower is what it appears to be flows naturally from that which I see; and when I dwell on this thought it is an affirmation, it is a false judgement; but if I pursue the examination, if some reflexion causes me to perceive that appearances deceive me, lo and behold, I abandon my error. To abide in a certain place, or not to go further, not to espy some landmark, these are privations.

33. It is the same in respect of malice or ill will. The will tends towards good in general, it must strive after the perfection that befits us, and the supreme perfection is in God. All pleasures have within themselves some feeling of perfection. But when one is limited to the pleasures of the senses, or to other pleasures to the detriment of greater good, as of health, of virtue, of union with God, of felicity, it is in this privation of a further aspiration that the defect consists. In general perfection is positive, it is an absolute reality; defect is privative, it comes from limitation and tends towards new privations. This saying is therefore as true as it is ancient: *bonum ex causa integra, malum ex quolibet defectu*; as also that [143]which states: *malum causam habet non efficientem, sed deficientem*. And I hope that the meaning of these axioms will be better apprehended after what I have just said.

34. The physical co-operation of God and of creatures with the will contributes also to the difficulties existing in regard to freedom. I am of opinion that our will is exempt not only from constraint but also from necessity. Aristotle has already observed that there are two things in freedom, to wit, spontaneity and choice, and therein lies our mastery over our actions. When we act freely we are not being forced, as would happen if we were pushed on to a precipice and thrown from top to bottom; and we are not prevented from having the mind free when we

deliberate, as would happen if we were given a draught to deprive us of discernment. There is *contingency* in a thousand actions of Nature; but when there is no judgement in him who acts there is no *freedom*. And if we had judgement not accompanied by any inclination to act, our soul would be an understanding without will.

35. It is not to be imagined, however, that our freedom consists in an indetermination or an indifference of equipoise, as if one must needs be inclined equally to the side of yes and of no and in the direction of different courses, when there are several of them to take. This equipoise in all directions is impossible: for if we were equally inclined towards the courses A, B and C, we could not be equally inclined towards A and towards not A. This equipoise is also absolutely contrary to experience, and in scrutinizing oneself one will find that there has always been some cause or reason inclining us towards the course taken, although very often we be not aware of that which prompts us: just in the same way one is hardly aware why, on issuing from a door, one has placed the right foot before the left or the left before the right.

36. But let us pass to the difficulties. Philosophers agree to-day that the truth of contingent futurities is determinate, that is to say that contingent futurities are future, or that they will be, that they will happen: for it is as sure that the future will be, as it is sure that the past has been. It was true already a hundred years ago that I should write to-day, as it will be true after a hundred years that I have written. Thus the contingent is not, because it is future, any the less contingent; and *determination*, which would be called certainty if it were known, is not incompatible with contingency. Often the certain and the determinate are taken as one thing, [144]because a determinate truth is capable of being known: thus it may be said that determination is an objective certainty.

37. This determination comes from the very nature of truth, and cannot injure freedom: but there are other determinations taken from elsewhere, and in the first place from the foreknowledge of God, which many have held to be contrary to freedom. They say that what is foreseen cannot fail to exist, and they say so truly; but it follows not that what is foreseen is necessary, for *necessary truth* is that whereof the contrary is impossible or implies contradiction. Now this truth which states that I shall write tomorrow is not of that nature, it is not necessary. Yet supposing that God foresees it, it is necessary that it come to pass; that is, the consequence is necessary, namely, that it exist, since it has been foreseen; for God is infallible. This is what is termed a *hypothetical necessity*. But our concern is not this necessity: it is an *absolute necessity* that is required, to be able to say that an action is necessary, that it is not contingent, that it is not the effect of a free choice. Besides it is very easily seen that foreknowledge in itself adds nothing to the determination of the truth of contingent futurities, save that this determination is known: and this does not augment the determination or the 'furation' (as it is termed) of these events, that whereon we agreed at the outset.

38. This answer is doubtless very correct. It is agreed that foreknowledge in itself does not make truth more determinate; truth is foreseen because it is determinate, because it is true; but it is not true because it is foreseen: and therein the knowledge of the future has nothing that is not also in the knowledge of the past or of the present. But here is what an opponent will be able to say: I grant you that foreknowledge in itself does not make truth more determinate, but it is the cause of the foreknowledge that makes it so. For it needs must be that the foreknowledge of God have its foundation in the nature of things, and this foundation, making the truth *predeterminate*, will prevent it from being contingent and free.

39. It is this difficulty that has caused two parties to spring up, one of the *predeterminators*, the other of the supporters of *mediate knowledge*. The Dominicans and the Augustinians are for predetermination, the Franciscans and the modern Jesuits on the other hand are for mediate knowledge. These two parties appeared towards the middle of the sixteenth century and a little later. [145]Molina himself, who is perhaps one of the first, with Fonseca, to have systematized this point, and from whom the others derived their name of Molinists, says in the book that he wrote on the reconciliation of freewill with grace, about the year 1570, that the Spanish doctors (he means principally the Thomists), who had been writing then for twenty years, finding no other way to explain how God could have a certain knowledge of contingent futurities, had introduced predetermination as being necessary to free actions.

40. As for himself, he thought to have found another way. He considers that there are three objects of divine knowledge, the possibles, the actual events and the conditional events that would happen in consequence of a certain condition if it were translated into action. The knowledge of possibilities is what is called the 'knowledge of mere intelligence'; that of events occurring actually in the progress of the universe is called the 'knowledge of intuition'. And as there is a kind of mean between the merely possible and the pure and absolute event, to wit, the conditional event, it can be said also, according to Molina, that there is a mediate knowledge between that of intuition and that of intelligence. Instance is given of the famous example of David asking the divine oracle whether the inhabitants of the town of Keilah, where he designed to shut himself in, would deliver him to Saul, supposing that Saul should besiege the town. God answered yes; whereupon David took a different course. Now

some advocates of this mediate knowledge are of opinion that God, foreseeing what men would do of their own accord, supposing they were placed in such and such circumstances, and knowing that they would make ill use of their free will, decrees to refuse them grace and favourable circumstances. And he may justly so decree, since in any case these circumstances and these aids would not have served them aught. But Molina contents himself with finding therein generally a reason for the decrees of God, founded on what the free creature would do in such and such circumstances.

41. I will not enter into all the detail of this controversy; it will suffice for me to give one instance. Certain older writers, not acceptable to St. Augustine and his first disciples, appear to have had ideas somewhat approaching those of Molina. The Thomists and those who call themselves disciples of St. Augustine (but whom their opponents call Jansenists) combat this doctrine on [146]philosophical and theological grounds. Some maintain that mediate knowledge must be included in the knowledge of mere intelligence. But the principal objection is aimed at the foundation of this knowledge. For what foundation can God have for seeing what the people of Keilah would do? A simple contingent and free act has nothing in itself to yield a principle of certainty, unless one look upon it as predetermined by the decrees of God, and by the causes that are dependent upon them. Consequently the difficulty existing in actual free actions will exist also in conditional free actions, that is to say, God will know them only under the condition of their causes and of his decrees, which are the first causes of things: and it will not be possible to separate such actions from those causes so as to know a contingent event in a way that is independent of the knowledge of its causes. Therefore all must of necessity be traced back to the predetermination of God's decrees, and this mediate knowledge (so it will be said) will offer no remedy. The theologians who profess to be adherents of St. Augustine claim also that the system of the Molinists would discover the source of God's grace in the good qualities of man, and this they deem an infringement of God's honour and contrary to St. Paul's teaching.

42. It would be long and wearisome to enter here into the replies and rejoinders coming from one side and the other, and it will suffice for me to explain how I conceive that there is truth on both sides. For this result I resort to my principle of an infinitude of possible worlds, represented in the region of eternal verities, that is, in the object of the divine intelligence, where all conditional futurities must be comprised. For the case of the siege of Keilah forms part of a possible world, *which differs from ours only in all that is connected with this hypothesis*, and the idea of this possible world represents that which would happen in this case. Thus we have a principle for the certain knowledge of contingent futurities, whether they happen actually or must happen in a certain case. For in the region of the possibles they are represented as they are, namely, as free contingencies. Therefore neither the foreknowledge of contingent futurities nor the foundation for the certainty of this foreknowledge should cause us perplexity or seem to prejudice freedom. And though it were true and possible that contingent futurities consisting in free actions of reasonable creatures were entirely independent of the decrees of God and of external causes, [147]there would still be means of foreseeing them; for God would see them as they are in the region of the possibles, before he decrees to admit them into existence.

43. But if the foreknowledge of God has nothing to do with the dependence or independence of our free actions, it is not so with the foreordination of God, his decrees, and the sequence of causes which, as I believe, always contribute to the determination of the will. And if I am for the Molinists in the first point, I am for the predeterminators in the second, provided always that predetermination be taken as not necessitating. In a word, I am of opinion that the will is always more inclined towards the course it adopts, but that it is never bound by the necessity to adopt it. That it will adopt this course is certain, but it is not necessary. The case corresponds to that of the famous saying, *Astra inclinant, non necessitant*, although here the similarity is not complete. For the event towards which the stars tend (to speak with the common herd, as if there were some foundation for astrology) does not always come to pass, whereas the course towards which the will is more inclined never fails to be adopted. Moreover the stars would form only a part of the inclinations that co-operate in the event, but when one speaks of the greater inclination of the will, one speaks of the result of all the inclinations. It is almost as we have spoken above of the consequent will in God, which results from all the antecedent wills.

44. Nevertheless, objective certainty or determination does not bring about the necessity of the determinate truth. All philosophers acknowledge this, asserting that the truth of contingent futurities is determinate, and that nevertheless they remain contingent. The thing indeed would imply no contradiction in itself if the effect did not follow; and therein lies contingency. The better to understand this point, we must take into account that there are two great principles of our arguments. The one is the principle of *contradiction*, stating that of two contradictory propositions the one is true, the other false; the other principle is that of the *determinant reason*: it states that nothing ever comes to pass without there being a cause or at least a reason determining it, that is, something to give an *a priori* reason why it is existent rather than non-existent, and in this wise rather than in any other. This great principle holds for all events, and a contrary instance will never be supplied: and although more often than not we are [148]insufficiently acquainted with these determinant reasons, we perceive nevertheless that there are

such. Were it not for this great principle we could never prove the existence of God, and we should lose an infinitude of very just and very profitable arguments whereof it is the foundation; moreover, it suffers no exception, for otherwise its force would be weakened. Besides, nothing is so weak as those systems where all is unsteady and full of exceptions. That fault cannot be laid to the charge of the system I approve, where everything happens in accordance with general rules that at most are mutually restrictive.

45. We must therefore not imagine with some Schoolmen, whose ideas tend towards the chimerical, that free contingent futurities have the privilege of exemption from this general rule of the nature of things. There is always a prevailing reason which prompts the will to its choice, and for the maintenance of freedom for the will it suffices that this reason should incline without necessitating. That is also the opinion of all the ancients, of Plato, of Aristotle, of St. Augustine. The will is never prompted to action save by the representation of the good, which prevails over the opposite representations. This is admitted even in relation to God, the good angels and the souls in bliss: and it is acknowledged that they are none the less free in consequence of that. God fails not to choose the best, but he is not constrained so to do: nay, more, there is no necessity in the object of God's choice, for another sequence of things is equally possible. For that very reason the choice is free and independent of necessity, because it is made between several possibles, and the will is determined only by the preponderating goodness of the object. This is therefore not a defect where God and the saints are concerned: on the contrary, it would be a great defect, or rather a manifest absurdity, were it otherwise, even in men here on earth, and if they were capable of acting without any inclining reason. Of such absurdity no example will ever be found; and even supposing one takes a certain course out of caprice, to demonstrate one's freedom, the pleasure or advantage one thinks to find in this conceit is one of the reasons tending towards it.

46. There is therefore a freedom of contingency or, in a way, of indifference, provided that by 'indifference' is understood that nothing necessitates us to one course or the other; but there is never any *indifference of equipoise*, that is, where all is completely [149]even on both sides, without any inclination towards either. Innumerable great and small movements, internal and external, co-operate with us, for the most part unperceived by us. And I have already said that when one leaves a room there are such and such reasons determining us to put the one foot first, without pausing to reflect. For there is not everywhere a slave, as in Trimalchio's house in Petronius, to cry to us: the right foot first. All that we have just said agrees entirely also with the maxims of the philosophers, who teach that a cause cannot act without having a disposition towards action. It is this disposition which contains a predetermination, whether the doer have received it from without, or have had it in consequence of his own antecedent character.

47. Thus we have no need to resort, in company with some new Thomists, to a new immediate predetermination by God, such as may cause the free creature to abandon his indifference, and to a decree of God for predetermining the creature, making it possible for God to know what the creature will do: for it suffices that the creature be predetermined by its preceding state, which inclines it to one course more than to the other. Moreover, all these connexions of the actions of the creature and of all creatures were represented in the divine understanding, and known to God through the knowledge of mere intelligence, before he had decreed to give them existence. Thus we see that, in order to account for the foreknowledge of God, one may dispense with both the mediate knowledge of the Molinists and the predetermination which a Bañez or an Alvarez (writers otherwise of great profundity) have taught.

48. By this false idea of an indifference of equipoise the Molinists were much embarrassed. They were asked not only how it was possible to know in what direction a cause absolutely indeterminate would be determined, but also how it was possible that there should finally result therefrom a determination for which there is no source: to say with Molina that it is the privilege of the free cause is to say nothing, but simply to grant that cause the privilege of being chimerical. It is pleasing to see their harassed efforts to emerge from a labyrinth whence there is absolutely no means of egress. Some teach that the will, before it is determined formally, must be determined virtually, in order to emerge from its state of equipoise; and Father Louis of Dole, in his book on the *Co-operation of God*, quotes Molinists who attempt to take refuge [150]in this expedient: for they are compelled to acknowledge that the cause must needs be disposed to act. But they gain nothing, they only defer the difficulty: for they will still be asked how the free cause comes to be determined virtually. They will therefore never extricate themselves without acknowledging that there is a predetermination in the preceding state of the free creature, which inclines it to be determined.

49. In consequence of this, the case also of Buridan's ass between two meadows, impelled equally towards both of them, is a fiction that cannot occur in the universe, in the order of Nature, although M. Bayle be of another opinion. It is true that, if the case were possible, one must say that the ass would starve himself to death: but fundamentally the question deals in the impossible, unless it be that God bring the thing about expressly. For the universe cannot be halved by a plane drawn through the middle of the ass, which is cut vertically through its

length, so that all is equal and alike on both sides, in the manner wherein an ellipse, and every plane figure of the number of those I term 'ambidexter', can be thus halved, by any straight line passing through its centre. Neither the parts of the universe nor the viscera of the animal are alike nor are they evenly placed on both sides of this vertical plane. There will therefore always be many things in the ass and outside the ass, although they be not apparent to us, which will determine him to go on one side rather than the other. And although man is free, and the ass is not, nevertheless for the same reason it must be true that in man likewise the case of a perfect equipoise between two courses is impossible. Furthermore it is true that an angel, or God certainly, could always account for the course man has adopted, by assigning a cause or a predisposing reason which has actually induced him to adopt it: yet this reason would often be complex and incomprehensible to ourselves, because the concatenation of causes linked together is very long.

50. Hence it is that the reason M. Descartes has advanced to prove the independence of our free actions, by what he terms an intense inward sensation, has no force. We cannot properly speaking be sensible of our independence, and we are not aware always of the causes, often imperceptible, whereon our resolution depends. It is as though the magnetic needle took pleasure in turning towards the north: for it would think that it was turning independently of any other cause, not being aware of the imperceptible [151]movements of the magnetic matter. Nevertheless we shall see later in what sense it is quite true that the human soul is altogether its own natural principle in relation to its actions, dependent upon itself and independent of all other creatures.

51. As for *volition* itself, to say that it is an object of free will is incorrect. We will to act, strictly speaking, and we do not will to will; else we could still say that we will to have the will to will, and that would go on to infinity. Besides, we do not always follow the latest judgement of practical understanding when we resolve to will; but we always follow, in our willing, the result of all the inclinations that come from the direction both of reasons and passions, and this often happens without an express judgement of the understanding.

52. All is therefore certain and determined beforehand in man, as everywhere else, and the human soul is a kind of *spiritual automaton*, although contingent actions in general and free action in particular are not on that account necessary with an absolute necessity, which would be truly incompatible with contingency. Thus neither futurity in itself, certain as it is, nor the infallible prevision of God, nor the predetermination either of causes or of God's decrees destroys this contingency and this freedom. That is acknowledged in respect of futurity and prevision, as has already been set forth. Since, moreover, God's decree consists solely in the resolution he forms, after having compared all possible worlds, to choose that one which is the best, and bring it into existence together with all that this world contains, by means of the all-powerful word *Fiat*, it is plain to see that this decree changes nothing in the constitution of things: God leaves them just as they were in the state of mere possibility, that is, changing nothing either in their essence or nature, or even in their accidents, which are represented perfectly already in the idea of this possible world. Thus that which is contingent and free remains no less so under the decrees of God than under his prevision.

53. But could God himself (it will be said) then change nothing in the world? Assuredly he could not now change it, without derogation to his wisdom, since he has foreseen the existence of this world and of what it contains, and since, likewise, he has formed this resolution to bring it into existence: for he cannot be mistaken nor repent, and it did not behove him to from an imperfect resolution applying to one part and not the [152]whole. Thus, all being ordered from the beginning, it is only because of this hypothetical necessity, recognized by everyone, that after God's prevision or after his resolution nothing can be changed: and yet the events in themselves remain contingent. For (setting aside this supposition of the futurity of the thing and of the prevision or of the resolution of God, a supposition which already lays it down as a fact that the thing will happen, and in accordance with which one must say, 'Unumquodque, quando est, oportet esse, aut unumquodque, siquidem erit, oportet futurum esse'), the event has nothing in it to render it necessary and to suggest that no other thing might have happened in its stead. And as for the connexion between causes and effects, it only inclined, without necessitating, the free agency, as I have just explained; thus it does not produce even a hypothetical necessity, save in conjunction with something from outside, to wit, this very maxim, that the prevailing inclination always triumphs.

54. It will be said also that, if all is ordered, God cannot then perform miracles. But one must bear in mind that the miracles which happen in the world were also enfolded and represented as possible in this same world considered in the state of mere possibility; and God, who has since performed them, when he chose this world had even then decreed to perform them. Again the objection will be made that vows and prayers, merits and demerits, good and bad actions avail nothing, since nothing can be changed. This objection causes most perplexity to people in general, and yet it is purely a sophism. These prayers, these vows, these good or bad actions that occur to-day were already before God when he formed the resolution to order things. Those things which happen in this existing world were represented, with their effects and their consequences, in the idea of this same world, while it was still possible only; they were represented therein, attracting God's grace whether natural

or supernatural, requiring punishments or rewards, just as it has happened actually in this world since God chose it. The prayer or the good action were even then an *ideal cause* or *condition*, that is, an inclining reason able to contribute to the grace of God, or to the reward, as it now does in reality. Since, moreover, all is wisely connected together in the world, it is clear that God, foreseeing that which would happen freely, ordered all other things on that basis beforehand, or (what is [153]the same) he chose that possible world in which everything was ordered in this fashion.

55. This consideration demolishes at the same time what the ancients called the 'Lazy Sophism' (λογος αργος) which ended in a decision to do nothing: for (people would say) if what I ask is to happen it will happen even though I should do nothing; and if it is not to happen it will never happen, no matter what trouble I take to achieve it. This necessity, supposedly existent in events, and detached from their causes, might be termed *Fatum Mahometanum*, as I have already observed above, because a similar line of reasoning, so it is said, causes the Turks not to shun places ravaged by plague. But the answer is quite ready: the effect being certain, the cause that shall produce it is certain also; and if the effect comes about it will be by virtue of a proportionate cause. Thus your laziness perchance will bring it about that you will obtain naught of what you desire, and that you will fall into those misfortunes which you would by acting with care have avoided. We see, therefore, that the *connexion of causes with effects*, far from causing an unendurable fatality, provides rather a means of obviating it. There is a German proverb which says that death will ever have a cause; and nothing is so true. You will die on that day (let us presume it is so, and that God foresees it): yes, without doubt; but it will be because you will do what shall lead you thither. It is likewise with the chastisements of God, which also depend upon their causes. And it will be apposite in this connexion to quote this famous passage from St. Ambrose (in cap. I *Lucae*), 'Novit Dominus mutare sententiam, si tu noveris mutare delictum', which is not to be understood as of reprobation, but of denunciation, such as that which Jonah dealt out for God to the Ninevites. This common saying: 'Si non es praedestinatus, fac ut praedestineris', must not be taken literally, its true sense being that he who has doubts of his predestination need only do what is required for him to obtain it by the grace of God. The sophism which ends in a decision to trouble oneself over nothing will haply be useful sometimes to induce certain people to face danger fearlessly. It has been applied in particular to Turkish soldiers: but it seems that hashish is a more important factor than this sophism, not to mention the fact that this resolute spirit in the Turks has greatly belied itself in our days.

56. A learned physician of Holland named Johan van Beverwyck took the trouble to write *De Termino Vitae* and to collect [154]sundry answers, letters and discourses of some learned men of his time on this subject. This collection has been printed, and it is astonishing to see there how often people are misled, and how they have confused a problem which, properly speaking, is the easiest in the world. After that it is no wonder that there are very many doubts which the human race cannot abandon. The truth is that people love to lose themselves, and this is a kind of ramble of the mind, which is unwilling to subject itself to attention, to order, to rules. It seems as though we are so accustomed to games and jesting that we play the fool even in the most serious occupations, and when we least think to do so.

57. I fear that in the recent dispute between the theologians of the Augsburg Confession, *De Termino Paenitentiae Peremptorio*, which has called forth so many treatises in Germany, some misunderstanding, though of a different nature, has slipped in. The terms prescribed by the laws are amongst lawyers known as *fatalia*. It may be said, in a sense, that the *peremptory term*, prescribed to man for his repentance and amendment, is certain in the sight of God, with whom all is certain. God knows when a sinner will be so hardened that thereafter nothing can be done for him: not indeed that it would be impossible for him to do penance or that sufficient grace needs must be refused to him after a certain term, a grace that never fails; but because there will be a time whereafter he will no more approach the ways of salvation. But we never have certain marks for recognizing this term, and we are never justified in considering a man utterly abandoned: that would be to pass a rash judgement. It were better always to have room for hope; and this is an occasion, with a thousand others, where our ignorance is beneficial.

*Prudens futuri temporis exitum*

*Caliginosa nocte premit Deus.*

58. The whole future is doubtless determined: but since we know not what it is, nor what is foreseen or resolved, we must do our duty, according to the reason that God has given us and according to the rules that he has prescribed for us; and thereafter we must have a quiet mind, and leave to God himself the care for the outcome. For he will never fail to do that which shall be the best, not only in general but also in particular, for those who have true confidence in him, that is, a confidence composed of [155]true piety, a lively faith and fervent charity, by virtue of which we will, as far as in us lies, neglect nothing appertaining to our duty and his service. It is true that

we cannot 'render service' to him, for he has need of nothing: but it is 'serving him', in our parlance, when we strive to carry out his presumptive will, co-operating in the good as it is known to us, wherever we can contribute thereto. For we must always presume that God is prompted towards the good we know, until the event shows us that he had stronger reasons, although perhaps unknown to us, which have made him subordinate this good that we sought to some other greater good of his own designing, which he has not failed or will not fail to effect.

59. I have just shown how the action of the will depends upon its causes; that there is nothing so appropriate to human nature as this dependence of our actions; and that otherwise one would slip into a preposterous and unendurable fatality, namely into the *Fatum Mahometanum*, which is the worst of all because it overthrows foresight and good counsel. It is well to show, notwithstanding, how this dependence of voluntary actions does not fundamentally preclude the existence within us of a wonderful *spontaneity*, which in a certain sense makes the soul in its resolves independent of the physical influence of all other creatures. This spontaneity, hitherto little recognized, which exalts our command over our actions to the highest pitch, is a consequence of the System of Pre-established Harmony, of which I must give some explanation here. The Scholastic philosophers believed that there was a reciprocal physical influence between body and soul: but since it has been recognized that thought and dimensional mass have no mutual connexion, and that they are creatures differing *toto genere*, many moderns have acknowledged that there is no *physical communication* between soul and body, despite the *metaphysical communication* always subsisting, which causes soul and body to compose one and the same *suppositum*, or what is called a person. This physical communication, if there were such, would cause the soul to change the degree of speed and the directional line of some motions that are in the body, and *vice versa* the body to change the sequence of the thoughts that are in the soul. But this effect cannot be inferred from any notion conceived in the body and in the soul; though nothing be better known to us than the soul, since it is inmost to us, that is to say inmost to itself.

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60. M. Descartes wished to compromise and to make a part of the body's action dependent upon the soul. He believed in the existence of a rule of Nature to the effect, according to him, that the same quantity of movement is conserved in bodies. He deemed it not possible that the influence of the soul should violate this law of bodies, but he believed that the soul notwithstanding might have power to change the direction of the movements that are made in the body; much as a rider, though giving no force to the horse he mounts, nevertheless controls it by guiding that force in any direction he pleases. But as that is done by means of the bridle, the bit, the spurs and other material aids, it is conceivable how that can be; there are, however, no instruments such as the soul may employ for this result, nothing indeed either in the soul or in the body, that is, either in thought or in the mass, which may serve to explain this change of the one by the other. In a word, that the soul should change the quantity of force and that it should change the line of direction, both these things are equally inexplicable.

61. Moreover, two important truths on this subject have been discovered since M. Descartes' day. The first is that the quantity of absolute force which is in fact conserved is different from the quantity of movement, as I have demonstrated elsewhere. The second discovery is that the same direction is still conserved in all bodies together that are assumed as interacting, in whatever way they come into collision. If this rule had been known to M. Descartes, he would have taken the direction of bodies to be as independent of the soul as their force; and I believe that that would have led direct to the Hypothesis of Pre-established Harmony, whither these same rules have led me. For apart from the fact that the physical influence of one of these substances on the other is inexplicable, I recognized that without a complete derangement of the laws of Nature the soul could not act physically upon the body. And I did not believe that one could here listen to philosophers, competent in other respects, who produce a God, as it were, *ex machina*, to bring about the final solution of the piece, maintaining that God exerts himself deliberately to move bodies as the soul pleases, and to give perceptions to the soul as the body requires. For this system, which is called that of *occasional causes* (because it teaches that God acts on the body at the instance of the soul, and *vice versa*), besides introducing perpetual miracles to [157]establish communication between these two substances, does not obviate the derangement of the natural laws obtaining in each of these same substances, which, in the general opinion, their mutual influence would cause.

62. Being on other considerations already convinced of the principle of Harmony in general, I was in consequence convinced likewise of the *preformation* and the Pre-established Harmony of all things amongst themselves, of that between nature and grace, between the decrees of God and our actions foreseen, between all parts of matter, and even between the future and the past, the whole in conformity with the sovereign wisdom of God, whose works are the most harmonious it is possible to conceive. Thus I could not fail to arrive at the system which declares that God created the soul in the beginning in such a fashion that it must produce and represent to itself successively that which takes place within the body, and the body also in such a fashion that it must do of itself that which the soul ordains. Consequently the laws that connect the thoughts of the soul in the order of final

causes and in accordance with the evolution of perceptions must produce pictures that meet and harmonize with the impressions of bodies on our organs; and likewise the laws of movements in the body, which follow one another in the order of efficient causes, meet and so harmonize with the thoughts of the soul that the body is induced to act at the time when the soul wills it.

63. Far from its being prejudicial, nothing can be more favourable to freedom than that system. And M. Jacquelot has demonstrated well in his book on the *Conformity of Faith with Reason*, that it is just as if he who knows all that I shall order a servant to do the whole day long on the morrow made an automaton entirely resembling this servant, to carry out to-morrow at the right moment all that I should order; and yet that would not prevent me from ordering freely all that I should please, although the action of the automaton that would serve me would not be in the least free.

64. Moreover, since all that passes in the soul depends, according to this system, only upon the soul, and its subsequent state is derived only from it and from its present state, how can one give it a greater *independence*? It is true that there still remains some imperfection in the constitution of the soul. All that happens to the soul depends upon it, but depends not always upon its will; that [158]were too much. Nor are such happenings even recognized always by its understanding or perceived with distinctness. For there is in the soul not only an order of distinct perceptions, forming its dominion, but also a series of confused perceptions or passions, forming its bondage: and there is no need for astonishment at that; the soul would be a Divinity if it had none but distinct perceptions. It has nevertheless some power over these confused perceptions also, even if in an indirect manner. For although it cannot change its passions forthwith, it can work from afar towards that end with enough success, and endue itself with new passions and even habits. It even has a like power over the more distinct perceptions, being able to endue itself indirectly with opinions and intentions, and to hinder itself from having this one or that, and stay or hasten its judgement. For we can seek means beforehand to arrest ourselves, when occasion arises, on the sliding step of a rash judgement; we can find some incident to justify postponement of our resolution even at the moment when the matter appears ready to be judged. Although our opinion and our act of willing be not directly objects of our will (as I have already observed), one sometimes, takes measures nevertheless, to will and even to believe in due time, that which one does not will, or believe, now. So great is the profundity of the spirit of man.

65. And now, to bring to a conclusion this question of *spontaneity*, it must be said that, on a rigorous definition, the soul has within it the principle of all its actions, and even of all its passions, and that the same is true in all the simple substances scattered throughout Nature, although there be freedom only in those that are intelligent. In the popular sense notwithstanding, speaking in accordance with appearances, we must say that the soul depends in some way upon the body and upon the impressions of the senses: much as we speak with Ptolemy and Tycho in everyday converse, and think with Copernicus, when it is a question of the rising and the setting of the sun.

66. One may however give a true and philosophic sense to this *mutual dependence* which we suppose between the soul and the body. It is that the one of these two substances depends upon the other ideally, in so far as the reason of that which is done in the one can be furnished by that which is in the other. This had already happened when God ordered beforehand the harmony that there [159]would be between them. Even so would that automaton, that should fulfil the servant's function, depend upon me *ideally*, in virtue of the knowledge of him who, foreseeing my future orders, would have rendered it capable of serving me at the right moment all through the morrow. The knowledge of my future intentions would have actuated this great craftsman, who would accordingly have fashioned the automaton: my influence would be objective, and his physical. For in so far as the soul has perfection and distinct thoughts, God has accommodated the body to the soul, and has arranged beforehand that the body is impelled to execute its orders. And in so far as the soul is imperfect and as its perceptions are confused, God has accommodated the soul to the body, in such sort that the soul is swayed by the passions arising out of corporeal representations. This produces the same effect and the same appearance as if the one depended immediately upon the other, and by the agency of a physical influence. Properly speaking, it is by its confused thoughts that the soul represents the bodies which encompass it. The same thing must apply to all that we understand by the actions of simple substances one upon another. For each one is assumed to act upon the other in proportion to its perfection, although this be only ideally, and in the reasons of things, as God in the beginning ordered one substance to accord with another in proportion to the perfection or imperfection that there is in each. (Withal action and passion are always reciprocal in creatures, because one part of the reasons which serve to explain clearly what is done, and which have served to bring it into existence, is in the one of these substances, and another part of these reasons is in the other, perfections and imperfections being always mingled and shared.) Thus it is we attribute *action* to the one, and *passion* to the other.

67. But after all, whatsoever dependence be conceived in voluntary actions, and even though there were an absolute and mathematical necessity (which there is not) it would not follow that there would not be a sufficient

degree of freedom to render rewards and punishments just and reasonable. It is true that generally we speak as though the necessity of the action put an end to all merit and all demerit, all justification for praise and blame, for reward and punishment: but it must be admitted that this conclusion is not entirely correct. I am very far from sharing the opinions of Bradwardine, Wyclif, Hobbes and Spinoza, who [160]advocate, so it seems, this entirely mathematical necessity, which I think I have adequately refuted, and perhaps more clearly than is customary. Yet one must always bear testimony to the truth and not impute to a dogma anything that does not result from it. Moreover, these arguments prove too much, since they would prove just as much against hypothetical necessity, and would justify the lazy sophism. For the absolute necessity of the sequence of causes would in this matter add nothing to the infallible certainty of a hypothetical necessity.

68. In the first place, therefore, it must be agreed that it is permitted to kill a madman when one cannot by other means defend oneself. It will be granted also that it is permitted, and often even necessary, to destroy venomous or very noxious animals, although they be not so by their own fault.

69. Secondly, one inflicts punishments upon a beast, despite its lack of reason and freedom, when one deems that this may serve to correct it: thus one punishes dogs and horses, and indeed with much success. Rewards serve us no less in the managing of animals: when an animal is hungry, the food that is given to him causes him to do what otherwise would never be obtained from him.

70. Thirdly, one would inflict even on beasts capital punishments (where it is no longer a question of correcting the beast that is punished) if this punishment could serve as an example, or inspire terror in others, to make them cease from evil doing. Rorarius, in his book on reason in beasts, says that in Africa they crucified lions, in order to drive away other lions from the towns and frequented places, and that he had observed in passing through the province of Jülich that they hanged wolves there in order to ensure greater safety for the sheepfolds. There are people in the villages also who nail birds of prey to the doors of houses, with the idea that other birds of the same kind will then not so readily appear. These measures would always be justified if they were of any avail.

71. Then, in the fourth place, since experience proves that the fear of chastisements and the hope of rewards serves to make men abstain from evil and strive to do good, one would have good reason to avail oneself of such, even though men were acting under necessity, whatever the necessity might be. The objection will be raised that if good or evil is necessary it is useless to avail oneself of means to obtain it or to hinder it: but the answer has already been [161]given above in the passage combating the lazy sophism. If good or evil were a necessity without these means, then such means would be unavailing; but it is not so. These goods and evils come only with the aid of these means, and if these results were necessary the means would be a part of the causes rendering them necessary, since experience teaches us that often fear or hope hinders evil or advances good. This objection, then, differs hardly at all from the lazy sophism, which we raise against the certainty as well as the necessity of future events. Thus one may say that these objections are directed equally against hypothetical necessity and absolute necessity, and that they prove as much against the one as against the other, that is to say, nothing at all.

72. There was a great dispute between Bishop Bramhall and Mr. Hobbes, which began when they were both in Paris, and which was continued after their return to England; all the parts of it are to be found collected in a quarto volume published in London in the year 1656. They are all in English, and have not been translated as far as I know, nor inserted in the Collection of Works in Latin by Mr. Hobbes. I had already read these writings, and have obtained them again since. And I had observed at the outset that he had not at all proved the absolute necessity of all things, but had shown sufficiently that necessity would not overthrow all the rules of divine or human justice, and would not prevent altogether the exercise of this virtue.

73. There is, however, a kind of justice and a certain sort of rewards and of punishments which appear not so applicable to those who should act by an absolute necessity, supposing such necessity existed. It is that kind of justice which has for its goal neither improvement nor example, nor even redress of the evil. This justice has its foundation only in the fitness of things, which demands a certain satisfaction for the expiation of an evil action. The Socinians, Hobbes and some others do not admit this punitive justice, which properly speaking is avenging justice. God reserves it for himself in many cases; but he does not fail to grant it to those who are entitled to govern others, and he exercises it through their agency, provided that they act under the influence of reason and not of passion. The Socinians believe it to be without foundation, but it always has some foundation in that fitness of things which gives satisfaction not only to the injured but also to the wise who see it; even as a beautiful piece of music, or again a good [162]piece of architecture, satisfies cultivated minds. And the wise lawgiver having threatened, and having, so to speak, promised a chastisement, it befits his consistency not to leave the action completely unpunished, even though the punishment would no longer avail to correct anyone. But even though he should have promised nothing, it is enough that there is a fitness of things which could have prompted him to

make this promise, since the wise man likewise promises only that which is fitting. And one may even say that there is here a certain compensation of the mind, which would be scandalized by disorder if the chastisement did not contribute towards restoring order. One can also consult what Grotius wrote against the Socinians, of the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, and the answer of Crellius thereto.

74. Thus it is that the pains of the damned continue, even when they no longer serve to turn them away from evil, and that likewise the rewards of the blessed continue, even when they no longer serve for strengthening them in good. One may say nevertheless that the damned ever bring upon themselves new pains through new sins, and that the blessed ever bring upon themselves new joys by new progress in goodness: for both are founded on the *principle of the fitness of things*, which has seen to it that affairs were so ordered that the evil action must bring upon itself a chastisement. There is good reason to believe, following the parallelism of the two realms, that of final causes and that of efficient causes, that God has established in the universe a connexion between punishment or reward and bad or good action, in accordance wherewith the first should always be attracted by the second, and virtue and vice obtain their reward and their punishment in consequence of the natural sequence of things, which contains still another kind of pre-established harmony than that which appears in the communication between the soul and the body. For, in a word, all that God does, as I have said already, is harmonious to perfection. Perhaps then this principle of the fitness of things would no longer apply to beings acting without true freedom or exemption from absolute necessity; and in that case corrective justice alone would be administered, and not punitive justice. That is the opinion of the famous Conringius, in a dissertation he published on what is just. And indeed, the reasons Pomponazzi employed in his book on fate, to prove the usefulness of chastisements and rewards, even though all should come about in our [163]actions by a fatal necessity, concern only amendment and not satisfaction, *κολασιν ου τιμωριαν*. Moreover, it is only for the sake of outward appearances that one destroys animals accessory to certain crimes, as one razes the houses of rebels, that is, to inspire terror. Thus it is an act of corrective justice, wherein punitive justice has no part at all.

75. But we will not amuse ourselves now by discussing a question more curious than necessary, since we have shown sufficiently that there is no such necessity in voluntary actions. Nevertheless it was well to show that *imperfect freedom* alone, that is, freedom which is exempt only from constraint, would suffice as foundation for chastisements and rewards of the kind conducive to the avoidance of evil, and to amendment. One sees also from this that some persons of intelligence, who persuade themselves that everything is necessary, are wrong in saying that none must be praised or blamed, rewarded or punished. Apparently they say so only to exercise their wit: the pretext is that all being necessary nothing would be in our power. But this pretext is ill founded: necessary actions would be still in our power, at least in so far as we could perform them or omit them, when the hope or the fear of praise or blame, of pleasure or pain prompted our will thereto, whether they prompted it of necessity, or in prompting it they left spontaneity, contingency and freedom all alike unimpaired. Thus praise and blame, rewards and punishments would preserve always a large part of their use, even though there were a true necessity in our actions. We can praise and blame also natural good and bad qualities, where the will has no part—in a horse, in a diamond, in a man; and he who said of Cato of Utica that he acted virtuously through the goodness of his nature, and that it was impossible for him to behave otherwise, thought to praise him the more.

76. The difficulties which I have endeavoured up to now to remove have been almost all common to natural and revealed theology. Now it will be necessary to come to a question of revealed theology, concerning the election or the reprobation of men, with the dispensation or use of divine grace in connexion with these acts of the mercy or the justice of God. But when I answered the preceding objections, I opened up a way to meet those that remain. This confirms the observation I made thereon (*Preliminary Dissertation*, 43) that there is rather a conflict between the [164]true reasons of natural theology and the false reasons of human appearances, than between revealed faith and reason. For on this subject scarcely any difficulty arises that is new, and not deriving its origin from those which can be placed in the way of the truths discerned by reason.

77. Now as theologians of all parties are divided among themselves on this subject of predestination and grace, and often give different answers to the same objections, according to their various principles, one cannot avoid touching on the differences which prevail among them. One may say in general that some look upon God more metaphysically and others more morally: and it has already been stated on other occasions that the Counter-Remonstrants took the first course and the Remonstrants the second. But to act rightly we must affirm alike on one side the independence of God and the dependence of creatures, and on the other side the justice and goodness of God, which makes him dependent upon himself, his will upon his understanding or his wisdom.

78. Some gifted and well-intentioned authors, desiring to show the force of the reasons advocated by the two principal parties, in order to persuade them to a mutual tolerance, deem that the whole controversy is reduced to this essential point, namely: What was God's principal aim in making his decrees with regard to man? Did he make them solely in order to show forth his glory by manifesting his attributes, and forming, to that end, the great

plan of creation and providence? Or has he had regard rather to the voluntary movements of intelligent substances which he designed to create, considering what they would will and do in the different circumstances and situations wherein he might place them, so as to form a fitting resolve thereupon? It appears to me that the two answers to this great question thus given as opposites to one another are easy to reconcile, and that in consequence the two parties would be agreed in principle, without any need of tolerance, if all were reduced to this point. In truth God, in designing to create the world, purposed solely to manifest and communicate his perfections in the way that was most efficacious, and most worthy of his greatness, his wisdom and his goodness. But that very purpose pledged him to consider all the actions of creatures while still in the state of pure possibility, that he might form the most fitting plan. He is like a great architect whose aim [165] in view is the satisfaction or the glory of having built a beautiful palace, and who considers all that is to enter into this construction: the form and the materials, the place, the situation, the means, the workmen, the expense, before he forms a complete resolve. For a wise person in laying his plans cannot separate the end from the means; he does not contemplate any end without knowing if there are means of attaining thereto.

79. I know not whether there are also perchance persons who imagine that, God being the absolute master of all things, one can thence infer that everything outside him is indifferent to him, that he considers himself alone, without concern for others, and that thus he has made some happy and others unhappy without any cause, without choice, without reason. But to teach so about God were to deprive him of wisdom and of goodness. We need only observe that he considers himself and neglects nothing of what he owes to himself, to conclude that he considers his creatures also, and that he uses them in the manner most consistent with order. For the more a great and good prince is mindful of his glory, the more he will think of making his subjects happy, even though he were the most absolute of all monarchs, and though his subjects were slaves from birth, bondsmen (in lawyers' parlance), people entirely in subjection to arbitrary power. Calvin himself and some others of the greatest defenders of the absolute decree rightly maintained that God had *great and just reasons* for his election and the dispensation of his grace, although these reasons be unknown to us in detail: and we must judge charitably that the most rigid predestinators have too much reason and too much piety to depart from this opinion.

80. There will therefore be no argument for debate on that point (as I hope) with people who are at all reasonable. But there will always be argument among those who are called Universalists and Particularists, according to what they teach of the grace and the will of God. Yet I am somewhat inclined to believe that the heated dispute between them on the will of God to save all men, and on that which depends upon it (when one keeps separate the doctrine *de Auxiliis*, or of the assistance of grace), rests rather in expressions than in things. For it is sufficient to consider that God, as well as every wise and beneficent mind, is inclined towards all possible good, and that this inclination is proportionate to the excellence of the good. Moreover, this results (if we take the matter [166] precisely and in itself) from an 'antecedent will', as it is termed, which, however, is not always followed by its complete effect, because this wise mind must have many other inclinations besides. Thus it is the result of all the inclinations together that makes his will complete and decretory, as I have already explained. One may therefore very well say with ancient writers that God wills to save all men according to his antecedent will, but not according to his consequent will, which never fails to be followed by its effect. And if those who deny this universal will do not allow that the antecedent inclination be called a will, they are only troubling themselves about a question of name.

81. But there is a question more serious in regard to predestination to eternal life and to all other destination by God, to wit, whether this destination is absolute or respective. There is destination to good and destination to evil; and as evil is moral or physical, theologians of all parties agree that there is no destination to moral evil, that is to say, that none is destined to sin. As for the greatest physical evil, which is damnation, one can distinguish between destination and predestination: for predestination appears to contain within itself an absolute destination, which is anterior to the consideration of the good or evil actions of those whom it concerns. Thus one may say that the reprobate are *destined* to be condemned, because they are known to be impenitent. But it cannot so well be said that the reprobate are *predestined* to damnation: for there is no *absolute* reprobation, its foundation being final foreseen impenitence.

82. It is true that there are writers who maintain that God, wishing to manifest his mercy and his justice in accordance with reasons worthy of him, but unknown to us, chose the elect, and in consequence rejected the damned, prior to all thought of sin, even of Adam, that after this resolve he thought fit to permit sin in order to be able to exercise these two virtues, and that he has bestowed grace in Jesus Christ to some in order to save them, while he has refused it to others in order to be able to punish them. Hence these writers are named 'Supralapsarians', because the decree to punish precedes, according to them, the knowledge of the future existence of sin. But the opinion most common to-day amongst those who are called Reformed, and one that is favoured by the Synod of Dordrecht, is that of the 'Infralapsarians', corresponding somewhat to the conception of St. Augustine. For [167] he asserts that God having resolved to permit the sin of Adam and the corruption of the

human race, for reasons just but hidden, his mercy made him choose some of the corrupt mass to be freely saved by the merit of Jesus Christ, and his justice made him resolve to punish the others by the damnation that they deserved. That is why, with the Schoolmen, only the saved were called *Praedestinati* and the damned were called *Praesciti*. It must be admitted that some Infralapsarians and others speak sometimes of predestination to damnation, following the example of Fulgentius and of St. Augustine himself: but that signifies the same as destination to them, and it avails nothing to wrangle about words. That pretext, notwithstanding, was in time past used for maltreating that Godscalc who caused a stir about the middle of the ninth century, and who took the name of Fulgentius to indicate that he followed that author.

83. As for the destination of the elect to eternal life, the Protestants, as well as those of the Roman Church, dispute much among themselves as to whether election is absolute or is founded on the prevision of final living faith. Those who are called Evangelicals, that is, those of the Augsburg Confession, hold the latter opinion: they believe that one need not go into the hidden causes of election while one may find a manifest cause of it shown in Holy Scripture, which is faith in Jesus Christ; and it appears to them that the prevision of the cause is also the cause of the prevision of the effect. Those who are called Reformed are of a different opinion: they admit that salvation comes from faith in Jesus Christ, but they observe that often the cause anterior to the effect in execution is posterior in intention, as when the cause is the means and the effect is the end. Thus the question is, whether faith or salvation is anterior in the intention of God, that is, whether God's design is rather to save man than to make him a believer.

84. Hence we see that the question between the Supralapsarians and the Infralapsarians in part, and again between them and the Evangelicals, comes back to a right conception of the order that is in God's decrees. Perhaps one might put an end to this dispute at once by saying that, properly speaking, all the decrees of God that are here concerned are simultaneous, not only in respect of time, as everyone agrees, but also *in signo rationis*, or in the order of nature. And indeed, the Formula of Concord, building upon some passages [168] of St. Augustine, comprised in the same Decree of Election salvation and the means that conduce to it. To demonstrate this synchronism of destinations or of decrees with which we are concerned, we must revert to the expedient that I have employed more than once, which states that God, before decreeing anything, considered among other possible sequences of things that one which he afterwards approved. In the idea of this is represented how the first parents sin and corrupt their posterity; how Jesus Christ redeems the human race; how some, aided by such and such graces, attain to final faith and to salvation; and how others, with or without such or other graces, do not attain thereto, continue in sin, and are damned. God grants his sanction to this sequence only after having entered into all its detail, and thus pronounces nothing final as to those who shall be saved or damned without having pondered upon everything and compared it with other possible sequences. Thus God's pronouncement concerns the whole sequence at the same time; he simply decrees its existence. In order to save other men, or in a different way, he must needs choose an altogether different sequence, seeing that all is connected in each sequence. In this conception of the matter, which is that most worthy of the All-wise, all whose actions are connected together to the highest possible degree, there would be only one total decree, which is to create such a world. This total decree comprises equally all the particular decrees, without setting one of them before or after another. Yet one may say also that each particular act of antecedent will entering into the total result has its value and order, in proportion to the good whereto this act inclines. But these acts of antecedent will are not called decrees, since they are not yet inevitable, the outcome depending upon the total result. According to this conception of things, all the difficulties that can here be made amount to the same as those I have already stated and removed in my inquiry concerning the origin of evil.

85. There remains only one important matter of discussion, which has its peculiar difficulties. It is that of the dispensation of the means and circumstances contributing to salvation and to damnation. This comprises amongst others the subject of the Aids of Grace (*de auxiliis gratiae*), on which Rome (since the Congregation *de Auxiliis* under Clement VIII, when a debate took place between the Dominicans and the Jesuits) does not readily permit [169] books to be published. Everyone must agree that God is altogether good and just, that his goodness makes him contribute the least possible to that which can render men guilty, and the most possible to that which serves to save them (possible, I say, subject to the general order of things); that his justice prevents him from condemning innocent men, and from leaving good actions without reward; and that he even keeps an exact proportion in punishments and rewards. Nevertheless, this idea that one should have of the goodness and the justice of God does not appear enough in what we know of his actions with regard to the salvation and the damnation of men: and it is that which makes difficulties concerning sin and its remedies.

86. The first difficulty is how the soul could be infected with original sin, which is the root of actual sins, without injustice on God's part in exposing the soul thereto. This difficulty has given rise to three opinions on the origin of the soul itself. The first is that of the *pre-existence of human souls* in another world or in another life, where they had sinned and on that account had been condemned to this prison of the human body, an opinion of the

Platonists which is attributed to Origen and which even to-day finds adherents. Henry More, an English scholar, advocated something like this dogma in a book written with that express purpose. Some of those who affirm this pre-existence have gone as far as metempsychosis. The younger van Helmont held this opinion, and the ingenious author of some metaphysical *Meditations*, published in 1678 under the name of William Wander, appears to have some leaning towards it. The second opinion is that of *Traduction*, as if the soul of children were engendered (*per traducem*) from the soul or souls of those from whom the body is engendered. St. Augustine inclined to this judgement the better to explain original sin. This doctrine is taught also by most of the theologians of the Augsburg Confession. Nevertheless it is not completely established among them, since the Universities of Jena and Helmstedt, and others besides, have long been opposed to it. The third opinion, and that most widely accepted to-day, is that of *Creation*: it is taught in the majority of the Christian Schools, but it is fraught with the greatest difficulty in respect of original sin.

87. Into this controversy of theologians on the origin of the human soul has entered the philosophic dispute on *the origin of forms*. Aristotle and scholastic philosophy after him called *Form* [170] that which is a principle of action and is found in that which acts. This inward principle is either substantial, being then termed 'Soul', when it is in an organic body, or accidental, and customarily termed 'Quality'. The same philosopher gave to the soul the generic name of 'Entelechy' or *Act*. This word 'Entelechy' apparently takes its origin from the Greek word signifying 'perfect', and hence the celebrated Ermolao Barbaro expressed it literally in Latin by *perfectihabia*: for *Act* is a realization of potency. And he had no need to consult the Devil, as men say he did, in order to learn that. Now the Philosopher of Stagira supposes that there are two kinds of *Act*, the permanent act and the successive act. The permanent or lasting act is nothing but the Substantial or Accidental Form: the substantial form (as for example the soul) is altogether permanent, at least according to my judgement, and the accidental is only so for a time. But the altogether momentary act, whose nature is transitory, consists in action itself. I have shown elsewhere that the notion of Entelechy is not altogether to be scorned, and that, being permanent, it carries with it not only a mere faculty for action, but also that which is called 'force', 'effort', 'conatus', from which action itself must follow if nothing prevents it. Faculty is only an *attribute*, or rather sometimes a mode; but force, when it is not an ingredient of substance itself (that is, force which is not primitive but derivative), is a *quality*, which is distinct and separable from substance. I have shown also how one may suppose that the soul is a primitive force which is modified and varied by derivative forces or qualities, and exercised in actions.

88. Now philosophers have troubled themselves exceedingly on the question of the origin of substantial forms. For to say that the compound of form and matter is produced and that the form is only *comproduced* means nothing. The common opinion was that forms were derived from the potency of matter, this being called *Eduction*. That also meant in fact nothing, but it was explained in a sense by a comparison with shapes: for that of a statue is produced only by removal of the superfluous marble. This comparison might be valid if form consisted in a mere limitation, as in the case of shape. Some have thought that forms were sent from heaven, and even created expressly, when bodies were produced. Julius Scaliger hinted that it was possible that forms were rather derived from the active potency of the efficient cause (that is to [171] say, either from that of God in the case of Creation or from that of other forms in the case of generation), than from the passive potency of matter. And that, in the case of generation, meant a return to traduction. Daniel Sennert, a famous doctor and physicist at Wittenberg, cherished this opinion, particularly in relation to animate bodies which are multiplied through seed. A certain Julius Caesar della Galla, an Italian living in the Low Countries, and a doctor of Groningen named Johan Freitag wrote with much vehemence in opposition to Sennert. Johann Sperling, a professor at Wittenberg, made a defence of his master, and finally came into conflict with Johann Zeisold, a professor at Jena, who upheld the belief that the human soul is created.

89. But traduction and eduction are equally inexplicable when it is a question of finding the origin of the soul. It is not the same with accidental forms, since they are only modifications of the substance, and their origin may be explained by eduction, that is, by variation of limitations, in the same way as the origin of shapes. But it is quite another matter when we are concerned with the origin of a substance, whose beginning and destruction are equally difficult to explain. Sennert and Sperling did not venture to admit the subsistence and the indestructibility of the souls of beasts or of other primitive forms, although they allowed that they were indivisible and immaterial. But the fact is that they confused indestructibility with immortality, whereby is understood in the case of man that not only the soul but also the personality subsists. In saying that the soul of man is immortal one implies the subsistence of what makes the identity of the person, something which retains its moral qualities, conserving the *consciousness*, or the reflective inward feeling, of what it is: thus it is rendered susceptible to chastisement or reward. But this conservation of personality does not occur in the souls of beasts: that is why I prefer to say that they are imperishable rather than to call them immortal. Yet this misapprehension appears to have been the cause of a great inconsistency in the doctrine of the Thomists and of other good philosophers: they recognized the immateriality or indivisibility of all souls, without being willing to admit their indestructibility, greatly to the prejudice of the immortality of the human soul. John Scot, that is, the Scotsman (which formerly signified

Hibernian or Erigena), a famous writer of the time of Louis the Debonair and of his sons, was for the conservation of all [172]souls: and I see not why there should be less objection to making the atoms of Epicurus or of Gassendi endure, than to affirming the subsistence of all truly simple and indivisible substances, which are the sole and true atoms of Nature. And Pythagoras was right in saying generally, as Ovid makes him say:

*Morte carent animae.*

90. Now as I like maxims which hold good and admit of the fewest exceptions possible, here is what has appeared to me most reasonable in every sense on this important question. I consider that souls and simple substances altogether cannot begin except by creation, or end except by annihilation. Moreover, as the formation of organic animate bodies appears explicable in the order of nature only when one assumes a *preformation* already organic, I have thence inferred that what we call generation of an animal is only a transformation and augmentation. Thus, since the same body was already furnished with organs, it is to be supposed that it was already animate, and that it had the same soul: so I assume *vice versa*, from the conservation of the soul when once it is created, that the animal is also conserved, and that apparent death is only an envelopment, there being no likelihood that in the order of nature souls exist entirely separated from all body, or that what does not begin naturally can cease through natural forces.

91. Considering that so admirable an order and rules so general are established in regard to animals, it does not appear reasonable that man should be completely excluded from that order, and that everything in relation to his soul should come about in him by miracle. Besides I have pointed out repeatedly that it is of the essence of God's wisdom that all should be harmonious in his works, and that nature should be parallel with grace. It is thus my belief that those souls which one day shall be human souls, like those of other species, have been in the seed, and in the progenitors as far back as Adam, and have consequently existed since the beginning of things, always in a kind of organic body. On this point it seems that M. Swammerdam, Father Malebranche, M. Bayle, Mr. Pitcairne, M. Hartsoeker and numerous other very able persons share my opinion. This doctrine is also sufficiently confirmed by the microscope observations of M. Leeuwenhoek and other good observers. But it also for divers reasons appears likely [173]to me that they existed then as sentient or animal souls only, endowed with perception and feeling, and devoid of reason. Further I believe that they remained in this state up to the time of the generation of the man to whom they were to belong, but that then they received reason, whether there be a natural means of raising a sentient soul to the degree of a reasoning soul (a thing I find it difficult to imagine) or whether God may have given reason to this soul through some special operation, or (if you will) by a kind of *transcreation*. This latter is easier to admit, inasmuch as revelation teaches much about other forms of immediate operation by God upon our souls. This explanation appears to remove the obstacles that beset this matter in philosophy or theology. For the difficulty of the origin of forms thus disappears completely; and besides it is much more appropriate to divine justice to give the soul, already corrupted *physically* or on the animal side by the sin of Adam, a new perfection which is reason, than to put a reasoning soul, by creation or otherwise, in a body wherein it is to be corrupted *morally*.

92. Now the soul being once under the domination of sin, and ready to commit sin in actual fact as soon as the man is fit to exercise reason, a new question arises, to wit: whether this tendency in a man who has not been regenerated by baptism suffices to damn him, even though he should never come to commit sin, as may happen, and happens often, whether he die before reaching years of discretion or he become dull of sense before he has made use of his reason. St. Gregory of Nazianzos is supposed to have denied this (*Orat. de Baptismo*); but St. Augustine is for the affirmative, and maintains that original sin of itself is sufficient to earn the flames of hell, although this opinion is, to say the least, very harsh. When I speak here of damnation or of hell, I mean pains, and not mere deprivation of supreme felicity; I mean *poenam sensus, non damni*. Gregory of Rimini, General of the Augustinians, with a few others followed St. Augustine in opposition to the accepted opinion of the Schools of his time, and for that reason he was called the torturer of children, *tortor infantum*. The Schoolmen, instead of sending them into the flames of hell, have assigned to them a special Limbo, where they do not suffer, and are only punished by privation of the beatific vision. The Revelations of St. Birgitta (as they are called), much esteemed in Rome, also uphold this dogma. Salmeron and Molina, and before them [174]Ambrose Catharin and others, grant them a certain natural bliss; and Cardinal Sfondrati, a man of learning and piety, who approves this, latterly went so far as to prefer in a sense their state, which is the state of happy innocence, to that of a sinner saved, as we may see in his *Nodus Praedestinationis Solutus*. That, however, seems to go too far. Certainly a soul truly enlightened would not wish to sin, even though it could by this means obtain all imaginable pleasures. But the case of choosing between sin and true bliss is simply chimerical, and it is better to obtain bliss (even after repentance) than to be deprived of it for ever.

93. Many prelates and theologians of France who are well pleased to differ from Molina, and to join with St. Augustine, seem to incline towards the opinion of this great doctor, who condemns to eternal flames children that

die in the age of innocence before having received baptism. This is what appears from the letter mentioned above, written by five distinguished prelates of France to Pope Innocent XII, against that posthumous book by Cardinal Sfondrati. But therein they did not venture to condemn the doctrine of the purely privative punishment of children dying without baptism, seeing it approved by the venerable Thomas Aquinas, and by other great men. I do not speak of those who are called on one side Jansenists and on the other disciples of St. Augustine, for they declare themselves entirely and firmly for the opinion of this Father. But it must be confessed that this opinion has not sufficient foundation either in reason or in Scripture, and that it is outrageously harsh. M. Nicole makes rather a poor apology for it in his book on the *Unity of the Church*, written to oppose M. Jurieu, although M. Bayle takes his side in chapter 178 of the *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III. M. Nicole makes use of this pretext, that there are also other dogmas in the Christian religion which appear harsh. On the one hand, however, that does not lead to the conclusion that these instances of harshness may be multiplied without proof; and on the other we must take into account that the other dogmas mentioned by M. Nicole, namely original sin and eternity of punishment, are only harsh and unjust to outward appearance, while the damnation of children dying without actual sin and without regeneration would in truth be harsh, since it would be in effect the damning of innocents. For that reason I believe that the party which advocates this opinion will never altogether have the upper hand in the [175]Roman Church itself. Evangelical theologians are accustomed to speak with fair moderation on this question, and to surrender these souls to the judgement and the clemency of their Creator. Nor do we know all the wonderful ways that God may choose to employ for the illumination of souls.

94. One may say that those who condemn for original sin alone, and who consequently condemn children dying unbaptized or outside the Covenant, fall, in a sense, without being aware of it, into a certain attitude to man's inclination and God's foreknowledge which they disapprove in others. They will not have it that God should refuse his grace to those whose resistance to it he foresees, nor that this expectation and this tendency should cause the damnation of these persons: and yet they claim that the tendency which constitutes original sin, and in which God foresees that the child will sin as soon as he shall reach years of discretion, suffices to damn this child beforehand. Those who maintain the one and reject the other do not preserve enough uniformity and connexion in their dogmas.

95. There is scarcely less difficulty in the matter of those who reach years of discretion and plunge into sin, following the inclination of corrupt nature, if they receive not the succour of the grace necessary for them to stop on the edge of the precipice, or to drag themselves from the abyss wherein they have fallen. For it seems hard to damn them eternally for having done that which they had no power to prevent themselves from doing. Those that damn even children, who are without discretion, trouble themselves even less about adults, and one would say that they have become callous through the very expectation of seeing people suffer. But it is not the same with other theologians, and I would be rather on the side of those who grant to all men a grace sufficient to draw them away from evil, provided they have a sufficient tendency to profit by this succour, and not to reject it voluntarily. The objection is made that there has been and still is a countless multitude of men, among civilized peoples and among barbarians, who have never had this knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ which is necessary for those who would tread the wonted paths to salvation. But without excusing them on the plea of a sin purely philosophical, and without stopping at a mere penalty of privation, things for which there is no opportunity of discussion here, one may doubt the fact: for how do we know whether they [176]do not receive ordinary or extraordinary succour of kinds unknown to us? This maxim, *Quod facienti, quod in se est, non denegatur gratia necessaria*, appears to me to have eternal truth. Thomas Aquinas, Archbishop Bradwardine and others have hinted that, in regard to this, something comes to pass of which we are not aware. (Thom. quest. XIV, *De Veritate*, artic. XI, ad I et alibi. Bradwardine, *De Causa Dei*, non procul ab initio.) And sundry theologians of great authority in the Roman Church itself have taught that a sincere act of the love of God above all things, when the grace of Jesus Christ arouses it, suffices for salvation. Father Francis Xavier answered the Japanese that if their ancestors had used well their natural light God would have given them the grace necessary for salvation; and the Bishop of Geneva, Francis of Sales, gives full approval to this answer (Book 4, *On the Love of God*, ch. 5).

96. This I pointed out some time ago to the excellent M Pélisson, to show him that the Roman Church, going further than the Protestants, does not damn utterly those who are outside its communion, and even outside Christianity, by using as its only criterion explicit faith. Nor did he refute it, properly speaking, in the very kind answer he gave me, and which he published in the fourth part of his *Reflexions*, also doing me the honour of adding to it my letter. I offered him then for consideration what a famous Portuguese theologian, by name Jacques Payva Andradius, envoy to the Council of Trent, wrote concerning this, in opposition to Chemnitz, during this same Council. And now, without citing many other authors of eminence, I will content myself with naming Father Friedrich Spee, the Jesuit, one of the most excellent in his Society, who also held this common opinion upon the efficacy of the love of God, as is apparent in the preface to the admirable book which he wrote in Germany on the Christian virtues. He speaks of this observation as of a highly important secret of piety, and expatiates with great clearness upon the power of divine love to blot out sin, even without the intervention of the

Sacraments of the Catholic Church, provided one scorn them not, for that would not at all be compatible with this love. And a very great personage, whose character was one of the most lofty to be found in the Roman Church, was the first to make me acquainted with it. Father Spee was of a noble family of Westphalia (it may be said in passing) and he died in the odour of sanctity, according [177]to the testimony of him who published this book in Cologne with the approval of the Superiors.

97. The memory of this excellent man ought to be still precious to persons of knowledge and good sense, because he is the author of the book entitled: *Cautio Criminalis circa Processus contra Sagas*, which has caused much stir, and has been translated into several languages. I learnt from the Grand Elector of Mainz, Johann Philipp von Schonborn, uncle of His Highness the present Elector, who walks gloriously in the footsteps of that worthy predecessor, the story that follows. That Father was in Franconia when there was a frenzy there for burning alleged sorcerers. He accompanied even to the pyre many of them, all of whom he recognized as being innocent, from their confessions and the researches that he had made thereon. Therefore in spite of the danger incurred at that time by one telling the truth in this matter, he resolved to compile this work, without however naming himself. It bore great fruit and on this matter converted that Elector, at that time still a simple canon and afterwards Bishop of Würzburg, finally also Archbishop of Mainz, who, as soon as he came to power, put an end to these burnings. Therein he was followed by the Dukes of Brunswick, and finally by the majority of the other princes and states of Germany.

98. This digression appeared to me to be seasonable, because that writer deserves to be more widely known. Returning now to the subject I make a further observation. Supposing that to-day a knowledge of Jesus Christ according to the flesh is absolutely necessary to salvation, as indeed it is safest to teach, it will be possible to say that God will give that knowledge to all those who do, humanly speaking, that which in them lies, even though God must needs give it by a miracle. Moreover, we cannot know what passes in souls at the point of death; and if sundry learned and serious theologians claim that children receive in baptism a kind of faith, although they do not remember it afterwards when they are questioned about it, why should one maintain that nothing of a like nature, or even more definite, could come about in the dying, whom we cannot interrogate after their death? Thus there are countless paths open to God, giving him means of satisfying his justice and his goodness: and the only thing one may allege against this is that we know not what way he employs; which is far from being a valid objection.

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99. Let us pass on to those who lack not power to amend, but good will. They are doubtless not to be excused; but there always remains a great difficulty concerning God, since it rested with him to give them this same good will. He is the master of wills, the hearts of kings and those of all other men are in his hand. Holy Scripture goes so far as to say that God at times hardened the wicked in order to display his power by punishing them. This hardening is not to be taken as meaning that God inspires men with a kind of anti-grace, that is, a kind of repugnance to good, or even an inclination towards evil, just as the grace that he gives is an inclination towards good. It is rather that God, having considered the sequence of things that he established, found it fitting, for superior reasons, to permit that Pharaoh, for example, should be in such *circumstances* as should increase his wickedness, and divine wisdom willed to derive a good from this evil.

100. Thus it all often comes down to *circumstances*, which form a part of the combination of things. There are countless examples of small circumstances serving to convert or to pervert. Nothing is more widely known than the *Tolle, lege* (Take and read) cry which St. Augustine heard in a neighbouring house, when he was pondering on what side he should take among the Christians divided into sects, and saying to himself,

*Quod vitae sectabor iter?*

This brought him to open at random the book of the Holy Scriptures which he had before him, and to read what came before his eyes: and these were words which finally induced him to give up Manichaeism. The good Steno, a Dane, who was titular Bishop of Titianopolis, Vicar Apostolic (as they say) of Hanover and the region around, when there was a Duke Regent of his religion, told us that something of that kind had happened to him. He was a great anatomist and deeply versed in natural science; but he unfortunately gave up research therein, and from being a great physicist he became a mediocre theologian. He would almost listen to nothing more about the marvels of Nature, and an express order from the Pope *in virtute sanctae obedientiae* was needed to extract from him the observations M. Thévenot asked of him. He told us then that what had greatly helped towards inducing him to place himself on the side of the Roman Church had been the voice of a lady in Florence, who had cried out to him from a window: [179]'Go not on the side where you are about to go, sir, go on the other side.' 'That voice struck me,' he told us, 'because I was just meditating upon religion.' This lady knew that he was seeking a man in

the house where she was, and, when she saw him making his way to the other house, wished to point out where his friend's room was.

101. Father John Davidius, the Jesuit, wrote a book entitled *Veridicus Christianus*, which is like a kind of *Bibliomancy*, where one takes passages at random, after the pattern of the *Tolle, lege* of St. Augustine, and it is like a devotional game. But the chances to which, in spite of ourselves, we are subject, play only too large a part in what brings salvation to men, or removes it from them. Let us imagine twin Polish children, the one taken by the Tartars, sold to the Turks, brought to apostasy, plunged in impiety, dying in despair; the other saved by some chance, falling then into good hands to be educated properly, permeated by the soundest truths of religion, exercised in the virtues that it commends to us, dying with all the feelings of a good Christian. One will lament the misfortune of the former, prevented perhaps by a slight circumstance from being saved like his brother, and one will marvel that this slight chance should have decided his fate for eternity.

102. Someone will perchance say that God foresaw by mediate knowledge that the former would have been wicked and damned even if he had remained in Poland. There are perhaps conjunctures wherein something of the kind takes place. But will it therefore be said that this is a general rule, and that not one of those who were damned amongst the pagans would have been saved if he had been amongst Christians? Would that not be to contradict our Lord, who said that Tyre and Sidon would have profited better by his preaching, if they had had the good fortune to hear it, than Capernaum?

103. But were one to admit even here this use of mediate knowledge against all appearances, this knowledge still implies that God considers what a man would do in such and such circumstances; and it always remains true that God could have placed him in other circumstances more favourable, and given him inward or outward succour capable of vanquishing the most abysmal wickedness existing in any soul. I shall be told that God is not bound to do so, but that is not enough; it must be added that greater reasons prevent him from making all his goodness felt by [180]all. Thus there must needs be choice; but I do not think one must seek the reason altogether in the good or bad nature of men. For if with some people one assume that God, choosing the plan which produces the most good, but which involves sin and damnation, has been prompted by his wisdom to choose the best natures in order to make them objects of his grace, this grace would not sufficiently appear to be a free gift. Accordingly man will be distinguishable by a kind of inborn merit, and this assumption seems remote from the principles of St. Paul, and even from those of Supreme Reason.

104. It is true that there are reasons for God's choice, and the consideration of the object, that is, the nature of man, must needs enter therein; but it does not seem that this choice can be subjected to a rule such as we are capable of conceiving, and such as may flatter the pride of men. Some famous theologians believe that God offers more grace, and in a more favourable way, to those whose resistance he foresees will be less, and that he abandons the rest to their self-will. We may readily suppose that this is often the case, and this expedient, among those which make man distinguishable by anything favourable in his nature, is the farthest removed from Pelagianism. But I would not venture, notwithstanding, to make of it a universal rule. Moreover, that we may not have cause to vaunt ourselves, it is necessary that we be ignorant of the reasons for God's choice. Those reasons are too diverse to become known to us; and it may be that God at times shows the power of his grace by overcoming the most obstinate resistance, to the end that none may have cause either to despair or to be puffed up. St. Paul, as it would seem, had this in mind when he offered himself as an example. God, he said, has had mercy upon me, to give a great example of his patience.

105. It may be that fundamentally all men are equally bad, and consequently incapable of being distinguished the one from the other through their good or less bad natural qualities; but they are not bad all in the same way: for there is an inherent individual difference between souls, as the Pre-established Harmony proves. Some are more or less inclined towards a particular good or a particular evil, or towards their opposites, all in accordance with their natural dispositions. But since the general plan of the universe, chosen by God for superior reasons, causes men to be in different circumstances, those who meet with such as are more [181]favourable to their nature will become more readily the least wicked, the most virtuous, the most happy; yet it will be always by aid of the influence of that inward grace which God unites with the circumstances. Sometimes it even comes to pass, in the progress of human life, that a more excellent nature succeeds less, for lack of cultivation or opportunities. One may say that men are chosen and ranged not so much according to their excellence as according to their conformity with God's plan. Even so it may occur that a stone of lesser quality is made use of in a building or in a group because it proves to be the particular one for filling a certain gap.

106. But, in fine, all these attempts to find reasons, where there is no need to adhere altogether to certain hypotheses, serve only to make clear to us that there are a thousand ways of justifying the conduct of God. All the disadvantages we see, all the obstacles we meet with, all the difficulties one may raise for oneself, are no

hindrance to a belief founded on reason, even when it cannot stand on conclusive proof, as has been shown and will later become more apparent, that there is nothing so exalted as the wisdom of God, nothing so just as his judgements, nothing so pure as his holiness, and nothing more vast than his goodness.

## GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ: THEODICY (PART 2)

107. Hitherto I have devoted myself to giving a full and clear exposition of this whole subject: and although I have not yet spoken of M. Bayle's objections in particular, I have endeavoured to anticipate them, and to suggest ways of answering them. But as I have taken upon myself the task of meeting them in detail, not only because there will perhaps still be passages calling for elucidation, but also because his arguments are usually full of wit and erudition, and serve to throw greater light on this controversy, it will be well to give an account of the chief objections that are dispersed through his works, and to add my answers. At the beginning I observed 'that God co-operates in moral evil, and in physical evil, and in each of them both morally and physically; and that man co-operates therein also morally and physically in a free and active way, becoming in consequence subject to blame and punishment'. I have shown also that each point has its own difficulty; but the greatest of these lies in maintaining that God co-operates morally in moral evil, that is, in sin, without being the originator of the sin, and even without being accessory thereto.

108. He does this by *permitting* it justly, and by *directing* it wisely towards the good, as I have shown in a manner that appears tolerably intelligible. But as it is here principally that M. Bayle [183]undertakes to discomfit those who maintain that there is nothing in faith which cannot be harmonized with reason, it is also here especially I must show that my dogmas are fortified (to make use of his own allegory) with a rampart, even of reasons, which is able to resist the fire of his strongest batteries. He has ranged them against me in chapter 144 of his *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial* (vol. III, p. 812), where he includes the theological doctrine in seven propositions and opposes thereto nineteen philosophic maxims, like so many large cannon capable of breaching my rampart. Let us begin with the theological propositions.

109. I. 'God,' he says, 'the Being eternal and necessary, infinitely good, holy, wise and powerful, possesses from all eternity a glory and a bliss that can never either increase or diminish.' This proposition of M. Bayle's is no less philosophical than theological. To say that God possesses a 'glory' when he is alone, that depends upon the meaning of the term. One may say, with some, that glory is the satisfaction one finds in being aware of one's own perfections; and in this sense God possesses it always. But when glory signifies that others become aware of these perfections, one may say that God acquires it only when he reveals himself to intelligent creatures; even though it be true that God thereby gains no new good, and it is rather the rational creatures who thence derive advantage, when they apprehend aright the glory of God.

110. II. 'He resolved freely upon the production of creatures, and he chose from among an infinite number of possible beings those whom it pleased him to choose, to give them existence, and to compose the universe of them, while he left all the rest in nothingness.' This proposition is also, just like the preceding one, in close conformity with that part of philosophy which is called natural theology. One must dwell a little on what is said here, that he chose the possible beings 'whom it pleased him to choose'. For it must be borne in mind that when I say, 'that pleases me', it is as though I were saying, 'I find it good'. Thus it is the ideal goodness of the object which pleases, and which makes me choose it among many others which do not please or which please less, that is to say, which contain less of that goodness which moves me. Now it is only the genuinely good that is capable of pleasing God: and consequently that which pleases God most, and which meets his choice, is the best.

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111. III. 'Human nature having been among the Beings that he willed to produce, he created a man and a woman, and granted them amongst other favours free will, so that they had the power to obey him; but he threatened them with death if they should disobey the order that he gave them to abstain from a certain fruit.' This proposition is in part revealed, and should be admitted without difficulty, provided that *free will* be understood properly, according to the explanation I have given.

112. IV. 'They ate thereof nevertheless, and thenceforth they were condemned, they and all their posterity, to the miseries of this life, to temporal death and eternal damnation, and made subject to such a tendency to sin that

they abandoned themselves thereto endlessly and without ceasing.' There is reason to suppose that the forbidden action by itself entailed these evil results in accordance with a natural effect, and that it was for that very reason, and not by a purely arbitrary decree, that God had forbidden it: much as one forbids knives to children. The famous Fludde or de Fluctibus, an Englishman, once wrote a book *De Vita, Morte et Resurrectione* under the name of R. Otreb, wherein he maintained that the fruit of the forbidden tree was a poison: but we cannot enter into this detail. It suffices that God forbade a harmful thing; one must not therefore suppose that God acted here simply in the character of a legislator who enacts a purely positive law, or of a judge who imposes and inflicts a punishment by an order of his will, without any connexion between the evil of guilt and the evil of punishment. And it is not necessary to suppose that God in justifiable annoyance deliberately put a corruption in the soul and the body of man, by an extraordinary action, in order to punish him: much as the Athenians gave hemlock-juice to their criminals. M. Bayle takes the matter thus: he speaks as if the original corruption had been put in the soul of the first man by an order and operation of God. It is that which calls forth his objection (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 178, p. 1218) 'that reason would not commend the monarch who, in order to chastise a rebel, condemned him and his descendants to have a tendency towards rebellion'. But this chastisement happens naturally to the wicked, without any ordinance of a legislator, and they become addicted to evil. If drunkards beget children inclined to the same vice, by a natural consequence of what takes place in bodies, that would be a punishment of their progenitors, [185]but it would not be a penalty of law. There is something comparable to this in the consequences of the first man's sin. For the contemplation of divine wisdom leads us to believe that the realm of nature serves that of grace; and that God as an Architect has done all in a manner befitting God considered as a Monarch. We do not sufficiently know the nature of the forbidden fruit, or that of the action, or its effects, to judge of the details of this matter: nevertheless we must do God justice so far as to believe that it comprised something other than what painters depict for us.

113. V. 'It has pleased him by his infinite mercy to deliver a very few men from this condemnation; and, leaving them exposed during this life to the corruption of sin and misery, he has given them aids which enable them to obtain the never-ending bliss of paradise.' Many in the past have doubted, as I have already observed, whether the number of the damned is so great as is generally supposed; and it appears that they believed in the existence of some intermediate state between eternal damnation and perfect bliss. But we have no need of these opinions, and it is enough to keep to the ideas accepted in the Church. In this connexion it is well to observe that this proposition of M. Bayle's is conceived in accordance with the principles of sufficient grace, given to all men, and sufficing them provided that they have good will. Although M. Bayle holds the opposite opinion, he wished (as he states in the margin) to avoid the terms that would not agree with a system of decrees subsequent to the prevision of contingent events.

114. VI. 'He foresaw from eternity all that which should happen, he ordered all things and placed them each one in its own place, and he guides and controls them continually, according to his pleasure. Thus nothing is done without his permission or against his will, and he can prevent, as seems good to him, as much and as often as seems good to him, all that does not please him, and in consequence sin, which is the thing in the world that most offends him and that he most detests; and he can produce in each human soul all the thoughts that he approves.' This thesis is also purely philosophic, that is, recognizable by the light of natural reason. It is opportune also, as one has dwelt in thesis II on *that which pleases*, to dwell here upon *that which seems good*, that is, upon that which God finds good to do. He can avoid or put away as 'seems good to him' all 'that does not please him'. Nevertheless it must be borne in mind that some objects of his aversion, such as [186]certain evils, and especially sin, which his antecedent will repelled, could only have been rejected by his consequent or decretory will, in so far as it was prompted by the rule of the best, which the All-wise must choose after having taken all into account. When one says 'that sin offends God most, and that he detests it most', these are human ways of speaking. God cannot, properly speaking, be *offended*, that is, injured, disturbed, disquieted or angered; and he *detests* nothing of that which exists, in the sense that to detest something is to look upon it with abomination and in a way that causes us disgust, that greatly pains and distresses us; for God cannot suffer either vexation, or grief or discomfort; he is always altogether content and at ease. Yet these expressions in their true sense are justified. The supreme goodness of God causes his antecedent will to repel all evil, but moral evil more than any other: it only admits evil at all for irresistible superior reasons, and with great correctives which repair its ill effects to good advantage. It is true also that God could produce in each human soul all the thoughts that he approves: but this would be to act by miracles, more than his most perfectly conceived plan admits.

115. VII. 'He offers grace to people that he knows are destined not to accept it, and so destined by this refusal to make themselves more criminal than they would be if he had not offered them that grace; he assures them that it is his ardent wish that they accept it, and he does not give them the grace which he knows they would accept.' It is true that these people become more criminal through their refusal than if one had offered them nothing, and that God knows this. Yet it is better to permit their crime than to act in a way which would render God himself blameworthy, and provide the criminals with some justification for the complaint that it was not possible for them

to do better, even though they had or might have wished it. God desires that they receive such grace from him as they are fit to receive, and that they accept it; and he desires to give them in particular that grace whose acceptance by them he foresees: but it is always by a will antecedent, detached or particular, which cannot always be carried out in the general plan of things. This thesis also is among the number of those which philosophy establishes no less than revelation, like three others of the seven that we have just stated here, the third, fourth and fifth being the only ones where revelation is necessary.

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116. Here now are the nineteen philosophic maxims which M. Bayle opposes to the seven theological propositions.

I. 'As the infinitely perfect Being finds in himself a glory and a bliss that can never either diminish or increase, his goodness alone has determined him to create this universe: neither the ambition to be praised, nor any interested motive of preserving or augmenting his bliss and his glory, has had any part therein.' This maxim is very good: praises of God do him no service, but they are of service to the men who praise him, and he desired their good. Nevertheless, when one says that *goodness* alone determined God to create this universe, it is well to add that his goodness prompted him *antecedently* to create and to produce all possible good; but that his wisdom made the choice and caused him to select the best *consequently*; and finally that his power gave him the means to carry out *actually* the great design which he had formed.

117. II. 'The goodness of the infinitely perfect Being is infinite, and would not be infinite if one could conceive of a goodness greater than this. This characteristic of infinity is proper also to all his other perfections, to love of virtue, hatred of vice, etc., they must be the greatest one can imagine. (See M. Jurieu in the first three sections of the *Judgement on Methods*, where he argues constantly upon this principle, as upon a primary notion. See also in Wittich, *De Providentia Dei*, n. 12, these words of St. Augustine, lib. I, *De Doctrina Christiana*, c. 7: "Cum cogitatur Deus, ita cogitatur, ut aliquid, quo nihil melius sit atque sublimius. Et paulo post: Nec quisquam inveniri potest, qui hoc Deum credat esse, quo melius aliquid est.")'

This maxim is altogether to my liking, and I draw from it this conclusion, that God does the very best possible: otherwise the exercise of his goodness would be restricted, and that would be restricting his *goodness* itself, if it did not prompt him to the best, if he were lacking in good will. Or again it would be restricting his *wisdom* and his *power*, if he lacked the knowledge necessary for discerning the best and for finding the means to obtain it, or if he lacked the strength necessary for employing these means. There is, however, ambiguity in the assertion that love of virtue and hatred of vice are infinite in God: if that were absolutely and unreservedly true, in practice there would be no vice in the world. But although each one of God's perfections is infinite in itself, it is exercised only in proportion to the object and as the nature of things prompts it. [188] Thus love of the best in the whole carries the day over all other individual inclinations or hatreds; it is the only impulse whose very exercise is absolutely infinite, nothing having power to prevent God from declaring himself for the best; and some vice being combined with the best possible plan, God permits it.

118. III. 'An infinite goodness having guided the Creator in the production of the world, all the characteristics of knowledge, skill, power and greatness that are displayed in his work are destined for the happiness of intelligent creatures. He wished to show forth his perfections only to the end that creatures of this kind should find their felicity in the knowledge, the admiration and the love of the Supreme Being.'

This maxim appears to me not sufficiently exact. I grant that the happiness of intelligent creatures is the principal part of God's design, for they are most like him; but nevertheless I do not see how one can prove that to be his sole aim. It is true that the realm of nature must serve the realm of grace: but, since all is connected in God's great design, we must believe that the realm of grace is also in some way adapted to that of nature, so that nature preserves the utmost order and beauty, to render the combination of the two the most perfect that can be. And there is no reason to suppose that God, for the sake of some lessening of moral evil, would reverse the whole order of nature. Each perfection or imperfection in the creature has its value, but there is none that has an infinite value. Thus the moral or physical good and evil of rational creatures does not infinitely exceed the good and evil which is simply metaphysical, namely that which lies in the perfection of the other creatures; and yet one would be bound to say this if the present maxim were strictly true. When God justified to the Prophet Jonah the pardon that he had granted to the inhabitants of Nineveh, he even touched upon the interest of the beasts who would have been involved in the ruin of this great city. No substance is absolutely contemptible or absolutely precious before God. And the abuse or the exaggerated extension of the present maxim appears to be in part the source of the difficulties that M. Bayle puts forward. It is certain that God sets greater store by a man than a lion; nevertheless it can hardly be said with certainty that God prefers a single man in all respects to the whole of lion-kind. Even

should that be so, it would by no means follow that the interest of a certain number of men would prevail over the [189]consideration of a general disorder diffused through an infinite number of creatures. This opinion would be a remnant of the old and somewhat discredited maxim, that all is made solely for man.

119. IV. 'The benefits he imparts to the creatures that are capable of felicity tend only to their happiness. He therefore does not permit that these should serve to make them unhappy, and, if the wrong use that they made of them were capable of destroying them, he would give them sure means of always using them well. Otherwise they would not be true benefits, and his goodness would be smaller than that we can conceive of in another benefactor. (I mean, in a Cause that united with its gifts the sure skill to make good use of them.)'

There already is the abuse or the ill effect of the preceding maxim. It is not strictly true (though it appear plausible) that the benefits God imparts to the creatures who are capable of felicity tend solely to their happiness. All is connected in Nature; and if a skilled artisan, an engineer, an architect, a wise politician often makes one and the same thing serve several ends, if he makes a double hit with a single throw, when that can be done conveniently, one may say that God, whose wisdom and power are perfect, does so always. That is husbanding the ground, the time, the place, the material, which make up as it were his outlay. Thus God has more than one purpose in his projects. The felicity of all rational creatures is one of the aims he has in view; but it is not his whole aim, nor even his final aim. Therefore it happens that the unhappiness of some of these creatures may come about *by concomitance*, and as a result of other greater goods: this I have already explained, and M. Bayle has to some extent acknowledged it. The goods as such, considered in themselves, are the object of the antecedent will of God. God will produce as much reason and knowledge in the universe as his plan can admit. One can conceive of a mean between an antecedent will altogether pure and primitive, and a consequent and final will. The *primitive antecedent will* has as its object each good and each evil in itself, detached from all combination, and tends to advance the good and prevent the evil. The *mediate will* relates to combinations, as when one attaches a good to an evil: then the will will have some tendency towards this combination when the good exceeds the evil therein. But the *final and decisive will* results from consideration of all the goods and all the evils that enter into our deliberation, it results [190]from a total combination. This shows that a mediate will, although it may in a sense pass as consequent in relation to a pure and primitive antecedent will, must be considered antecedent in relation to the final and decretory will. God gives reason to the human race; misfortunes arise thence by concomitance. His pure antecedent will tends towards giving reason, as a great good, and preventing the evils in question. But when it is a question of the evils that accompany this gift which God has made to us of reason, the compound, made up of the combination of reason and of these evils, will be the object of a mediate will of God, which will tend towards producing or preventing this compound, according as the good or the evil prevails therein. But even though it should prove that reason did more harm than good to men (which, however, I do not admit), whereupon the mediate will of God would discard it with all its concomitants, it might still be the case that it was more in accordance with the perfection of the universe to give reason to men, notwithstanding all the evil consequences which it might have with reference to them. Consequently, the final will or the decree of God, resulting from all the considerations he can have, would be to give it to them. And, far from being subject to blame for this, he would be blameworthy if he did not so. Thus the evil, or the mixture of goods and evils wherein the evil prevails, happens only *by concomitance*, because it is connected with greater goods that are outside this mixture. This mixture, therefore, or this compound, is not to be conceived as a grace or as a gift from God to us; but the good that is found mingled therein will nevertheless be good. Such is God's gift of reason to those who make ill use thereof. It is always a good in itself; but the combination of this good with the evils that proceed from its abuse is not a good with regard to those who in consequence thereof become unhappy. Yet it comes to be by concomitance, because it serves a greater good in relation to the universe. And it is doubtless that which prompted God to give reason to those who have made it an instrument of their unhappiness. Or, to put it more precisely, in accordance with my system God, having found among the possible beings some rational creatures who misuse their reason, gave existence to those who are included in the best possible plan of the universe. Thus nothing prevents us from admitting that God grants goods which turn into evil by the fault of men, this often happening to men in just punishment of the misuse they had made of God's [191]grace. Aloysius Novarinus wrote a book *De Occultis Dei Beneficiis*: one could write one *De Occultis Dei Poenis*. This saying of Claudian would be in place here with regard to some persons:

*Tolluntur in altum, Ut lapsu graviore ruant.*

But to say that God should not give a good which he knows an evil will will abuse, when the general plan of things demands that he give it; or again to say that he should give certain means for preventing it, contrary to this same general order: that is to wish (as I have observed already) that God himself become blameworthy in order to prevent man from being so. To object, as people do here, that the goodness of God would be smaller than that of another benefactor who would give a more useful gift, is to overlook the fact that the goodness of a benefactor is not measured by a single benefit. It may well be that a gift from a private person is greater than one from a prince,

but the gifts of this private person all taken together will be much inferior to the prince's gifts all together. Thus one can esteem fittingly the good things done by God only when one considers their whole extent by relating them to the entire universe. Moreover, one may say that the gifts given in the expectation that they will harm are the gifts of an enemy, 'εχθρων δωρα αδωρα,

*Hostibus eveniant talia dona meis.*

But that applies to when there is malice or guilt in him who gives them, as there was in that Eutrapelus of whom Horace speaks, who did good to people in order to give them the means of destroying themselves. His design was evil, but God's design cannot be better than it is. Must God spoil his system, must there be less beauty, perfection and reason in the universe, because there are people who misuse reason? The common sayings are in place here: *Abusus non tollit usum*; there is *scandalum datum et scandalum acceptum*.

120. V. 'A maleficent being is very capable of heaping magnificent gifts upon his enemies, when he knows that they will make thereof a use that will destroy them. It therefore does not beseem the infinitely good Being to give to creatures a free will, whereof, as he knows for certain, they would make a use that would render them unhappy. Therefore if he gives them free will he combines with it the art of using it always opportunely, and permits not that [192]they neglect the practice of this art in any conjuncture; and if there were no sure means of determining the good use of this free will, he would rather take from them this faculty, than allow it to be the cause of their unhappiness. That is the more manifest, as free will is a grace which he has given them of his own choice and without their asking for it; so that he would be more answerable for the unhappiness it would bring upon them than if he had only granted it in response to their importunate prayers.'

What was said at the end of the remark on the preceding maxim ought to be repeated here, and is sufficient to counter the present maxim. Moreover, the author is still presupposing that false maxim advanced as the third, stating that the happiness of rational creatures is the sole aim of God. If that were so, perhaps neither sin nor unhappiness would ever occur, even by concomitance. God would have chosen a sequence of possibles where all these evils would be excluded. But God would fail in what is due to the universe, that is, in what he owes to himself. If there were only spirits they would be without the required connexion, without the order of time and place. This order demands matter, movement and its laws; to adjust these to spirits in the best possible way means to return to our world. When one looks at things only in the mass, one imagines to be practicable a thousand things that cannot properly take place. To wish that God should not give free will to rational creatures is to wish that there be none of these creatures; and to wish that God should prevent them from misusing it is to wish that there be none but these creatures alone, together with what was made for them only. If God had none but these creatures in view, he would doubtless prevent them from destroying themselves. One may say in a sense, however, that God has given to these creatures the art of always making good use of their free will, for the natural light of reason is this art. But it would be necessary always to have the will to do good, and often creatures lack the means of giving themselves the will they ought to have; often they even lack the will to use those means which indirectly give a good will. Of this I have already spoken more than once. This fault must be admitted, and one must even acknowledge that God would perhaps have been able to exempt creatures from that fault, since there is nothing to prevent, so it seems, the existence of some whose nature it would be always to have good will. But I reply that it is not necessary, and that it was not feasible [193]for all rational creatures to have so great a perfection, and such as would bring them so close to the Divinity. It may even be that that can only be made possible by a special divine grace. But in this case, would it be proper for God to grant it to all, that is, always to act miraculously in respect of all rational creatures? Nothing would be less rational than these perpetual miracles. There are degrees among creatures: the general order requires it. And it appears quite consistent with the order of divine government that the great privilege of strengthening in the good should be granted more easily to those who had a good will when they were in a more imperfect state, in the state of struggle and of pilgrimage, *in Ecclesia militante, in statu viatorum*. The good angels themselves were not created incapable of sin. Nevertheless I would not dare to assert that there are no blessed creatures born, or such as are sinless and holy by their nature. There are perhaps people who give this privilege to the Blessed Virgin, since, moreover, the Roman Church to-day places her above the angels. But it suffices us that the universe is very great and very varied: to wish to limit it is to have little knowledge thereof. 'But', M. Bayle goes on, 'God has given free will to creatures capable of sinning, without their having asked him for this grace. And he who gave such a gift would be more answerable for the unhappiness that it brought upon those who made use of it, than if he had granted it only in response to their importunate prayers.' But importunity in prayers makes no difference to God; he knows better than we what we need, and he only grants what serves the interest of the whole. It seems that M. Bayle here makes free will consist in the faculty for sinning; yet he acknowledges elsewhere that God and the Saints are free, without having this faculty. However that may be, I have already shown fully that God, doing what his wisdom and his goodness combined ordain, is not answerable for the evil that he permits. Even men, when they do their duty, are not answerable for consequences, whether they foresee them or not.

121. VI. 'It is as sure a means of taking a man's life to give him a silk cord that one knows certainly he will make use of freely to strangle himself, as to plant a few dagger thrusts in his body. One desires his death not less when one makes use of the first way, than when one employs the second: it even seems as though one desires it with a more malicious intention, since one tends to leave to him the whole trouble and the whole blame of his destruction.'

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Those who write treatises on Duties (*De Officiis*) as, for instance, Cicero, St. Ambrose, Grotius, Opalenius, Sharrok, Rachelius, Pufendorf, as well as the Casuists, teach that there are cases where one is not obliged to return to its owner a thing deposited: for example, one will not give back a dagger when one knows that he who has deposited it is about to stab someone. Let us pretend that I have in my hands the fatal draught that Meleager's mother will make use of to kill him; the magic javelin that Cephalus will unwittingly employ to kill his Procris; the horses of Theseus that will tear to pieces Hippolytus, his son: these things are demanded back from me, and I am right in refusing them, knowing the use that will be made of them. But how will it be if a competent judge orders me to restore them, when I cannot prove to him what I know of the evil consequences that restitution will have, Apollo perchance having given to me, as to Cassandra, the gift of prophecy under the condition that I shall not be believed? I should then be compelled to make restitution, having no alternative other than my own destruction: thus I cannot escape from contributing towards the evil. Another comparison: Jupiter promises Semele, the Sun Phaeton, Cupid Psyche to grant whatever favour the other shall ask. They swear by the Styx,

*Di cuius jurare timent et fallere Numen.*

One would gladly stop, but too late, the request half heard,

*Voluit Deus ora loquentis*

*Opprimere; exierat jam vox properata sub auras.*

One would gladly draw back after the request was made, making vain remonstrances; but they press you, they say to you: 'Do you make oaths that you will not keep?' The law of the Styx is inviolable, one must needs submit to it; if one has erred in making the oath, one would err more in not keeping it; the promise must be fulfilled, however harmful it may be to him who exacts it. It would be ruinous to you if you did not fulfil it. It seems as though the moral of these fables implies that a supreme necessity may constrain one to comply with evil. God, in truth, knows no other judge that can compel him to give what may turn to evil, he is not like Jupiter who fears the Styx. But his own wisdom is the greatest judge that he can find, there is no appeal from its judgements: they are the decrees of destiny. The eternal verities, objects of [195]his wisdom, are more inviolable than the Styx. These laws and this judge do not constrain: they are stronger, for they persuade. Wisdom only shows God the best possible exercise of his goodness: after that, the evil that occurs is an inevitable result of the best. I will add something stronger: To permit the evil, as God permits it, is the greatest goodness.

*Si mala sustulerat, non erat ille bonus.*

One would need to have a bent towards perversity to say after this that it is more malicious to leave to someone the whole trouble and the whole blame of his destruction. When God does leave it to a man, it has belonged to him since before his existence; it was already in the idea of him as still merely possible, before the decree of God which makes him to exist. Can one, then, leave it or give it to another? There is the whole matter.

122. VII. 'A true benefactor gives promptly, and does not wait to give until those he loves have suffered long miseries from the privation of what he could have imparted to them at first very easily, and without causing any inconvenience to himself. If the limitation of his forces does not permit him to do good without inflicting pain or some other inconvenience, he acquiesces in this, but only regretfully, and he never employs this way of rendering service when he can render it without mingling any kind of evil in his favours. If the profit one could derive from the evils he inflicted could spring as easily from an unalloyed good as from those evils, he would take the straight road of unalloyed good, and not the indirect road that would lead from the evil to the good. If he showers riches and honours, it is not to the end that those who have enjoyed them, when they come to lose them, should be all the more deeply afflicted in proportion to their previous experience of pleasure, and that thus they should become more unhappy than the persons who have always been deprived of these advantages. A malicious being would shower good things at such a price upon the people for whom he had the most hatred.'

(Compare this passage of Aristotle, *Rhetor.*, 1. 2, c. 23, p. m. 446: 'οιον ει δοιη αν τις τινη 'ινα αφελομενος λειψησι· 'οθεν και τουτ' ειρηται,

πολλοις 'ο δαιμων ου κατ' ευνοιαν φερων

Μεγαλα διδωσιν ευτυχηματ', αλλ' 'ινα

τας συμφορας λαβωσιν επιφανεστερας.

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Id est: Veluti si quis alicui aliquid det, ut (postea) hoc (ipsi) erepto (ipsum) afficiat dolore. Unde etiam illud est dictum:

*Bona magna multis non amicus dat Deus,*

*Insigniore ut rursus his privet malo.)*

All these objections depend almost on the same sophism; they change and mutilate the fact, they only half record things: God has care for men, he loves the human race, he wishes it well, nothing so true. Yet he allows men to fall, he often allows them to perish, he gives them goods that tend towards their destruction; and when he makes someone happy, it is after many sufferings: where is his affection, where is his goodness or again where is his power? Vain objections, which suppress the main point, which ignore the fact that it is of God one speaks. It is as though one were speaking of a mother, a guardian, a tutor, whose well-nigh only care is concerned with the upbringing, the preservation, the happiness of the person in question, and who neglect their duty. God takes care of the universe, he neglects nothing, he chooses what is best on the whole. If in spite of all that someone is wicked and unhappy, it behoved him to be so. God (so they say) could have given happiness to all, he could have given it promptly and easily, and without causing himself any inconvenience, for he can do all. But should he? Since he does not so, it is a sign that he had to act altogether differently. If we infer from this either that God only regretfully, and owing to lack of power, fails to make men happy and to give the good first of all and without admixture of evil, or else that he lacks the good will to give it unreservedly and for good and all, then we are comparing our true God with the God of Herodotus, full of envy, or with the demon of the poet whose iambs Aristotle quotes, and I have just translated into Latin, who gives good things in order that he may cause more affliction by taking them away. That would be trifling with God in perpetual anthropomorphisms, representing him as a man who must give himself up completely to one particular business, whose goodness must be chiefly exercised upon those objects alone which are known to us, and who lacks either aptitude or good will. God is not lacking therein, he could do the good that we would desire; he even wishes it, taking it separately, but he must not do it in preference to other greater goods which are opposed to it. Moreover, one has no cause to complain of the fact that usually one [197]attains salvation only through many sufferings, and by bearing the cross of Jesus Christ. These evils serve to make the elect imitators of their master, and to increase their happiness.

123. VIII. 'The greatest and the most substantial glory that he who is the master of others can gain is to maintain amongst them virtue, order, peace, contentment of mind. The glory that he would derive from their unhappiness can be nothing but a false glory.'

If we knew the city of God just as it is, we should see that it is the most perfect state which can be devised; that virtue and happiness reign there, as far as is possible, in accordance with the laws of the best; that sin and unhappiness (whose entire exclusion from the nature of things reasons of the supreme order did not permit), are well-nigh nothing there in comparison with the good, and even are of service for greater good. Now since these evils were to exist, there must needs be some appointed to be subject to them, and we are those people. If it were others, would there not be the same appearance of evil? Or rather, would not these others be those known as We? When God derives some glory from the evil through having made it serve a greater good, it was proper that he should derive that glory. It is not therefore a false glory, as would be that of a prince who overthrew his state in order to have the honour of setting it up again.

124. IX. 'The way whereby that master can give proof of greatest love for virtue is to cause it, if he can, to be always practised without any mixture of vice. If it is easy for him to procure for his subjects this advantage, and nevertheless he permits vice to raise its head, save that he punishes it finally after having long tolerated it, his affection for virtue is not the greatest one can conceive; it is therefore not infinite.'

I am not yet half way through the nineteen maxims, and already I am weary of refuting, and making the same answer always. M. Bayle multiplies unnecessarily his so-called maxims in opposition to my dogmas. If things connected together may be separated, the parts from their whole, the human kind from the universe, God's attributes the one from the other, power from wisdom, it may be said that God *can cause* virtue to be in the world without any mixture of vice, and even that he can do so *easily*. But, since he has permitted vice, it must be that that order of the universe which was found preferable to every other plan required it. One must believe that it is not permitted to do otherwise, since [198]it is not possible to do better. It is a hypothetical necessity, a moral necessity, which, far from being contrary to freedom, is the effect of its choice. *Quae rationi contraria sunt, ea nec fieri a Sapiente posse credendum est*. The objection is made here, that God's affection for virtue is therefore not the greatest which can be conceived, that it is not *infinite*. To that an answer has already been given on the second maxim, in the assertion that God's affection for any created thing whatsoever is proportionate to the value of the thing. Virtue is the noblest quality of created things, but it is not the only good quality of creatures. There are innumerable others which attract the inclination of God: from all these inclinations there results the most possible good, and it turns out that if there were only virtue, if there were only rational creatures, there would be less good. Midas proved to be less rich when he had only gold. And besides, wisdom must vary. To multiply one and the same thing only would be superfluity, and poverty too. To have a thousand well-bound Vergils in one's library, always to sing the airs from the opera of Cadmus and Hermione, to break all the china in order only to have cups of gold, to have only diamond buttons, to eat nothing but partridges, to drink only Hungarian or Shiraz wine—would one call that reason? Nature had need of animals, plants, inanimate bodies; there are in these creatures, devoid of reason, marvels which serve for exercise of the reason. What would an intelligent creature do if there were no unintelligent things? What would it think of, if there were neither movement, nor matter, nor sense? If it had only distinct thoughts it would be a God, its wisdom would be without bounds: that is one of the results of my meditations. As soon as there is a mixture of confused thoughts, there is sense, there is matter. For these confused thoughts come from the relation of all things one to the other by way of duration and extent. Thus it is that in my philosophy there is no rational creature without some organic body, and there is no created spirit entirely detached from matter. But these organic bodies vary no less in perfection than the spirits to which they belong. Therefore, since God's wisdom must have a world of bodies, a world of substances capable of perception and incapable of reason; since, in short, it was necessary to choose from all the things possible what produced the best effect together, and since vice entered in by this door, God would not have been altogether good, altogether wise if he had excluded it.

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125. X. 'The way to evince the greatest hatred for vice is not indeed to allow it to prevail for a long time and then chastise it, but to crush it before its birth, that is, prevent it from showing itself anywhere. A king, for example, who put his finances in such good order that no malversation was ever committed, would thus display more hatred for the wrong done by factionaries than if, after having suffered them to batten on the blood of the people, he had them hanged.'

It is always the same song, it is anthropomorphism pure and simple. A king should generally have nothing so much at heart as to keep his subjects free from oppression. One of his greatest interests is to bring good order into his finances. Nevertheless there are times when he is obliged to tolerate vice and disorders. He has a great war on his hands, he is in a state of exhaustion, he has no choice of generals, it is necessary to humour those he has, those possessed of great authority with the soldiers: a Braccio, a Sforza, a Wallenstein. He lacks money for the most pressing needs, it is necessary to turn to great financiers, who have an established credit, and he must at the same time connive at their malversations. It is true that this unfortunate necessity arises most often from previous errors. It is not the same with God: he has need of no man, he commits no error, he always does the best. One cannot even wish that things may go better, when one understands them: and it would be a vice in the Author of things if he wished to change anything whatsoever in them, if he wished to exclude the vice that was found there. Is this State with perfect government, where good is willed and performed as far as it is possible, where evil even serves the greatest good, comparable with the State of a prince whose affairs are in ruin and who escapes as best he can? Or with that of a prince who encourages oppression in order to punish it, and who delights to see the little men with begging bowls and the great on scaffolds?

126. XI. 'A ruler devoted to the interests of virtue, and to the good of his subjects, takes the utmost care to ensure that they never disobey his laws; and if he must needs chastise them for their disobedience, he sees to it that the penalty cures them of the inclination to evil, and restores in their soul a strong and constant tendency towards good: so far is he from any desire that the penalty for the error should incline them more and more towards evil.'

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To make men better, God does all that is due, and even all that can be done on his side without detriment to what is due. The most usual aim of punishment is amendment; but it is not the sole aim, nor that which God always intends. I have said a word on that above. Original sin, which disposes men towards evil, is not merely a penalty for the first sin; it is a natural consequence thereof. On that too a word has been said, in the course of an observation on the fourth theological proposition. It is like drunkenness, which is a penalty for excess in drinking and is at the same time a natural consequence that easily leads to new sins.

127. XII. 'To permit the evil that one could prevent is not to care whether it be committed or not, or is even to wish that it be committed.'

By no means. How many times do men permit evils which they could prevent if they turned all their efforts in that direction? But other more important cares prevent them from doing so. One will rarely resolve upon adjusting irregularities in the coinage while one is involved in a great war. And the action of an English Parliament in this direction a little before the Peace of Ryswyck will be rather praised than imitated. Can one conclude from this that the State has no anxiety about this irregularity, or even that it desires it? God has a far stronger reason, and one far more worthy of him, for tolerating evils. Not only does he derive from them greater goods, but he finds them connected with the greatest goods of all those that are possible: so that it would be a fault not to permit them.

128. XIII. 'It is a very great fault in those who govern, if they do not care whether there be disorder in their States or not. The fault is still greater if they wish and even desire disorder there. If by hidden and indirect, but infallible, ways they stirred up a sedition in their States to bring them to the brink of ruin, in order to gain for themselves the glory of showing that they have the courage and the prudence necessary for saving a great kingdom on the point of perishing, they would be most deserving of condemnation. But if they stirred up this sedition because there were no other means than that, of averting the total ruin of their subjects and of strengthening on new foundations, and for several centuries, the happiness of nations, one must needs lament the unfortunate necessity (see above, pp. 146, 147, what has been said of the [201]force of necessity) to which they were reduced, and praise them for the use that they made thereof.'

This maxim, with divers others set forth here, is not applicable to the government of God. Not to mention the fact that it is only the disorders of a very small part of his kingdom which are brought up in objection, it is untrue that he has no anxiety about evils, that he desires them, that he brings them into being, to have the glory of allaying them. God wills order and good; but it happens sometimes that what is disorder in the part is order in the whole. I have already stated this legal axiom: *Incivile est nisi tota lege inspecta judicare*. The permission of evils comes from a kind of moral necessity: God is constrained to this by his wisdom and by his goodness; *this necessity is happy*, whereas that of the prince spoken of in the maxim is *unhappy*. His State is one of the most corrupt; and the government of God is the best State possible.

129. XIV. 'The permission of a certain evil is only excusable when one cannot remedy it without introducing a greater evil; but it cannot be excusable in those who have in hand a remedy more efficacious against this evil, and against all the other evils that could spring from the suppression of this one.'

The maxim is true, but it cannot be brought forward against the government of God. Supreme reason constrains him to permit the evil. If God chose what would not be the best absolutely and in all, that would be a greater evil than all the individual evils which he could prevent by this means. This wrong choice would destroy his wisdom and his goodness.

130. XV. 'The Being infinitely powerful, Creator of matter and of spirits, makes whatever he wills of this matter and these spirits. There is no situation or shape that he cannot communicate to spirits. If he then permitted a physical or a moral evil, this would not be for the reason that otherwise some other still greater physical or moral evil would be altogether inevitable. None of those reasons for the mixture of good and evil which are founded on the limitation of the forces of benefactors can apply to him.'

It is true that God makes of matter and of spirits whatever he wills; but he is like a good sculptor, who will make from his block of marble only that which he judges to be the best, and who judges well. God makes of matter the most excellent of all possible machines; he makes of spirits the most excellent of all governments conceivable; and over and above all that, he establishes for [202]their union the most perfect of all harmonies, according to the system I have proposed. Now since physical evil and moral evil occur in this perfect work, one must conclude (contrary to M. Bayle's assurance here) that *otherwise a still greater evil would have been altogether inevitable*. This great evil would be that God would have chosen ill if he had chosen otherwise than he has chosen. It is true that God is infinitely powerful; but his power is indeterminate, goodness and wisdom combined determine him to produce the best. M. Bayle makes elsewhere an objection which is peculiar to him, which he derives from the

opinions of the modern Cartesians. They say that God could have given to souls what thoughts he would, without making them depend upon any relation to the body: by this means souls would be spared a great number of evils which only spring from derangement of the body. More will be said of this later; now it is sufficient to bear in mind that God cannot establish a system ill-connected and full of dissonances. It is to some extent the nature of souls to represent bodies.

131. XVI. 'One is just as much the cause of an event when one brings it about in moral ways, as when one brings it about in physical ways. A Minister of State, who, without going out of his study, and simply by utilizing the passions of the leaders of a faction, overthrew all their plots, would thus be bringing about the ruin of this faction, no less than if he destroyed it by a surprise attack.'

I have nothing to say against this maxim. Evil is always attributed to moral causes, and not always to physical causes. Here I observe simply that if I could not prevent the sin of others except by committing a sin myself, I should be justified in permitting it, and I should not be accessory thereto, or its moral cause. In God, every fault would represent a sin; it would be even more than sin, for it would destroy Divinity. And it would be a great fault in him not to choose the best. I have said so many times. He would then prevent sin by something worse than all sins.

132. XVII. 'It is all the same whether one employ a necessary cause, or employ a free cause while choosing the moments when one knows it to be determined. If I imagine that gunpowder has the power to ignite or not to ignite when fire touches it, and if I know for certain that it will be disposed to ignite at eight o'clock in the morning, I shall be just as much the cause of its effects if I apply the fire to it at that hour, as I should be in assuming, as is [203]the case, that it is a necessary cause. For where I am concerned it would no longer be a free cause. I should be catching it at the moment when I knew it to be necessitated by its own choice. It is impossible for a being to be free or indifferent with regard to that to which it is already determined, and at the time when it is determined thereto. All that which exists exists of necessity while it exists. Το ειναι το ον 'οταν ηι, και το μη ειναι 'οταν μη ηι, αναγκη. "Necesse est id quod est, quando est, esse; et id quod non est, quando non est, non esse": Arist., *De Interpret.*, cap. 9. The Nominalists have adopted this maxim of Aristotle. Scotus and sundry other Schoolmen appear to reject it, but fundamentally their distinctions come to the same thing. See the Jesuits of Coimbra on this passage from Aristotle, p. 380 *et seq.*')

This maxim may pass also; I would wish only to change something in the phraseology. I would not take 'free' and 'indifferent' for one and the same thing, and would not place 'free' and 'determined' in antithesis. One is never altogether indifferent with an indifference of equipoise; one is always more inclined and consequently more determined on one side than on another: but one is never necessitated to the choice that one makes. I mean here a *necessity* absolute and metaphysical; for it must be admitted that God, that wisdom, is prompted to the best by a *moral* necessity. It must be admitted also that one is necessitated to the choice by a hypothetical necessity, when one actually makes the choice; and even before one is necessitated thereto by the very truth of the futuration, since one will do it. These hypothetical necessities do no harm. I have spoken sufficiently on this point already.

133. XVIII. 'When a whole great people has become guilty of rebellion, it is not showing clemency to pardon the hundred thousandth part, and to kill all the rest, not excepting even babes and sucklings.'

It seems to be assumed here that there are a hundred thousand times more damned than saved, and that children dying unbaptized are included among the former. Both these points are disputed, and especially the damnation of these children. I have spoken of this above. M. Bayle urges the same objection elsewhere (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 178, p. 1223): 'We see clearly', he says, 'that the Sovereign who wishes to exercise both justice and clemency when a city has revolted must be content with the punishment of a small number of [204]mutineers, and pardon all the rest. For if the number of those who are chastised is as a thousand to one, in comparison with those whom he freely pardons, he cannot be accounted mild, but, on the contrary, cruel. He would assuredly be accounted an abominable tyrant if he chose punishments of long duration, and if he eschewed bloodshed only because he was convinced that men would prefer death to a miserable life; and if, finally, the desire to take revenge were more responsible for his severities than the desire to turn to the service of the common weal the penalty that he would inflict on almost all the rebels. Criminals who are executed are considered to expiate their crimes so completely by the loss of their life, that the public requires nothing more, and is indignant when executioners are clumsy. These would be stoned if they were known deliberately to give repeated strokes of the axe; and the judges who are present at the execution would not be immune from danger if they were thought to take pleasure in this evil sport of the executioners, and to have surreptitiously urged them to practise it.' (Note that this is not to be understood as strictly universal. There are cases where the people approve of the slow killing of certain criminals, as when Francis I thus put to death some persons accused of heresy after

the notorious Placards of 1534. No pity was shown to Ravaillac, who was tortured in divers horrible ways. See the *French Mercury*, vol. I, fol. m., 455 *et seq.* See also Pierre Matthieu in his *History of the Death of Henry IV*; and do not forget what he says on page m. 99 concerning the discussion by the judges with regard to the torture of this parricide.) 'Finally it is an exceptionally notorious fact that Rulers who should be guided by St. Paul, I mean who should condemn to the extreme penalty all those whom he condemns to eternal death, would be accounted enemies of the human kind and destroyers of their communities. It is incontestable that their laws, far from being fitted, in accordance with the aim of legislators, to uphold society, would be its complete ruin. (Apply here these words of Pliny the Younger, *Epist.*, 22, lib. 8: *Mandemus memoriae quod vir mitissimus, et ob hoc quoque maximus, Thrasea crebro dicere solebat, Qui vitia odit, homines odit.*)' He adds that it was said of the laws of Draco, an Athenian lawgiver, that they had not been written with ink, but with blood, because they punished all sins with the extreme penalty, and because damnation is a penalty even worse than death. But it must be borne in mind that [205]damnation is a consequence of sin. Thus I once answered a friend, who raised as an objection the disproportion existing between an eternal punishment and a limited crime, that there is no injustice when the continuation of the punishment is only a result of the continuation of the sin. I will speak further on this point later. As for the number of the damned, even though it should be incomparably greater among men than the number of the saved, that would not preclude the possibility that in the universe the happy creatures infinitely outnumber those who are unhappy. Such examples as that of a prince who punishes only the leaders of rebels or of a general who has a regiment decimated, are of no importance here. Self-interest compels the prince and the general to pardon the guilty, even though they should remain wicked. God only pardons those who become better: he can distinguish them; and this severity is more consistent with perfect justice. But if anyone asks why God gives not to all the grace of conversion, the question is of a different nature, having no relation to the present maxim. I have already answered it in a sense, not in order to find God's reasons, but to show that he cannot lack such, and that there are no opposing reasons of any validity. Moreover, we know that sometimes whole cities are destroyed and the inhabitants put to the sword, to inspire terror in the rest. That may serve to shorten a great war or a rebellion, and would mean a saving of blood through the shedding of it: there is no decimation there. We cannot assert, indeed, that the wicked of our globe are punished so severely in order to intimidate the inhabitants of the other globes and to make them better. Yet an abundance of reasons in the universal harmony which are unknown to us, because we know not sufficiently the extent of the city of God, nor the form of the general republic of spirits, nor even the whole architecture of bodies, may produce the same effect.

134. XIX. 'Those physicians who chose, among many remedies capable of curing a sick man, whereof divers were such as they well knew he would take with enjoyment, precisely that one which they knew he would refuse to take, would vainly urge and pray him not to refuse it; we should still have just cause for thinking that they had no desire to cure him: for if they wished to do so, they would choose for him among those good medicines one which they knew he would willingly swallow. If, moreover, they knew that rejection of the remedy they offered him would augment his [206]sickness to the point of making it fatal, one could not help saying that, despite all their exhortations, they must certainly be desirous of the sick man's death.'

God wishes to save all men: that means that he would save them if men themselves did not prevent it, and did not refuse to receive his grace; and he is not bound or prompted by reason always to overcome their evil will. He does so sometimes nevertheless, when superior reasons allow of it, and when his consequent and decretory will, which results from all his reasons, makes him resolve upon the election of a certain number of men. He gives aids to all for their conversion and for perseverance, and these aids suffice in those who have good will, but they do not always suffice to give good will. Men obtain this good will either through particular aids or through circumstances which cause the success of the general aids. God cannot refrain from offering other remedies which he knows men will reject, bringing upon themselves all the greater guilt: but shall one wish that God be unjust in order that man may be less criminal? Moreover, the grace that does not serve the one may serve the other, and indeed always serves the totality of God's plan, which is the best possible in conception. Shall God not give the rain, because there are low-lying places which will be thereby incommoded? Shall the sun not shine as much as it should for the world in general, because there are places which will be too much dried up in consequence? In short, all these comparisons, spoken of in these maxims that M. Bayle has just given, of a physician, a benefactor, a minister of State, a prince, are exceedingly lame, because it is well known what their duties are and what can and ought to be the object of their cares: they have scarce more than the one affair, and they often fail therein through negligence or malice. God's object has in it something infinite, his cares embrace the universe: what we know thereof is almost nothing, and we desire to gauge his wisdom and his goodness by our knowledge. What temerity, or rather what absurdity! The objections are on false assumptions; it is senseless to pass judgement on the point of law when one does not know the matter of fact. To say with St. Paul, *O altitudo divitiarum et sapientiae*, is not renouncing reason, it is rather employing the reasons that we know, for they teach us that immensity of God whereof the Apostle speaks. But therein we confess our ignorance of the facts, and we acknowledge, moreover, before we see it, that [207]God does all the best possible, in accordance with the infinite wisdom which guides his actions. It is true that we have already before our eyes proofs and tests of this, when we

see something entire, some whole complete in itself, and isolated, so to speak, among the works of God. Such a whole, shaped as it were by the hand of God, is a plant, an animal, a man. We cannot wonder enough at the beauty and the contrivance of its structure. But when we see some broken bone, some piece of animal's flesh, some sprig of a plant, there appears to be nothing but confusion, unless an excellent anatomist observe it: and even he would recognize nothing therein if he had not before seen like pieces attached to their whole. It is the same with the government of God: that which we have been able to see hitherto is not a large enough piece for recognition of the beauty and the order of the whole. Thus the very nature of things implies that this order in the Divine City, which we see not yet here on earth, should be an object of our faith, of our hope, of our confidence in God. If there are any who think otherwise, so much the worse for them, they are malcontents in the State of the greatest and the best of all monarchs; and they are wrong not to take advantage of the examples he has given them of his wisdom and his infinite goodness, whereby he reveals himself as being not only wonderful, but also worthy of love beyond all things.

135. I hope it will be found that nothing of what is comprised in the nineteen maxims of M. Bayle, which we have just considered, has been left without a necessary answer. It is likely that, having often before meditated on this subject, he will have put there all his strongest convictions touching the moral cause of moral evil. There are, however, still sundry passages here and there in his works which it will be well not to pass over in silence. Very often he exaggerates the difficulty which he assumes with regard to freeing God from the imputation of sin. He observes (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 161, p. 1024) that Molina, if he reconciled free will with foreknowledge, did not reconcile the goodness and the holiness of God with sin. He praises the sincerity of those who bluntly declare (as he claims Piscator did) that everything is to be traced back to the will of God, and who maintain that God could not but be just, even though he were the author of sin, even though he condemned innocence. And on the other side, or in other passages, he seems to show more approval [208]of the opinions of those who preserve God's goodness at the expense of his greatness, as Plutarch does in his book against the Stoics. 'It was more reasonable', he says, 'to say' (with the Epicureans) 'that innumerable parts' (or atoms flying about at haphazard through an infinite space) 'by their force prevailed over the weakness of Jupiter and, in spite of him and against his nature and will, did many bad and irrational things, than to agree that there is neither confusion nor wickedness but he is the author thereof.' What may be said for both these parties, Stoics and Epicureans, appears to have led M. Bayle to the *επὲχειν* of the Pyrrhonians, the suspension of his judgement in respect of reason, so long as faith is set apart; and to that he professes sincere submission.

136. Pursuing his arguments, however, he has gone as far as attempting almost to revive and reinforce those of the disciples of Manes, a Persian heretic of the third century after Christ, or of a certain Paul, chief of the Manichaeans in Armenia in the seventh century, from whom they were named Paulicians. All these heretics renewed what an ancient philosopher of Upper Asia, known under the name of Zoroaster, had taught, so it is said, of two intelligent principles of all things, the one good, the other bad, a dogma that had perhaps come from the Indians. Among them numbers of people still cling to their error, one that is exceedingly prone to overtake human ignorance and superstition, since very many barbarous peoples, even in America, have been deluded by it, without having had need of philosophy. The Slavs (according to Helmold) had their Zernebog or black God. The Greeks and Romans, wise as they seem to be, had a Vejovis or Anti-Jupiter, otherwise called Pluto, and numerous other maleficent divinities. The Goddess Nemesis took pleasure in abasing those who were too fortunate; and Herodotus in some passages hints at his belief that all Divinity is envious; which, however, is not in harmony with the doctrine of the two principles.

137. Plutarch, in his treatise *On Isis and Osiris*, knows of no writer more ancient than Zoroaster the magician, as he calls him, that is likely to have taught the two principles. Trogus or Justin makes him a King of the Bactrians, who was conquered by Ninus or Semiramis; he attributes to him the knowledge of astronomy and the invention of magic. But this magic was apparently the religion of the fire-worshippers: and it appears that he looked upon [209]light and heat as the good principle, while he added the evil, that is to say, opacity, darkness, cold. Pliny cites the testimony of a certain Hermippus, an interpreter of Zoroaster's books, according to whom Zoroaster was a disciple in the art of magic to one named Azonacus; unless indeed this be a corruption of Oromases, of whom I shall speak presently, and whom Plato in the *Alcibiades* names as the father of Zoroaster. Modern Orientals give the name Zerdust to him whom the Greeks named Zoroaster; he is regarded as corresponding to Mercury, because with some nations Wednesday (*mercredi*) takes its name from him. It is difficult to disentangle the story of Zoroaster and know exactly when he lived. Suidas puts him five hundred years before the taking of Troy. Some Ancients cited by Pliny and Plutarch took it to be ten times as far back. But Xanthus the Lydian (in the preface to Diogenes Laertius) put him only six hundred years before the expedition of Xerxes. Plato declares in the same passage, as M. Bayle observes, that the magic of Zoroaster was nothing but the study of religion. Mr. Hyde in his book on the religion of the ancient Persians tries to justify this magic, and to clear it not only of the crime of impiety but also of idolatry. Fire-worship prevailed among the Persians and the Chaldaeans also; it is thought that

Abraham left it when he departed from Ur of the Chaldees. Mithras was the sun and he was also the God of the Persians; and according to Ovid's account horses were offered in sacrifice to him,

*Placat equo Persis radiis Hyperiona cinctum,*

*Ne detur celeri victima tarda Deo.*

But Mr. Hyde believes that they only made use of the sun and fire in their worship as symbols of the Divinity. It may be necessary to distinguish, as elsewhere, between the Wise and the Multitude. There are in the splendid ruins of Persepolis or of Tschelminaar (which means forty columns) sculptured representations of their ceremonies. An ambassador of Holland had had them sketched at very great cost by a painter, who had devoted a considerable time to the task: but by some chance or other these sketches fell into the hands of a well-known traveller, M. Chardin, according to what he tells us himself. It would be a pity if they were lost. These ruins are one of the most ancient and most beautiful monuments of the earth; and in this respect I wonder at such lack of curiosity in a century so curious as ours.

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138. The ancient Greeks and the modern Orientals agree in saying that Zoroaster called the good God Oromazes, or rather Oromasdes, and the evil God Arimanius. When I pondered on the fact that great princes of Upper Asia had the name of Hormisdas and that Irminius or Herminius was the name of a god or ancient hero of the Scythian Celts, that is, of the Germani, it occurred to me that this Arimanius or Irminius might have been a great conqueror of very ancient time coming from the west, just as Genghis Khan and Tamburlaine were later, coming from the east. Arimanius would therefore have come from the north-west, that is, from Germania and Sarmatia, through the territory of the Alani and Massagetae, to raid the dominions of one Ormisdas, a great king in Upper Asia, just as other Scythians did in the days of Cyaxares, King of the Medes, according to the account given by Herodotus. The monarch governing civilized peoples, and working to defend them against the barbarians, would have gone down to posterity, amongst the same peoples, as the good god; but the chief of these devastators will have become the symbol of the evil principle: that is altogether reasonable. It appears from this same mythology that these two princes contended for long, but that neither of them was victorious. Thus they both held their own, just as the two principles shared the empire of the world according to the hypothesis attributed to Zoroaster.

139. It remains to be proved that an ancient god or hero of the Germani was called Herman, Arimanius or Irminius. Tacitus relates that the three tribes which composed Germania, the Ingaevones, the Istaevones and the Herminones or Hermiones, were thus named from the three sons of Mannus. Whether that be true or not, he wished in any case to indicate that there was a hero named Herminius, from whom he was told the Herminones were named. Herminones, Hermenner, Hermunduri all mean the same, that is, Soldiers. Even in the Dark Ages Arimanni were *viri militares*, and there is *feudum Arimandiae* in Lombard law.

140. I have shown elsewhere that apparently the name of one part of Germania was given to the whole, and that from these Herminones or Hermunduri all the Teutonic peoples were named *Hermanni* or *Germani*. The difference between these two words is only in the force of the aspiration: there is the same difference of initial letter between the *Germani* of the Latins and *Hermanos* of the Spaniards, or in the *Gammarus* of the Latins and the *Hummer* (that is, [211] marine crayfish) of the Low Germans. Besides it is very usual for one part of a nation to give the name to the whole: so all the Germani were called Alemanni by the French, and yet this, according to the old nomenclature, only applied to the Suabians and the Swiss. Although Tacitus did not actually know the origin of the name of the Germani, he said something which supports my opinion, when he observed that it was a name which inspired terror, taken or given *ob metum*. In fact it signifies a warrior: *Heer*, *Hari* is army, whence comes *Hariban*, or 'call to Haro', that is, a general order to be with the army, since corrupted into *Arrièreban*. Thus Hariman or Ariman, German *Guerre-man*, is a soldier. For as *Hari*, *Heer* means army, so *Wehr* signifies arms, *Wehren* to fight, to make war, the word *Guerre*, *Guerra* coming doubtless from the same source. I have already spoken of the *feudum Arimandiae*: not only did Herminones or Germani signify the same, but also that ancient Herman, so-called son of Mannus, appears to have been given this name as being pre-eminently a warrior.

141. Now it is not the passage in Tacitus only which indicates for us this god or hero: we cannot doubt the existence of one of this name among these peoples, since Charlemagne found and destroyed near the Weser the column called *Irmingsäule*, erected in honour of this god. And that combined with the passage in Tacitus leaves us with the conclusion that it was not that famous Arminius who was an enemy of the Romans, but a much greater and more ancient hero, that this cult concerned. Arminius bore the same name as those who are called Hermann to-day. Arminius was not great enough, nor fortunate enough, nor well enough known throughout Germania to

attain to the honour of a public cult, even at the hands of remote tribes, like the Saxons, who came long after him into the country of the Cherusci. And our Arminius, taken by the Asiatics for the evil God, provides ample confirmation of my opinion. For in these matters conjectures confirm one another without any logical circle, when their foundations tend towards one and the same end.

142. It is not beyond belief that the Hermes (that is, Mercury) of the Greeks is the same Herminius or Arimanius. He may have been an inventor or promoter of the arts and of a slightly more civilized life among his own people and in the countries where he held supremacy, while amongst his enemies he was looked upon as the author of confusion. Who knows but that he may have [212]penetrated even into Egypt, like the Scythians who in pursuit of Sesostris came nearly so far. Theut, Menes and Hermes were known and revered in Egypt. They might have been Tuiscon, his son Mannus and Herman, son of Mannus, according to the genealogy of Tacitus. Menes is held to be the most ancient king of the Egyptians; 'Theut' was with them a name for Mercury. At least Theut or Tuiscon, from whom Tacitus derives the descent of the Germani, and from whom the Teutons, *Tuitsche* (that is, Germani) even to-day have their name, is the same as that *Teutates* who according to Lucan was worshipped by the Gauls, and whom Caesar took *pro Dite Patre*, for Pluto, because of the resemblance between his Latin name and that of *Teut* or *Thiet*, *Titan*, *Theodon*; this in ancient times signified men, people, and also an excellent man (like the word 'baron'), in short, a prince. There are authorities for all these significations: but one must not delay over this point. Herr Otto Sperling, who is well known for various learned writings, but has many more in readiness to appear, in a special dissertation has treated the question of this Teutates, God of the Celts. Some observations which I imparted to him on that subject have been published, with his reply, in the *Literary News of the Baltic Sea*. He interprets this passage from Lucan somewhat otherwise than I do:

*Teutates, pollensque feris altaribus Hesus,*

*Et Tamaris Scythicae non mitior ara Dianae.*

Hesus was, it appears, the God of War, who was called Ares by the Greeks and Erich by the ancient Germani, whence still remains *Erichtag*, Tuesday. The letters R and S, which are produced by the same organ, are easily interchanged, for instance: *Moor* and *Moos*, *Geran* and *Gesen*, *Er war* and *Er was*, *Fer*, *Hierro*, *Eiron*, *Eisen*. Likewise *Papisius*, *Valesius*, *Fusius*, instead of *Papirius*, *Valerius*, *Furius*, with the ancient Romans. As for Taramis or perhaps Taranis, one knows that *Taran* was the thunder, or the God of Thunder, with the ancient Celts, called *Thor* by the Germani of the north; whence the English have preserved the name 'Thursday', *jeudi*, *diem Jovis*. And the passage from Lucan means that the altar of Taran, God of the Celts, was not less cruel than that of Diana in Tauris: *Taranis aram non mitiorem ara Dianae Scythicae fuisse*.

143. It is also not impossible that there was a time when the [213]western or Celtic princes made themselves masters of Greece, of Egypt and a good part of Asia, and that their cult remained in those countries. When one considers with what rapidity the Huns, the Saracens and the Tartars gained possession of a great part of our continent one will be the less surprised at this; and it is confirmed by the great number of words in the Greek and German tongues which correspond so closely. Callimachus, in a hymn in honour of Apollo, seems to imply that the Celts who attacked the Temple at Delphi, under their Brennus, or chief, were descendants of the ancient Titans and Giants who made war on Jupiter and the other gods, that is to say, on the Princes of Asia and of Greece. It may be that Jupiter is himself descended from the Titans or Theodons, that is, from the earlier Celto-Scythian princes; and the material collected by the late Abbé de la Charmoye in his *Celtic Origins* conforms to that possibility. Yet there are opinions on other matters in this work by this learned writer which to me do not appear probable, especially when he excludes the Germani from the number of the Celts, not having recalled sufficiently the facts given by ancient writers and not being sufficiently aware of the relation between the ancient Gallic and Germanic tongues. Now the so-called Giants, who wished to scale the heavens, were new Celts who followed the path of their ancestors; and Jupiter, although of their kindred, as it were, was constrained to resist them. Just so did the Visigoths established in Gallic territory resist, together with the Romans, other peoples of Germania and Scythia, who succeeded them under Attila their leader, he being at that time in control of the Scythian, Sarmatic and Germanic tribes from the frontiers of Persia up to the Rhine. But the pleasure one feels when one thinks to find in the mythologies of the gods some trace of the old history of fabulous times has perhaps carried me too far, and I know not whether I shall have been any more successful than Goropius Becanus, Schrieckius, Herr Rudbeck and the Abbe de la Charmoye.

144. Let us return to Zoroaster, who led us to Oromasdes and Arimanius, the sources of good and evil, and let us assume that he looked upon them as two eternal principles opposed to each other, although there is reason to doubt this assumption. It is thought that Marcion, disciple of Cerdon, was of this opinion before Manes. M. Bayle acknowledges that these men used lamentable arguments; but he thinks that they did not sufficiently [214]recognize their advantages or know how to apply their principal instrument, which was the difficulty over the

origin of evil. He believes that an able man on their side would have thoroughly embarrassed the orthodox, and it seems as though he himself, failing any other, wished to undertake a task so unnecessary in the opinion of many people. 'All the hypotheses' (he says, *Dictionary*, v., 'Marcion', p. 2039) 'that Christians have established parry but poorly the blows aimed at them: they all triumph when they act on the offensive; but they lose their whole advantage when they have to sustain the attack.' He confesses that the 'Dualists' (as with Mr. Hyde he calls them), that is, the champions of two principles, would soon have been routed by *a priori* reasons, taken from the nature of God; but he thinks that they triumph in their turn when one comes to the *a posteriori* reasons, which are taken from the existence of evil.

145. He treats of the matter with abundant detail in his *Dictionary*, article 'Manichaeans', p. 2025, which we must examine a little, in order to throw greater light upon this subject: 'The surest and clearest ideas of order teach us', he says, 'that a Being who exists through himself, who is necessary, who is eternal, must be single, infinite, all powerful, and endowed with all kinds of perfections.' This argument deserves to have been developed more completely. 'Now it is necessary to see', he goes on, 'if the phenomena of nature can be conveniently explained by the hypothesis of one single principle.' I have explained it sufficiently by showing that there are cases where some disorder in the part is necessary for producing the greatest order in the whole. But it appears that M. Bayle asks a little too much: he wishes for a detailed exposition of how evil is connected with the best possible scheme for the universe. That would be a complete explanation of the phenomena: but I do not undertake to give it; nor am I bound to do so, for there is no obligation to do that which is impossible for us in our existing state. It is sufficient for me to point out that there is nothing to prevent the connexion of a certain individual evil with what is the best on the whole. This incomplete explanation, leaving something to be discovered in the life to come, is sufficient for answering the objections, though not for a comprehension of the matter.

146. 'The heavens and all the rest of the universe', adds M. Bayle, 'preach the glory, the power, the oneness of God.' Thence [215]the conclusion should have been drawn that this is the case (as I have already observed above) because there is seen in these objects something entire and isolated, so to speak. Every time we see such a work of God, we find it so perfect that we must wonder at the contrivance and the beauty thereof: but when we do not see an entire work, when we only look upon scraps and fragments, it is no wonder if the good order is not evident there. Our planetary system composes such an isolated work, which is complete also when it is taken by itself; each plant, each animal, each man furnishes one such work, to a certain point of perfection: one recognizes therein the wonderful contrivance of the author. But the human kind, so far as it is known to us, is only a fragment, only a small portion of the City of God or of the republic of Spirits, which has an extent too great for us, and whereof we know too little, to be able to observe the wonderful order therein. 'Man alone,' says M. Bayle, 'that masterpiece of his Creator among things visible, man alone, I say, gives rise to great objections with regard to the oneness of God.' Claudian made the same observation, unburdening his heart in these well-known lines:

*Saepe mihi dubiam traxit sententia mentem, etc.*

But the harmony existing in all the rest allows of a strong presumption that it would exist also in the government of men, and generally in that of Spirits, if the whole were known to us. One must judge the works of God as wisely as Socrates judged those of Heraclitus in these words: What I have understood thereof pleases me; I think that the rest would please me no less if I understood it.

147. Here is another particular reason for the disorder apparent in that which concerns man. It is that God, in giving him intelligence, has presented him with an image of the Divinity. He leaves him to himself, in a sense, in his small department, *ut Spartam quam nactus est ornet*. He enters there only in a secret way, for he supplies being, force, life, reason, without showing himself. It is there that free will plays its game: and God makes game (so to speak) of these little Gods that he has thought good to produce, as we make game of children who follow pursuits which we secretly encourage or hinder according as it pleases us. Thus man is there like a little god in his own world or *Microcosm*, which he governs [216]after his own fashion: he sometimes performs wonders therein, and his art often imitates nature.

*Jupiter in parvo cum cerneret aethera vitro,*

*Risit et ad Superos talia dicta dedit:*

*Huccine mortalis progressa potentia, Divi?*

*Jam meus in fragili luditur orbe labor.*

*Jura poli rerumque fidem legesque Deorum*

*Cuncta Syracusius transtulit arte Senex.*

*Quid falso insontem tonitru Salmonea miror?*

*Aemula Naturae est parva reperta manus.*

But he also commits great errors, because he abandons himself to the passions, and because God abandons him to his own way. God punishes him also for such errors, now like a father or tutor, training or chastising children, now like a just judge, punishing those who forsake him: and evil comes to pass most frequently when these intelligences or their small worlds come into collision. Man finds himself the worse for this, in proportion to his fault; but God, by a wonderful art, turns all the errors of these little worlds to the greater adornment of his great world. It is as in those devices of perspective, where certain beautiful designs look like mere confusion until one restores them to the right angle of vision or one views them by means of a certain glass or mirror. It is by placing and using them properly that one makes them serve as adornment for a room. Thus the apparent deformities of our little worlds combine to become beauties in the great world, and have nothing in them which is opposed to the oneness of an infinitely perfect universal principle: on the contrary, they increase our wonder at the wisdom of him who makes evil serve the greater good.

148. M. Bayle continues: 'that man is wicked and miserable; that there are everywhere prisons and hospitals; that history is simply a collection of the crimes and calamities of the human race.' I think that there is exaggeration in that: there is incomparably more good than evil in the life of men, as there are incomparably more houses than prisons. With regard to virtue and vice, a certain mediocrity prevails. Machiavelli has already observed that there are few very wicked and very good men, and that this causes the failure of many great enterprises. I find it a great fault in historians that they keep their mind on the evil more [217]than on the good. The chief end of history, as also of poetry, should be to teach prudence and virtue by examples, and then to display vice in such a way as to create aversion to it and to prompt men to avoid it, or serve towards that end.

149. M. Bayle avows: 'that one finds everywhere both moral good and physical good, some examples of virtue, some examples of happiness, and that this is what makes the difficulty. For if there were only wicked and unhappy people', he says, 'there would be no need to resort to the hypothesis of the two principles.' I wonder that this admirable man could have evinced so great an inclination towards this opinion of the two principles; and I am surprised at his not having taken into account that this romance of human life, which makes the universal history of the human race, lay fully devised in the divine understanding, with innumerable others, and that the will of God only decreed its existence because this sequence of events was to be most in keeping with the rest of things, to bring forth the best result. And these apparent faults in the whole world, these spots on a Sun whereof ours is but a ray, rather enhance its beauty than diminish it, contributing towards that end by obtaining a greater good. There are in truth two principles, but they are both in God, to wit, his understanding and his will. The understanding furnishes the principle of evil, without being sullied by it, without being evil; it represents natures as they exist in the eternal verities; it contains within it the reason wherefore evil is permitted: but the will tends only towards good. Let us add a third principle, namely power; it precedes even understanding and will, but it operates as the one displays it and as the other requires it.

150. Some (like Campanella) have called these three perfections of God the three primordialities. Many have even believed that there was therein a secret connexion with the Holy Trinity: that power relates to the Father, that is, to the source of Divinity, wisdom to the Eternal Word, which is called *logos* by the most sublime of the Evangelists, and will or Love to the Holy Spirit. Well-nigh all the expressions or comparisons derived from the nature of the intelligent substance tend that way.

151. It seems to me that if M. Bayle had taken into account what I have just said of the principles of things, he would have answered his own questions, or at the least he would not have continued to ask, as he does in these which follow: 'If man is the work [218]of a single principle supremely good, supremely holy, supremely powerful, can he be subject to diseases, to cold, heat, hunger, thirst, pain, grief? Can he have so many evil tendencies? Can he commit so many crimes? Can supreme goodness produce an unhappy creature? Shall not supreme power, united to an infinite goodness, shower blessings upon its work, and shall it not banish all that might offend or grieve?' Prudentius in his *Hamartigenia* presented the same difficulty:

*Si non vult Deus esse malum, cur non vetat? inquit.*

*Non refert auctor fuerit, factorve malorum.*

*Anne opera in vitium sceleris pulcherrima verti,*

*Cum possit prohibere, sinat; quod si velit omnes*

*Innocuos agere Omnipotens, ne sancta voluntas*

*Degeneret, facto nec se manus inquinat ullo?*

*Condidit ergo malum Dominus, quod spectat ab alto,*

*Et patitur fierique probat, tanquam ipse creavit.*

*Ipse creavit enim, quod si discludere possit,*

*Non abolet, longoque sinit grassari usu.*

But I have already answered that sufficiently. Man is himself the source of his evils: just as he is, he was in the divine idea. God, prompted by essential reasons of wisdom, decreed that he should pass into existence just as he is. M. Bayle would perchance have perceived this origin of evil in the form in which I demonstrate it here, if he had herein combined the wisdom of God with his power, his goodness and his holiness. I will add, in passing, that his *holiness* is nothing other than the highest degree of goodness, just as the crime which is its opposite is the worst of all evil.

152. M. Bayle places the Greek philosopher Melissus, champion of the oneness of the first principle (and perhaps even of the oneness of substance) in conflict with Zoroaster, as with the first originator of duality. Zoroaster admits that the hypothesis of Melissus is more consistent with order and *a priori* reasons, but he denies its conformity with experience and *a posteriori* reasons. 'I surpass you', he said, 'in the explanation of phenomena, which is the principal mark of a good system.' But, in my opinion, it is not a very good explanation of a phenomenon to assign to it an *ad hoc* principle: to evil, a *principium maleficum*, to cold, a *primum frigidum*; there is nothing so easy and nothing so dull. It is well-nigh as if someone were to say that the [219]Peripatetics surpass the new mathematicians in the explanation of the phenomena of the stars, by giving them *ad hoc* intelligences to guide them. According to that, it is quite easy to conceive why the planets make their way with such precision; whereas there is need of much geometry and reflexion to understand how from the gravity of the planets, which bears them towards the sun, combined with some whirlwind which carries them along, or with their own motive force, can spring the elliptic movement of Kepler, which satisfies appearances so well. A man incapable of relishing deep speculations will at first applaud the Peripatetics and will treat our mathematicians as dreamers. Some old Galenist will do the same with regard to the faculties of the Schoolmen: he will admit a chylific, a chymific and a sanguific, and he will assign one of these *ad hoc* to each operation; he will think he has worked wonders, and will laugh at what he will call the chimeras of the moderns, who claim to explain through mechanical structure what passes in the body of an animal.

153. The explanation of the cause of evil by a particular principle, *per principium maleficum*, is of the same nature. Evil needs no such explanation, any more than do cold and darkness: there is neither *primum frigidum* nor principle of darkness. Evil itself comes only from privation; the positive enters therein only by concomitance, as the active enters by concomitance into cold. We see that water in freezing is capable of breaking a gun-barrel wherein it is confined; and yet cold is a certain privation of force, it only comes from the diminution of a movement which separates the particles of fluids. When this separating motion becomes weakened in the water by the cold, the particles of compressed air concealed in the water collect; and, becoming larger, they become more capable of acting outwards through their buoyancy. The resistance which the surfaces of the portions of air meet in the water, and which opposes the force exerted by these portions towards dilation, is far less, and consequently the effect of the air greater, in large air-bubbles than in small, even though these small bubbles combined should form as great a mass as the large. For the resistances, that is, the surfaces, increase by the *square*, and the forces, that is, the contents or the volumes of the spheres of compressed air, increase by the *cube*, of their diameters. Thus it is *by accident* that privation involves action and force. I have already shown how privation is enough to cause error and malice, and [220]how God is prompted to permit them, despite that there be no malignity in him. Evil comes from privation; the positive and action spring from it by accident, as force springs from cold.

154. The statement that M. Bayle attributes to the Paulicians, p. 2323, is not conclusive, to wit, that free will must come from two principles, to the end that it may have power to turn towards good and towards evil: for, being simple in itself, it should rather have come from a neutral principle if this argument held good. But free will tends towards good, and if it meets with evil it is by accident, for the reason that this evil is concealed beneath the good, and masked, as it were. These words which Ovid ascribes to Medea,

*Video meliora proboque,*

*Deteriora sequor,*

imply that the morally good is mastered by the agreeably good, which makes more impression on souls when they are disturbed by the passions.

155. Furthermore, M. Bayle himself supplies Melissus with a good answer; but a little later he disputes it. Here are his words, p. 2025: 'If Melissus consults the notions of order, he will answer that man was not wicked when God made him; he will say that man received from God a happy state, but that not having followed the light of conscience, which in accordance with the intention of its author should have guided him along the path of virtue, he has become wicked, and has deserved that God the supremely good should make him feel the effects of his anger. It is therefore not God who is the cause of moral evil: but he is the cause of physical evil, that is, of the punishment of moral evil. And this punishment, far from being incompatible with the supremely good principle, of necessity emanates from that one of its attributes, I mean its justice, which is not less essential to it than its goodness. This answer, the most reasonable that Melissus can give, is fundamentally good and sound, but it may be disputed by something more specious and more dazzling. For indeed Zoroaster objects that the infinitely good principle ought to have created man not only without actual evil, but also without the inclination towards evil; that God, having foreseen sin with all its consequences, ought to have prevented it; that he ought to have impelled man to moral good, and not to have allowed him any force for tending towards crime.' That is quite easy to say, but it is not [221]practicable if one follows the principles of order: it could not have been accomplished without perpetual miracles. Ignorance, error and malice follow one another naturally in animals made as we are: should this species, then, have been missing in the universe? I have no doubt but that it is too important there, despite all its weaknesses, for God to have consented to its abolition.

156. M. Bayle, in the article entitled 'Paulicians' inserted by him in his *Dictionary*, follows up the pronouncements he made in the article on the Manichaeans. According to him (p. 2330, lit. H) the orthodox seem to admit two first principles, in making the devil the originator of sin. M. Becker, a former minister of Amsterdam, author of the book entitled *The World Bewitched*, has made use of this idea in order to demonstrate that one should not assign such power and authority to the Devil as would allow of his comparison with God. Therein he is right: but he pushes the conclusions too far. And the author of the book entitled *Αποκαταστασις Παντων* believes that if the Devil had never been vanquished and despoiled, if he had always kept his prey, if the title of invincible had belonged to him, that would have done injury to the glory of God. But it is a poor advantage to keep those whom one has led astray in order to share their punishment for ever. And as for the cause of evil, it is true that the Devil is the author of sin. But the origin of sin comes from farther away, its source is in the original imperfection of creatures: that renders them capable of sinning, and there are circumstances in the sequence of things which cause this power to evince itself in action.

157. The devils were angels like the rest before their fall, and it is thought that their leader was one of the chief among angels; but Scripture is not explicit enough on that point. The passage of the Apocalypse that speaks of the struggle with the Dragon, as of a vision, leaves much in doubt, and does not sufficiently develop a subject which by the other sacred writers is hardly mentioned. It is not in place here to enter into this discussion, and one must still admit that the common opinion agrees best with the sacred text. M. Bayle examines some replies of St. Basil, of Lactantius and others on the origin of evil. As, however, they are concerned with physical evil, I postpone discussion thereof, and I will proceed with the examination of the difficulties over the moral cause of moral evil, which arise in several passages of the works of our gifted author.

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158. He disputes the *permission* of this evil, he would wish one to admit that God *wills* it. He quotes these words of Calvin (on Genesis, ch. 3): 'The ears of some are offended when one says that God willed it. But I ask you, what else is the permission of him who is entitled to forbid, or rather who has the thing in his own hands, but an act of will?' M. Bayle explains these words of Calvin, and those which precede them, as if he admitted that God willed the fall of Adam, not in so far as it was a crime, but under some other conception that is unknown to us. He quotes casuists who are somewhat lax, who say that a son can desire the death of his father, not in so far as it is an evil for himself but in so far as it is a good for his heirs (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 147, p. 850). It seems to me that Calvin only says that God willed man's fall for some reason unknown to us. In the main, when it is a question of a decisive will, that is, of a decree, these distinctions are useless: one wills the action with all its qualities, if it is true that one wills it. But when it is a crime, God can only will the permission of it: the crime is neither an end nor a means, it is only a *conditio sine qua non*; thus it is not the object of a direct will, as I have already demonstrated above. God cannot prevent it without acting against what he owes to himself, without doing

something that would be worse than the crime of man, without violating the rule of the best; and that would be to destroy divinity, as I have already observed. God is therefore bound by a moral necessity, which is in himself, to permit moral evil in creatures. There is precisely the case wherein the will of a wise mind is only permissive. I have already said this: he is bound to permit the crime of others when he cannot prevent it without himself failing in that which he owes to himself.

159. 'But among all these infinite combinations', says M. Bayle (p. 853), 'it pleased God to choose one wherein Adam was to sin, and by his decree he made it, in preference to all the others, the plan that should come to pass.' Very good; that is speaking my language; so long as one applies it to the combinations which compose the whole universe. 'You will therefore never make us understand', he adds, 'how God did not will that Eve and Adam should sin, since he rejected all the combinations wherein they would not have sinned.' But the thing is in general very easy to understand, from all that I have just said. This combination that makes the whole universe is the best; God therefore could not [223]refrain from choosing it without incurring a lapse, and rather than incur such, a thing altogether inappropriate to him, he permits the lapse or the sin of man which is involved in this combination.

160. M. Jacquelot, with other able men, does not differ in opinion from me, when for example he says, p. 186 of his treatise on the *Conformity of Faith with Reason*: 'Those who are puzzled by these difficulties seem to be too limited in their outlook, and to wish to reduce all God's designs to their own interests. When God formed the universe, his whole prospect was himself and his own glory, so that if we had knowledge of all creatures, of their diverse combinations and of their different relations, we should understand without difficulty that the universe corresponds perfectly to the infinite wisdom of the Almighty.' He says elsewhere (p. 232): 'Supposing the impossible, that God could not prevent the wrong use of free will without destroying it, it will be agreed that since his wisdom and his glory determined him to form free creatures this powerful reason must have prevailed over the grievous consequences which their freedom might have.' I have endeavoured to develop this still further through *the reason of the best and the moral necessity* which led God to make this choice, despite the sin of some creatures which is involved therein. I think that I have cut down to the root of the difficulty; nevertheless I am well pleased, for the sake of throwing more light on the matter, to apply my principle of solution to the peculiar difficulties of M. Bayle.

161. Here is one, set forth in these terms (ch. 148, p. 856): 'Would it in a prince be a mark of his kindness: 1. To give to a hundred messengers as much money as is needed for a journey of two hundred leagues? 2. To promise a recompense to all those who should finish the journey without having borrowed anything, and to threaten with imprisonment all those whom their money should not have sufficed? 3. To make choice of a hundred persons, of whom he would know for certain that there were but two who should earn the recompense, the ninety-eight others being destined to find on the way either a mistress or a gamester or some other thing which would make them incur expenses, and which he would himself have been at pains to dispose in certain places along their path? 4. To imprison actually ninety-eight of these messengers on the moment of their return? Is it not abundantly evident that he would have no kindness for them, and that on the contrary he would intend for them, not the proposed recompense, [224]but prison? They would deserve it, certainly; but he who had wished them to deserve it and placed them in the sure way towards deserving it, should he be worthy of being called kind, on the pretext that he had recompensed the two others?' It would doubtless not be on that account that he earned the title of 'kind'. Yet other circumstances may contribute, which would avail to render him worthy of praise for having employed this artifice in order to know those people, and to make trial of them; just as Gideon made use of some extraordinary means of choosing the most valiant and the least squeamish among his soldiers. And even if the prince were to know already the disposition of all these messengers, may he not put them to this test in order to make them known also to the others? Even though these reasons be not applicable to God, they make it clear, nevertheless, that an action like that of this prince may appear preposterous when it is detached from the circumstances indicating its cause. All the more must one deem that God has acted well, and that we should see this if we fully knew of all that he has done.

162. M. Descartes, in a letter to the Princess Elizabeth (vol. 1, letter 10) has made use of another comparison to reconcile human freedom with the omnipotence of God. 'He imagines a monarch who has forbidden duels, and who, knowing for certain that two noblemen, if they meet, will fight, takes sure steps to bring about their meeting. They meet indeed, they fight: their disobedience of the law is an effect of their free will, they are punishable. What a king can do in such a case (he adds) concerning some free actions of his subjects, God, who has infinite foreknowledge and power, certainly does concerning all those of men. Before he sent us into this world he knew exactly what all the tendencies of our will would be: he has endued us therewith, he also has disposed all other things that are outside us, to cause such and such objects to present themselves to our senses at such and such a time. He knew that as a result of this our free will would determine us toward some particular thing, and he has willed it thus; but he has not for that willed to constrain our free will thereto. In this king one may distinguish two different degrees of will, the one whereby he willed that these noblemen should fight, since he brought about their

meeting, and the other whereby he did not will it, since he forbade duels. Even so theologians distinguish in God an absolute and independent will, whereby he wills that all things be done [225]just as they are done, and another which is relative, and which concerns the merit or demerit of men, whereby he wills that his Laws be obeyed' (Descartes, letter 10 of vol. 1, pp. 51, 52. Compare with that the quotation made by M. Arnauld, vol. 2, p. 288 *et seqq.* of his *Reflexions on the System of Malebranche*, from Thomas Aquinas, on the antecedent and consequent will of God).

163. Here is M. Bayle's reply to that (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 154, p. 943): 'This great philosopher is much mistaken, it seems to me. There would not be in this monarch any degree of will, either small or great, that these two noblemen should obey the law, and not fight. He would will entirely and solely that they should fight. That would not exculpate them, they would only follow their passion, they would be unaware that they conformed to the will of their sovereign: but he would be in truth the moral cause of their encounter, and he would not more entirely wish it supposing he were to inspire them with the desire or to give them the order for it. Imagine to yourself two princes each of whom wishes his eldest son to poison himself. One employs constraint, the other contents himself with secretly causing a grief that he knows will be sufficient to induce his son to poison himself. Will you be doubtful whether the will of the latter is less complete than the will of the former? M. Descartes is therefore assuming an unreal fact and does not at all solve the difficulty.'

164. One must confess that M. Descartes speaks somewhat crudely of the will of God in regard to evil in saying not only that God knew that our free will would determine us toward some particular thing, but also *that he also wished it*, albeit he did not will to constrain the will thereto. He speaks no less harshly in the eighth letter of the same volume, saying that not the slightest thought enters into the mind of a man which God does not *will*, and has not willed from all eternity, to enter there. Calvin never said anything harsher; and all that can only be excused if it is to be understood of a permissive will. M. Descartes' solution amounts to the distinction between the will expressed in the sign and the will expressive of the good pleasure (*inter voluntatem signi et beneplaciti*) which the moderns have taken from the Schoolmen as regards the terms, but to which they have given a meaning not usual among the ancients. It is true that God may command something and yet not will that it be done, as when he commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son: he willed the obedience, and he did not [226]will the action. But when God commands the virtuous action and forbids the sin, he wills indeed that which he ordains, but it is only by an antecedent will, as I have explained more than once.

165. M. Descartes' comparison is therefore not satisfactory; but it may be made so. One must make some change in the facts, inventing some reason to oblige the prince to cause or permit the two enemies to meet. They must, for instance, be together in the army or in other obligatory functions, a circumstance the prince himself cannot hinder without endangering his State. For example, the absence of either of them might be responsible for the disappearance of innumerable persons of his party from the army or cause grumbling among the soldiers and give rise to some great disturbance. In this case, therefore, one may say that the prince does not will the duel: he knows of it, but he permits it notwithstanding, for he prefers permitting the sin of others to committing one himself. Thus this corrected comparison may serve, provided that one observe the difference between God and the prince. The prince is forced into this permission by his powerlessness; a more powerful monarch would have no need of all these considerations; but God, who has power to do all that is possible, only permits sin because it is absolutely impossible to anyone at all to do better. The prince's action is peradventure not free from sorrow and regret. This regret is due to his imperfection, of which he is sensible; therein lies displeasure. God is incapable of such a feeling and finds, moreover, no cause therefor; he is infinitely conscious of his own perfection, and it may even be said that the imperfection in creatures taken individually changes for him into perfection in relation to the whole, and that it is an added glory for the Creator. What more can one wish, when one possesses a boundless wisdom and when one is as powerful as one is wise; when one can do all and when one has the best?

166. Having once understood these things, we are hardened sufficiently, so it seems to me, against the strongest and most spirited objections. I have not concealed them: but there are some we shall merely touch upon, because they are too odious. The Remonstrants and M. Bayle (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 152, end page 919) quote St. Augustine, saying, '*crudelem esse misericordiam velle aliquem miserum esse ut eius miserearis*': in the same sense is cited Seneca *De Benef.*, L. 6, c. 36, 37. I confess that one would have some reason to urge that against those who [227]believed that God has no other cause for permitting sin than the design to have something wherewith to exercise punitive justice against the majority of men, and his mercy towards a small number of elect. But it must be considered that God had reasons for his permission of sin, more worthy of him and more profound in relation to us. Someone has dared to compare God's course of action with that of a Caligula, who has his edicts written in so small a hand and has them placarded in so high a place that it is not possible to read them; with that of a mother who neglects her daughter's honour in order to attain her own selfish ends; with that of Queen Catherine de Medicis, who is said to have abetted the love-affairs of her ladies in order to learn of the intrigues of the great; and even with that of Tiberius, who arranged, through the extraordinary

services of the executioner, that the law forbidding the subjection of a virgin to capital punishment should no longer apply to the case of Sejanus's daughter. This last comparison was proposed by Peter Bertius, then an Armenian, but finally a member of the Roman communion. And a scandalous comparison has been made between God and Tiberius, which is related at length by Andreas Caroli in his *Memorabilia Ecclesiastica* of the last century, as M. Bayle observes. Bertius used it against the Gomarists. I think that arguments of this kind are only valid against those who maintain that justice is an arbitrary thing in relation to God; or that he has a despotic power which can go so far as being able to condemn innocents; or, in short, that good is not the motive of his actions.

167. At that same time an ingenious satire was composed against the Gomarists, entitled *Fur praedestinatus, de gepredestineerdedief*, wherein there is introduced a thief condemned to be hanged, who attributes to God all the evil he has done; who believes himself predestined to salvation notwithstanding his wicked actions; who imagines that this belief is sufficient for him, and who defeats by arguments *ad hominem* a Counter-remonstrant minister called to prepare him for death: but this thief is finally converted by an old pastor who had been dismissed for his Arminianism, whom the gaoler, in pity for the criminal and for the weakness of the minister, had brought to him secretly. Replies were made to this lampoon, but replies to satires never please as much as the satires themselves. M. Bayle (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 154, p. 938) says that this book was printed in England in the [228]time of Cromwell, and he appears not to have been informed that it was only a translation of the much older original Flemish. He adds that Dr. George Kendal wrote a confutation of it at Oxford in the year 1657, under the title of *Fur pro Tribunali*, and that the dialogue is there inserted. This dialogue presupposes, contrary to the truth, that the Counter-remonstrants make God the cause of evil, and teach a kind of predestination in the Mahometan manner according to which it does not matter whether one does good or evil, and the assumption that one is predestined assures the fact. They by no means go so far. Nevertheless it is true that there are among them some Supralapsarians and others who find it hard to declare themselves in clear terms upon the justice of God and the principles of piety and morals in man. For they imagine despotism in God, and demand that man be convinced, without reason, of the absolute certainty of his election, a course that is liable to have dangerous consequences. But all those who acknowledge that God produces the best plan, having chosen it from among all possible ideas of the universe; that he there finds man inclined by the original imperfection of creatures to misuse his free will and to plunge into misery; that God prevents the sin and the misery in so far as the perfection of the universe, which is an emanation from his, may permit it: those, I say, show forth more clearly that God's intention is the one most right and holy in the world; that the creature alone is guilty, that his original limitation or imperfection is the source of his wickedness, that his evil will is the sole cause of his misery; that one cannot be destined to salvation without also being destined to the holiness of the children of God, and that all hope of election one can have can only be founded upon the good will infused into one's heart by the grace of God.

168. *Metaphysical considerations* also are brought up against my explanation of the moral cause of moral evil; but they will trouble me less since I have dismissed the objections derived from moral reasons, which were more impressive. These metaphysical considerations concern the nature of the *possible* and of the *necessary*; they go against my fundamental assumption that God has chosen the best of all possible worlds. There are philosophers who have maintained that there is nothing possible except that which actually happens. These are those same people who thought or could have thought that all is necessary unconditionally. Some [229]were of this opinion because they admitted a brute and blind necessity in the cause of the existence of things: and it is these I have most reason for opposing. But there are others who are mistaken only because they misuse terms. They confuse moral necessity with metaphysical necessity: they imagine that since God cannot help acting for the best he is thus deprived of freedom, and things are endued with that necessity which philosophers and theologians endeavour to avoid. With these writers my dispute is only one of words, provided they admit in very deed that God chooses and does the best. But there are others who go further, they think that God could have done better. This is an opinion which must be rejected: for although it does not altogether deprive God of wisdom and goodness, as do the advocates of blind necessity, it sets bounds thereto, thus derogating from God's supreme perfection.

169. The question of the *possibility of things that do not happen* has already been examined by the ancients. It appears that Epicurus, to preserve freedom and to avoid an absolute necessity, maintained, after Aristotle, that contingent futurities were not susceptible of determinate truth. For if it was true yesterday that I should write to-day, it could therefore not fail to happen, it was already necessary; and, for the same reason, it was from all eternity. Thus all that which happens is necessary, and it is impossible for anything different to come to pass. But since that is not so it would follow, according to him, that contingent futurities have no determinate truth. To uphold this opinion, Epicurus went so far as to deny the first and the greatest principle of the truths of reason, he denied that every assertion was either true or false. Here is the way they confounded him: 'You deny that it was true yesterday that I should write to-day; it was therefore false.' The good man, not being able to admit this conclusion, was obliged to say that it was neither true nor false. After that, he needs no refutation, and Chrysippus

might have spared himself the trouble he took to prove the great principle of contradictories, following the account by Cicero in his book *De Fato*: 'Contendit omnes nervos Chrysippus ut persuadeat omne Αξιωμα aut verum esse aut falsum. Ut enim Epicurus veretur ne si hoc concesserit, concedendum sit, fato fieri quaecunque fiant; si enim alterum ex aeternitate verum sit, esse id etiam certum; si certum, etiam necessarium; ita et necessitatem et fatum confirmari putat; sic Chrysippus metuit ne non, si non [230]obtinuerit omne quod enunciatur aut verum esse aut falsum, omnia fato fieri possint ex causis aeternis rerum futurarum.' M. Bayle observes (*Dictionary*, article 'Epicurus', let. T, p. 1141) 'that neither of these two great philosophers [Epicurus and Chrysippus] understood that the truth of this maxim, every proposition is true or false, is independent of what is called *fatum*: it could not therefore serve as proof of the existence of the *fatum*, as Chrysippus maintained and as Epicurus feared. Chrysippus could not have conceded, without damaging his own position, that there are propositions which are neither true nor false. But he gained nothing by asserting the contrary: for, whether there be free causes or not, it is equally true that this proposition, The Grand Mogul will go hunting to-morrow, is true or false. Men rightly regarded as ridiculous this speech of Tiresias: All that I shall say will happen or not, for great Apollo confers on me the faculty of prophesying. If, assuming the impossible, there were no God, it would yet be certain that everything the greatest fool in the world should predict would happen or would not happen. That is what neither Chrysippus nor Epicurus has taken into consideration.' Cicero, lib. I, *De Nat. Deorum*, with regard to the evasions of the Epicureans expressed the sound opinion (as M. Bayle observes towards the end of the same page) that it would be much less shameful to admit that one cannot answer one's opponent, than to have recourse to such answers. Yet we shall see that M. Bayle himself confused the certain with the necessary, when he maintained that the choice of the best rendered things necessary.

170. Let us come now to the possibility of things that do not happen, and I will give the very words of M. Bayle, albeit they are somewhat discursive. This is what he says on the matter in his *Dictionary* (article 'Chrysippus', let. S, p. 929): 'The celebrated dispute on things possible and things impossible owed its origin to the doctrine of the Stoics concerning fate. The question was to know whether, among the things which have never been and never will be, there are some possible; or whether all that is not, all that has never been, all that will never be, was impossible. A famous dialectician of the Megaric Sect, named Diodorus, gave a negative answer to the first of these two questions and an affirmative to the second; but Chrysippus vehemently opposed him. Here are two passages of Cicero (epist. 4, lib. 9, *Ad Familiar.*): "περι δυνατων με scito κατα Διοδωρον κρινειν. Quapropter si [231]venturus es, scito necesse esse te venire. Sin autem non es, των αδυνατων est te venire. Nunc vide utra te κρισις magis delectet, Χρυσιππεια ne, an haec; quam noster Diodorus [a Stoic who for a long time had lived in Cicero's house] non concoquebat." This is quoted from a letter that Cicero wrote to Varro. He sets forth more comprehensively the whole state of the question, in the little book *De Fato*. I am going to quote a few pieces (Cic., *De Fato*, p. m. 65): "Vigila, Chrysippe, ne tuam causam, in qua tibi cum Diodoro valente Dialectico magna luctatio est, deseras ... omne ergo quod falsum dicitur in futuro, id fieri non potest. At hoc, Chrysippe, minime vis, maximeque tibi de hoc ipso cum Diodoro certamen est. Ille enim id solum fieri posse dicit, quod aut sit verum, aut futurum sit verum; et quicquid futurum sit, id dicit fieri necesse esse; et quicquid non sit futurum, id negat fieri posse. Tu etiam quae non sint futura, posse fieri dicis, ut frangi hanc gemmam, etiamsi id nunquam futurum sit: neque necesse fuisse Cypselum regnare Corinthi, quamquam id millesimo ante anno Apollinis Oraculo editum esset.... Placet Diodoro, id solum fieri posse, quod aut verum sit, aut verum futurum sit: qui locus attingit hanc quaestionem, nihil fieri, quod non necesse fuerit; et quicquid fieri possit, id aut esse jam, aut futurum esse: nec magis commutari ex veris in falsa ea posse quae futura sunt, quam ea quae facta sunt: sed in factis immutabilitatem apparere; in futuris quibusdam, quia non apparent, ne inesse quidem videri: ut in eo qui mortifero morbo urgeatur, verum sit, hic morietur hoc morbo: at hoc idem si vere dicatur in eo, in quo tanta vis morbi non appareat, nihilominus futurum sit. Ita fit ut commutatio ex vero in falsum, ne in futuro quidem ulla fieri possit." Cicero makes it clear enough that Chrysippus often found himself in difficulties in this dispute, and that is no matter for astonishment: for the course he had chosen was not bound up with his dogma of fate, and, if he had known how, or had dared, to reason consistently, he would readily have adopted the whole hypothesis of Diodorus. We have seen already that the freedom he assigned to the soul, and his comparison of the cylinder, did not preclude the possibility that in reality all the acts of the human will were unavoidable consequences of fate. Hence it follows that everything which does not happen is impossible, and that there is nothing possible but that which actually comes to pass. Plutarch (*De Stoicor. Repugn.*, pp. 1053, 1054) discomfits him completely, on that point as well [232]as on the dispute with Diodorus, and maintains that his opinion on possibility is altogether contrary to the doctrine of *fatum*. Observe that the most eminent Stoics had written on this matter without following the same path. Arrian (in *Epict.*, lib. 2, c. 29, p. m. 166) named four of them, who are Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Archidemus and Antipater. He evinces great scorn for this dispute; and M. Menage need not have cited him as a writer who had spoken in commendation of the work of Chrysippus περι δυνατων ("citatur honorifice apud Arrianum", Menag. in *Laert.*, I, 7, 341) for assuredly these words, "γεγραφε δε και Χρυσιππος θαυμαστως, etc., de his rebus mira scripsit Chrysippus", etc., are not in that connexion a eulogy. That is shown by the passages immediately before and after it. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*De Collocat. Verbor.*, c. 17, p. m.

11) mentions two treatises by Chrysippus, wherein, under a title that promised something different, much of the logicians' territory had been explored. The work was entitled "περι της συνταξεως των του λογου μερων, de partium orationis collocatione", and treated only of propositions true and false, possible and impossible, contingent and equivocal, etc., matter that our Schoolmen have pounded down and reduced to its essence. Take note that Chrysippus recognized that past things were necessarily true, which Cleanthes had not been willing to admit. (Arrian, *ubi supra*, p. m. 165.) "Ου παν δε παρεληλυθος αληθες αναγκαιον εστι, καθαπερ 'οι περι Κλεανθην φερεσθαι δοκουσι. Non omne praeteritum ex necessitate verum est, ut illi qui Cleanthem sequuntur sentiunt." We have already seen (p. 562, col. 2) that Abélard is alleged to have taught a doctrine which resembles that of Diodorus. I think that the Stoics pledged themselves to give a wider range to possible things than to future things, for the purpose of mitigating the odious and frightful conclusions which were drawn from their dogma of fatality.'

It is sufficiently evident that Cicero when writing to Varro the words that have just been quoted (lib. 9, Ep. 4, *Ad Familiar.*) had not enough comprehension of the effect of Diodorus's opinion, since he found it preferable. He presents tolerably well in his book *De Fato* the opinions of those writers, but it is a pity that he has not always added the reasons which they employed. Plutarch in his treatise on the contradictions of the Stoics and M. Bayle are both surprised that Chrysippus was not of the same opinion as Diodorus, since he favours fatality. But Chrysippus and even his master [233]Cleanthes were on that point more reasonable than is supposed. That will be seen as we proceed. It is open to question whether the past is more necessary than the future. Cleanthes held the opinion that it is. The objection is raised that it is necessary *ex hypothesi* for the future to happen, as it is necessary *ex hypothesi* for the past to have happened. But there is this difference, that it is not possible to act on the past state, that would be a contradiction; but it is possible to produce some effect on the future. Yet the hypothetical necessity of both is the same: the one cannot be changed, the other will not be; and once that is past, it will not be possible for it to be changed either.

171. The famous Pierre Abélard expressed an opinion resembling that of Diodorus in the statement that God can do only that which he does. It was the third of the fourteen propositions taken from his works which were censured at the Council of Sens. It had been taken from the third book of his *Introduction to Theology*, where he treats especially of the power of God. The reason he gave for his statement was that God can do only that which he wills. Now God cannot will to do anything other than that which he does, because, of necessity, he must will whatever is fitting. Hence it follows that all that which he does not, is not fitting, that he cannot will to do it, and consequently that he cannot do it. Abélard admits himself that this opinion is peculiar to him, that hardly anyone shares in it, that it seems contrary to the doctrine of the saints and to reason and derogatory to the greatness of God. It appears that this author was a little too much inclined to speak and to think differently from others: for in reality this was only a dispute about words: he was changing the use of terms. Power and will are different faculties, whose objects also are different; it is confusing them to say that God can do only that which he wills. On the contrary, among various possibles, he wills only that which he finds the best. For all possibles are regarded as objects of power, but actual and existing things are regarded as the objects of his decretory will. Abélard himself acknowledged it. He raises this objection for himself: a reprobate can be saved; but he can only be saved if God saves him. God can therefore save him, and consequently do something that he does not. Abélard answers that it may indeed be said that this man can be saved in respect of the possibility of human nature, which is capable of salvation: but that it may not be said that God can save him in respect of God [234]himself, because it is impossible that God should do that which he must not do. But Abélard admits that it may very well be said in a sense, speaking absolutely and setting aside the assumption of reprobation, that such an one who is reprobate can be saved, and that thus often that which God does not can be done. He could therefore have spoken like the rest, who mean nothing different when they say that God can save this man, and that he can do that which he does not.

172. The so-called necessity of Wyclif, which was condemned by the Council of Constance, seems to arise simply from this same misunderstanding. I think that men of talent do wrong to truth and to themselves when, without reason, they bring into use new and displeasing expressions. In our own time the celebrated Mr. Hobbes supported this same opinion, that what does not happen is impossible. He proves it by the statement that all the conditions requisite for a thing that shall not exist (*omnia rei non futurae requisita*) are never found together, and that the thing cannot exist otherwise. But who does not see that that only proves a hypothetical impossibility? It is true that a thing cannot exist when a requisite condition for it is lacking. But as we claim to be able to say that the thing can exist although it does not exist, we claim in the same way to be able to say that the requisite conditions can exist although they do not exist. Thus Mr. Hobbes's argument leaves the matter where it is. The opinion which was held concerning Mr. Hobbes, that he taught an absolute necessity of all things, brought upon him much discredit, and would have done him harm even had it been his only error.

173. Spinoza went further: he appears to have explicitly taught a blind necessity, having denied to the Author of Things understanding and will, and assuming that good and perfection relate to us only, and not to him. It is true that Spinoza's opinion on this subject is somewhat obscure: for he grants God thought, after having divested him of understanding, *cogitationem, non intellectum concedit Deo*. There are even passages where he relents on the question of necessity. Nevertheless, as far as one can understand him, he acknowledges no goodness in God, properly speaking, and he teaches that all things exist through the necessity of the divine nature, without any act of choice by God. We will not waste time here in refuting an opinion so bad, and indeed so inexplicable. My own opinion is founded on the nature of the possibles, that is, [235]of things that imply no contradiction. I do not think that a Spinozist will say that all the romances one can imagine exist actually now, or have existed, or will still exist in some place in the universe. Yet one cannot deny that romances such as those of Mademoiselle de Scudéry, or as *Octavia*, are possible. Let us therefore bring up against him these words of M. Bayle, which please me well, on page 390, 'It is to-day', he says, 'a great embarrassment for the Spinozists to see that, according to their hypothesis, it was as impossible from all eternity that Spinoza, for instance, should not die at The Hague, as it is impossible for two and two to make six. They are well aware that it is a necessary conclusion from their doctrine, and a conclusion which disheartens, affrights, and stirs the mind to revolt, because of the absurdity it involves, diametrically opposed to common sense. They are not well pleased that one should know they are subverting a maxim so universal and so evident as this one: All that which implies contradiction is impossible, and all that which implies no contradiction is possible.'

174. One may say of M. Bayle, 'ubi bene, nemo melius', although one cannot say of him what was said of Origen, 'ubi male, nemo pejus'. I will only add that what has just been indicated as a maxim is in fact the definition of the *possible* and the *impossible*. M. Bayle, however, adds here towards the end a remark which somewhat spoils his eminently reasonable statement. 'Now what contradiction would there be if Spinoza had died in Leyden? Would Nature then have been less perfect, less wise, less powerful?' He confuses here what is impossible because it implies contradiction with what cannot happen because it is not meet to be chosen. It is true that there would have been no contradiction in the supposition that Spinoza died in Leyden and not at The Hague; there would have been nothing so possible: the matter was therefore indifferent in respect of the power of God. But one must not suppose that any event, however small it be, can be regarded as indifferent in respect of his wisdom and his goodness. Jesus Christ has said divinely well that everything is numbered, even to the hairs of our head. Thus the wisdom of God did not permit that this event whereof M. Bayle speaks should happen otherwise than it happened, not as if by itself it would have been more deserving of choice, but on account of its connexion with that entire sequence of the universe which deserved to be given preference. To say that what has already happened was of no interest to the wisdom of [236]God, and thence to infer that it is therefore not necessary, is to make a false assumption and argue incorrectly to a true conclusion. It is confusing what is necessary by moral necessity, that is, according to the principle of Wisdom and Goodness, with what is so by metaphysical and brute necessity, which occurs when the contrary implies contradiction. Spinoza, moreover, sought a metaphysical necessity in events. He did not think that God was determined by his goodness and by his perfection (which this author treated as chimeras in relation to the universe), but by the necessity of his nature; just as the semicircle is bound to enclose only right angles, without either knowing or willing this. For Euclid demonstrated that all angles enclosed between two straight lines drawn from the extremities of the diameter towards a point on the circumference of the circle are of necessity right angles, and that the contrary implies contradiction.

175. There are people who have gone to the other extreme: under the pretext of freeing the divine nature from the yoke of necessity they wished to regard it as altogether indifferent, with an indifference of equipoise. They did not take into account that just as metaphysical necessity is preposterous in relation to God's actions *ad extra*, so moral necessity is worthy of him. It is a happy necessity which obliges wisdom to do good, whereas indifference with regard to good and evil would indicate a lack of goodness or of wisdom. And besides, the indifference which would keep the will in a perfect equipoise would itself be a chimera, as has been already shown: it would offend against the great principle of the determinant reason.

176. Those who believe that God established good and evil by an arbitrary decree are adopting that strange idea of mere indifference, and other absurdities still stranger. They deprive God of the designation *good*: for what cause could one have to praise him for what he does, if in doing something quite different he would have done equally well? And I have very often been surprised that divers Supralapsarian theologians, as for instance Samuel Rutherford, a Professor of Theology in Scotland, who wrote when the controversies with the Remonstrants were at their height, could have been deluded by so strange an idea. Rutherford (in his *Exercitationes Apologeticae pro Gratia*) says positively that nothing is unjust or morally bad in God's eyes before he has forbidden it: thus without this prohibition it would be a matter of [237]indifference whether one murdered or saved a man, loved God or hated him, praised or blasphemed him. Nothing is so unreasonable as that. One may teach that God established good and evil by a positive law, or one may assert that there was something good and just before his decree, but that he is not required to conform to it, and that nothing prevents him from acting unjustly and from perhaps

condemning innocence: but it all comes to the same thing, offering almost equal dishonour to God. For if justice was established arbitrarily and without any cause, if God came upon it by a kind of hazard, as when one draws lots, his goodness and his wisdom are not manifested in it, and there is nothing at all to attach him to it. If it is by a purely arbitrary decree, without any reason, that he has established or created what we call justice and goodness, then he can annul them or change their nature. Thus one would have no reason to assume that he will observe them always, as it would be possible to say he will observe them on the assumption that they are founded on reasons. The same would hold good more or less if his justice were different from ours, if (for example) it were written in his code that it is just to make the innocent eternally unhappy. According to these principles also, nothing would compel God to keep his word or would assure us of its fulfilment. For why should the law of justice, which states that reasonable promises must be kept, be more inviolable for him than any other laws?

177. All these three dogmas, albeit a little different from one another, namely, (1) that the nature of justice is arbitrary, (2) that it is fixed, but it is not certain that God will observe it, and finally (3) that the justice we know is not that which he observes, destroy the confidence in God that gives us tranquillity, and the love of God that makes our happiness. There is nothing to prevent such a God from behaving as a tyrant and an enemy of honest folk, and from taking pleasure in that which we call evil. Why should he not, then, just as well be the evil principle of the Manichaeans as the single good principle of the orthodox? At least he would be neutral and, as it were, suspended between the two, or even sometimes the one and sometimes the other. That would be as if someone were to say that Oromasdes and Arimanius reign in turns, according to which of the two is the stronger or the more adroit. It is like the saying of a certain Moghul woman. She, so it seems, having heard it said that formerly under Genghis Khan and his [238]successors her nation had had dominion over most of the North and East, told the Muscovites recently, when M. Isbrand went to China on behalf of the Czar, through the country of those Tartars, that the god of the Moghuls had been driven from Heaven, but that one day he would take his own place again. The true God is always the same: natural religion itself demands that he be essentially as good and wise as he is powerful. It is scarcely more contrary to reason and piety to say that God acts without cognition, than to maintain that he has cognition which does not find the eternal rules of goodness and of justice among its objects, or again to say that he has a will such as heeds not these rules.

178. Some theologians who have written of God's right over creatures appear to have conceded to him an unrestricted right, an arbitrary and despotic power. They thought that would be placing divinity on the most exalted level that may be imagined for it, and that it would abase the creature before the Creator to such an extent that the Creator is bound by no laws of any kind with respect to the creature. There are passages from Twiss, Rutherford and some other Supralapsarians which imply that God cannot sin whatever he may do, because he is subject to no law. M. Bayle himself considers that this doctrine is monstrous and contrary to the holiness of God (*Dictionary*, v. 'Paulicians', p. 2332 *in initio*); but I suppose that the intention of some of these writers was less bad than it seems to be. Apparently they meant by the term right, ἀνυπευθυνία, a state wherein one is responsible to none for one's actions. But they will not have denied that God owes to himself what goodness and justice demand of him. On that matter one may see M. Amyraut's *Apology for Calvin*: it is true that Calvin appears orthodox on this subject, and that he is by no means one of the extreme Supralapsarians.

179. Thus, when M. Bayle says somewhere that St. Paul extricates himself from predestination only through the consideration of God's absolute right, and the incomprehensibility of his ways, it is implied that, if one understood them, one would find them consistent with justice, God not being able to use his power otherwise. St. Paul himself says that it is a *depth*, but a depth of wisdom (*altitudo sapientiae*), and *justice* is included in *the goodness of the All-wise*. I find that M. Bayle speaks very well elsewhere on the application of our notions of goodness to the actions of God (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 81, p. 139): 'One must not assert [239]here', he says, 'that the goodness of the infinite Being is not subject to the same rules as the goodness of the creature. For if there is in God an attribute that can be called goodness, the marks of goodness in general must apply to him. Now when we reduce goodness to the most general abstraction, we find therein the will to do good. Divide and subdivide into as many kinds as you shall please this general goodness, into infinite goodness, finite goodness, kingly goodness, goodness of a father, goodness of a husband, goodness of a master, you will find in each, as an inseparable attribute, the will to do good.'

180. I find also that M. Bayle combats admirably the opinion of those who assert that goodness and justice depend solely upon the arbitrary choice of God; who suppose, moreover, that if God had been determined by the goodness of things themselves to act, he would be entirely subjected to necessity in his actions, a state incompatible with freedom. That is confusing metaphysical necessity with moral necessity. Here is what M. Bayle says in objection to this error (*Reply*, ch. 89, p. 203): 'The consequence of this doctrine will be, that before God resolved upon creating the world he saw nothing better in virtue than in vice, and that his ideas did not show him that virtue was more worthy of his love than vice. That leaves no distinction between natural right and positive right; there will no longer be anything unalterable or inevitable in morals; it will have been just as possible for God

to command people to be vicious as to command them to be virtuous; and one will have no certainty that the moral laws will not one day be abrogated, as the ceremonial laws of the Jews were. This, in a word, leads us straight to the belief that God was the free author, not only of goodness and of virtue, but also of truth and of the essence of things. That is what certain of the Cartesians assert, and I confess that their opinion (see the Continuation of *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*, p. 554) might be of some avail in certain circumstances. Yet it is open to dispute for so many reasons, and subject to consequences so troublesome (see chapter 152 of the same Continuation) that there are scarcely any extremes it were not better to suffer rather than plunge into that one. It opens the door to the most exaggerated Pyrrhonism: for it leads to the assertion that this proposition, three and three make six, is only true where and during the time when it pleases God; that it is perhaps false in some parts of the universe; and that perhaps it will be so among [240]men in the coming year. All that depends on the free will of God could have been limited to certain places and certain times, like the Judaic ceremonies. This conclusion will be extended to all the laws of the Decalogue, if the actions they command are in their nature divested of all goodness to the same degree as the actions they forbid.'

181. To say that God, having resolved to create man just as he is, could not but have required of him piety, sobriety, justice and chastity, because it is impossible that the disorders capable of overthrowing or disturbing his work can please him, that is to revert in effect to the common opinion. Virtues are virtues only because they serve perfection or prevent the imperfection of those who are virtuous, or even of those who have to do with them. And they have that power by their nature and by the nature of rational creatures, before God decrees to create them. To hold a different opinion would be as if someone were to say that the rules of proportion and harmony are arbitrary with regard to musicians because they occur in music only when one has resolved to sing or to play some instrument. But that is exactly what is meant by being essential to good music: for those rules belong to it already in the ideal state, even when none yet thinks of singing, since it is known that they must of necessity belong to it as soon as one shall sing. In the same way virtues belong to the ideal state of the rational creature before God decrees to create it; and it is for that very reason we maintain that virtues are good by their nature.

182. M. Bayle has inserted a special chapter in his Continuation of *Divers Thoughts on the Comet* (it is chapter 152) where he shows 'that the Christian Doctors teach that there are things which are just antecedently to God's decrees'. Some theologians of the Augsburg Confession censured some of the Reformed who appeared to be of a different opinion; and this error was regarded as if it were a consequence of the absolute decree, which doctrine seems to exempt the will of God from any kind of reason, *ubi stat pro ratione voluntas*. But, as I have observed already on various occasions, Calvin himself acknowledged that the decrees of God are in conformity with justice and wisdom, although the reasons that might prove this conformity in detail are unknown to us. Thus, according to him, the rules of goodness and of justice are anterior to the decrees of God. M. Bayle, in the same place, quotes a passage from the celebrated M. Turretin which draws a [241]distinction between natural divine laws and positive divine laws. Moral laws are of the first kind and ceremonial of the second. Samuel Desmarests, a celebrated theologian formerly at Groningen, and Herr Strinesius, who is still at Frankfort on the Oder, advocated this same distinction; and I think that it is the opinion most widely accepted even among the Reformed. Thomas Aquinas and all the Thomists were of the same opinion, with the bulk of the Schoolmen and the theologians of the Roman Church. The Casuists also held to that idea: I count Grotius among the most eminent of them, and he was followed in this point by his commentators. Herr Pufendorf appeared to be of a different opinion, which he insisted on maintaining in the face of censure from some theologians; but he need not be taken into account, not having advanced far enough in subjects of this kind. He makes a vigorous protest against the absolute decree, in his *Fecialis divinus*, and yet he approves what is worst in the opinions of the champions of this decree, and without which this decree (as others of the Reformed explain) becomes endurable. Aristotle was very orthodox on this matter of justice, and the Schoolmen followed him: they distinguish, just as Cicero and the Jurists do, between perpetual right, which is binding on all and everywhere, and positive right, which is only for certain times and certain peoples. I once read with enjoyment the *Euthyphro* of Plato, who makes Socrates uphold the truth on that point, and M. Bayle has called attention to the same passage.

183. M. Bayle himself upholds this truth with considerable force in a certain passage, which it will be well to quote here in its entirety, long as it is (vol. II of the Continuation of *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*, ch. 152, p. 771 *seqq.*): 'According to the teaching of countless writers of importance', he says, 'there is in nature and in the essence of certain things a moral good or evil that precedes the divine decree. They prove this doctrine principally through the frightful consequences that attend the opposite dogma. Thus from the proposition that to do wrong to no man would be a good action, not in itself but by an arbitrary dispensation of God's will, it would follow that God could have given to man a law directly opposed at all points to the commandments of the Decalogue. That is horrifying. But here is a more direct proof, one derived from metaphysics. One thing is certain, that the existence of God is not an effect of his will. He exists not because he wills his [242]existence, but through the necessity of his infinite nature. His power and his knowledge exist through the same necessity. He is all-powerful, he knows all things, not because he wills it thus, but because these are attributes necessarily identified with him. The dominion

of his will relates only to the exercise of his power, he gives effect outside himself only to that which he wills, and he leaves all the rest in the state of mere possibility. Thence it comes that this dominion extends only over the existence of creatures, and not over their essential being. God was able to create matter, a man, a circle, or leave them in nothingness, but he was not able to produce them without giving them their essential properties. He had of necessity to make man a rational animal and to give the round shape to a circle, since, according to his eternal ideas, independent of the free decrees of his will, the essence of man lay in the properties of being animal and rational, and since the essence of the circle lay in having a circumference equally distant from the centre as to all its parts. This is what has caused the Christian philosophers to acknowledge that the essences of things are eternal, and that there are propositions of eternal truth; consequently that the essences of things and the truth of the first principles are immutable. That is to be understood not only of theoretical but also of practical first principles, and of all the propositions that contain the true definition of creatures. These essences and these truths emanate from the same necessity of nature as the knowledge of God. Since therefore it is by the nature of things that God exists, that he is all-powerful, and that he has perfect knowledge of all things, it is also by the nature of things that matter, the triangle, man and certain actions of man, etc., have such and such properties essentially. God saw from all eternity and in all necessity the essential relations of numbers, and the identity of the subject and predicate in the propositions that contain the essence of each thing. He saw likewise that the term just is included in these propositions: to esteem what is estimable, be grateful to one's benefactor, fulfil the conditions of a contract, and so on, with many others relating to morals. One is therefore justified in saying that the precepts of natural law assume the reasonableness and justice of that which is enjoined, and that it would be man's duty to practise what they contain even though God should have been so indulgent as to ordain nothing in that respect. Pray observe that in going back with our visionary thoughts to that ideal moment [243] when God has yet decreed nothing, we find in the ideas of God the principles of morals under terms that imply an obligation. We understand these maxims as certain, and derived from the eternal and immutable order: it beseems the rational creature to conform to reason; a rational creature conforming to reason is to be commended, but not conforming thereto is blameworthy. You would not dare to deny that these truths impose upon man a duty in relation to all acts which are in conformity with strict reason, such as these: one must esteem all that is estimable; render good for good; do wrong to no man; honour one's father; render to every man that which is his due, etc. Now since by the very nature of things, and before the divine laws, the truths of morality impose upon man certain duties, Thomas Aquinas and Grotius were justified in saying that if there were no God we should nevertheless be obliged to conform to natural law. Others have said that even supposing all rational beings in existence were to perish, true propositions would remain true. Cajetan maintained that if he remained alone in the universe, all other things without any exception having been destroyed, the knowledge that he had of the nature of a rose would nevertheless subsist.'

184. The late Jacob Thomasius, a celebrated Professor at Leipzig, made the apt observation in his elucidations of the philosophic rules of Daniel Stahl, a Jena professor, that it is not advisable to go altogether beyond God, and that one must not say, with some Scotists, that the eternal verities would exist even though there were no understanding, not even that of God. For it is, in my judgement, the divine understanding which gives reality to the eternal verities, albeit God's will have no part therein. All reality must be founded on something existent. It is true that an atheist may be a geometrician: but if there were no God, geometry would have no object. And without God, not only would there be nothing existent, but there would be nothing possible. That, however, does not hinder those who do not see the connexion of all things one with another and with God from being able to understand certain sciences, without knowing their first source, which is in God. Aristotle, although he also scarcely knew that source, nevertheless said something of the same kind which was very apposite. He acknowledged that the principles of individual forms of knowledge depend on a superior knowledge which gives the reason for them; and this superior knowledge must [244] have being, and consequently God, the source of being, for its object. Herr Dreier of Königsberg has aptly observed that the true metaphysics which Aristotle sought, and which he called *την ζητουμενην*, his *desideratum*, was theology.

185. Yet the same M. Bayle, who says so much that is admirable in order to prove that the rules of goodness and justice, and the eternal verities in general, exist by their nature, and not by an arbitrary choice of God, has spoken very hesitatingly about them in another passage (Continuation of *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*, vol. II, ch. 114, towards the end). After having given an account of the opinion of M. Descartes and a section of his followers, who maintain that God is the free cause of truths and of essences, he adds (p. 554): 'I have done all that I could to gain true understanding of this dogma and to find the solution of the difficulties surrounding it. I confess to you quite simply that I still cannot properly fathom it. That does not discourage me; I suppose, as other philosophers in other cases have supposed, that time will unfold the meaning of this noble paradox. I wish that Father Malebranche had thought fit to defend it, but he took other measures.' Is it possible that the enjoyment of doubt can have such influence upon a gifted man as to make him wish and hope for the power to believe that two contradictories never exist together for the sole reason that God forbade them to, and, moreover, that God could

have issued them an order to ensure that they always walked together? There is indeed a noble paradox! Father Malebranche showed great wisdom in taking other measures.

186. I cannot even imagine that M. Descartes can have been quite seriously of this opinion, although he had adherents who found this easy to believe, and would in all simplicity follow him where he only made pretence to go. It was apparently one of his tricks, one of his philosophic feints: he prepared for himself some loophole, as when for instance he discovered a trick for denying the movement of the earth, while he was a Copernican in the strictest sense. I suspect that he had in mind here another extraordinary manner of speaking, of his own invention, which was to say that affirmations and negations, and acts of inner judgement in general, are operations of the will. Through this artifice the eternal verities, which until the time of Descartes had been named an object of the divine understanding, suddenly became an object of God's will. Now the acts of his will are free, therefore God is the [245]free cause of the verities. That is the outcome of the matter. *Spectatum admissi*. A slight change in the meaning of terms has caused all this commotion. But if the affirmations of necessary truths were actions of the will of the most perfect mind, these actions would be anything but free, for there is nothing to choose. It seems that M. Descartes did not declare himself sufficiently on the nature of freedom, and that his conception of it was somewhat unusual: for he extended it so far that he even held the affirmations of necessary truths to be free in God. That was preserving only the name of freedom.

187. M. Bayle, who with others conceives this to be a freedom of indifference, that God had had to establish (for instance) the truths of numbers, and to ordain that three times three made nine, whereas he could have commanded them to make ten, imagines in this strange opinion, supposing it were possible to defend it, some kind of advantage gained against the Stratonists. Strato was one of the leaders of the School of Aristotle, and the successor of Theophrastus; he maintained (according to Cicero's account) that this world had been formed such as it is by Nature or by a necessary cause devoid of cognition. I admit that that might be so, if God had so preformed matter as to cause such an effect by the laws of motion alone. But without God there would not even have been any reason for existence, and still less for any particular existence of things: thus Strato's system is not to be feared.

188. Nevertheless M. Bayle is in difficulties over this: he will not admit plastic natures devoid of cognition, which Mr. Cudworth and others had introduced, for fear that the modern Stratonists, that is, the Spinozists, take advantage of it. This has involved him in disputes with M. le Clerc. Under the influence of this error, that a non-intelligent cause can produce nothing where contrivance appears, he is far from conceding to me that *preformation* which produces naturally the organs of animals, and *the system of a harmony pre-established by God* in bodies, to make them respond in accordance with their own laws to the thoughts and the wills of souls. But it ought to have been taken into account that this non-intelligent cause, which produces such beautiful things in the grains and seeds of plants and animals, and effects the actions of bodies as the will ordains them, was formed by the hand of God: and God is infinitely more skilful than a watchmaker, who himself [246]makes machines and automata that are capable of producing as wonderful effects as if they possessed intelligence.

189. Now to come to M. Bayle's apprehensions concerning the Stratonists, in case one should admit truths that are not dependent upon the will of God: he seems to fear lest they may take advantage against us of the perfect regularity of the eternal verities. Since this regularity springs only from the nature and necessity of things, without being directed by any cognition, M. Bayle fears that one might with Strato thence infer that the world also could have become regular through a blind necessity. But it is easy to answer that. In the region of the eternal verities are found all the possibles, and consequently the regular as well as the irregular: there must be a reason accounting for the preference for order and regularity, and this reason can only be found in understanding. Moreover these very truths can have no existence without an understanding to take cognizance of them; for they would not exist if there were no divine understanding wherein they are realized, so to speak. Hence Strato does not attain his end, which is to exclude cognition from that which enters into the origin of things.

190. The difficulty that M. Bayle has imagined in connexion with Strato seems a little too subtle and far-fetched. That is termed: *timere, ubi non est timor*. He makes another difficulty, which has just as slight a foundation, namely, that God would be subjected to a kind of *fatum*. Here are his words (p. 555): 'If they are propositions of eternal truth, which are such by their nature and not by God's institution, if they are not true by a free decree of his will, but if on the contrary he has recognized them as true of necessity, because such was their nature, there is a kind of *fatum* to which he is subjected; there is an absolutely insurmountable natural necessity. Thence comes also the result that the divine understanding in the infinity of its ideas has always and at the outset hit upon their perfect conformity with their objects, without the guidance of any cognition; for it would be a contradiction to say that any exemplary cause had served as a plan for the acts of God's understanding. One would never that way find eternal ideas or any first intelligence. One must say, then, that a nature which exists of necessity always finds its way, without any need for it to be shown. How then shall we overcome the obstinacy of a Stratonist?'

191. But again it is easy to answer. This so-called *fatum*, which [247]binds even the Divinity, is nothing but God's own nature, his own understanding, which furnishes the rules for his wisdom and his goodness; it is a happy necessity, without which he would be neither good nor wise. Is it to be desired that God should not be bound to be perfect and happy? Is our condition, which renders us liable to fail, worth envying? And should we not be well pleased to exchange it for sinlessness, if that depended upon us? One must be indeed weary of life to desire the freedom to destroy oneself and to pity the Divinity for not having that freedom. M. Bayle himself reasons thus elsewhere against those who laud to the skies an extravagant freedom which they assume in the will, when they would make the will independent of reason.

192. Moreover, M. Bayle wonders 'that the divine understanding in the infinity of its ideas always and at the outset hits upon their perfect conformity with their objects, without the guidance of any cognition'. This objection is null and void. Every distinct idea is, through its distinctness, in conformity with its object, and in God there are distinct ideas only. At first, moreover, the object exists nowhere; but when it comes into existence, it will be formed according to this idea. Besides, M. Bayle knows very well that the divine understanding has no need of time for seeing the connexion of things. All trains of reasoning are in God in a transcendent form, and they preserve an order amongst them in his understanding, as well as in ours: but with him it is only an order and a *priority of nature*, whereas with us there is a *priority of time*. It is therefore not to be wondered at that he who penetrates all things at one stroke should always strike true at the outset; and it must not be said that he succeeds without the guidance of any cognition. On the contrary, it is because his knowledge is perfect that his voluntary actions are also perfect.

193. Up to now I have shown that the Will of God is not independent of the rules of Wisdom, although indeed it is a matter for surprise that one should have been constrained to argue about it, and to do battle for a truth so great and so well established. But it is hardly less surprising that there should be people who believe that God only half observes these rules, and does not choose the best, although his wisdom causes him to recognize it; and, in a word, that there should be writers who hold that God could have done better. That is more or less the error of the famous Alfonso, King of Castile, who was elected King of the Romans by certain [248]Electors, and originated the astronomical tables that bear his name. This prince is reported to have said that if God in making the world had consulted him he would have given God good advice. Apparently the Ptolemaic system, which prevailed at that time, was displeasing to him. He believed therefore that something better planned could have been made, and he was right. But if he had known the system of Copernicus, with the discoveries of Kepler, now extended by knowledge of the gravity of the planets, he would indeed have confessed that the contrivance of the true system is marvellous. We see, therefore, that here the question concerned the more or less only; Alfonso maintained that better could have been done, and his opinion was censured by everyone.

194. Yet philosophers and theologians dare to support dogmatically such a belief; and I have many times wondered that gifted and pious persons should have been capable of setting bounds to the goodness and the perfection of God. For to assert that he knows what is best, that he can do it and that he does it not, is to avow that it rested with his will only to make the world better than it is; but that is what one calls lacking goodness. It is acting against that axiom already quoted: *Minus bonum habet rationem mali*. If some adduce experience to prove that God could have done better, they set themselves up as ridiculous critics of his works. To such will be given the answer given to all those who criticize God's course of action, and who from this same assumption, that is, the alleged defects of the world, would infer that there is an evil God, or at least a God neutral between good and evil. And if we hold the same opinion as King Alfonso, we shall, I say, receive this answer: You have known the world only since the day before yesterday, you see scarce farther than your nose, and you carp at the world. Wait until you know more of the world and consider therein especially the parts which present a complete whole (as do organic bodies); and you will find there a contrivance and a beauty transcending all imagination. Let us thence draw conclusions as to the wisdom and the goodness of the author of things, even in things that we know not. We find in the universe some things which are not pleasing to us; but let us be aware that it is not made for us alone. It is nevertheless made for us if we are wise: it will serve us if we use it for our service; we shall be happy in it if we wish to be.

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195. Someone will say that it is impossible to produce the best, because there is no perfect creature, and that it is always possible to produce one which would be more perfect. I answer that what can be said of a creature or of a particular substance, which can always be surpassed by another, is not to be applied to the universe, which, since it must extend through all future eternity, is an infinity. Moreover, there is an infinite number of creatures in the smallest particle of matter, because of the actual division of the *continuum* to infinity. And infinity, that is to say, the accumulation of an infinite number of substances, is, properly speaking, not a whole any more than the infinite number itself, whereof one cannot say whether it is even or uneven. That is just what serves to confute those who

make of the world a God, or who think of God as the Soul of the world; for the world or the universe cannot be regarded as an animal or as a substance.

196. It is therefore not a question of a creature, but of the universe; and the adversary will be obliged to maintain that one possible universe may be better than the other, to infinity; but there he would be mistaken, and it is that which he cannot prove. If this opinion were true, it would follow that God had not produced any universe at all: for he is incapable of acting without reason, and that would be even acting against reason. It is as if one were to suppose that God had decreed to make a material sphere, with no reason for making it of any particular size. This decree would be useless, it would carry with it that which would prevent its effect. It would be quite another matter if God decreed to draw from a given point one straight line to another given straight line, without any determination of the angle, either in the decree or in its circumstances. For in this case the determination would spring from the nature of the thing, the line would be perpendicular, and the angle would be right, since that is all that is determined and distinguishable. It is thus one must think of the creation of the best of all possible universes, all the more since God not only decrees to create a universe, but decrees also to create the best of all. For God decrees nothing without knowledge, and he makes no separate decrees, which would be nothing but antecedent acts of will: and these we have sufficiently explained, distinguishing them from genuine decrees.

197. M. Diroys, whom I knew in Rome, theologian to Cardinal d'Estrées, wrote a book entitled *Proofs and Assumptions in Favour of [250]the Christian Religion*, published in Paris in the year 1683. M. Bayle (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 165, p. 1058) recounts this objection brought up by M. Diroys: 'There is one more difficulty', he says, 'which it is no less important to meet than those given earlier, since it causes more trouble to those who judge goods and evils by considerations founded on the purest and most lofty maxims. This is that God being the supreme wisdom and goodness, it seems to them that he ought to do all things as wise and virtuous persons would wish them to be done, following the rules of wisdom and of goodness which God has imprinted in them, and as they would be obliged themselves to do these things if they depended upon them. Thus, seeing that the affairs of the world do not go so well as, in their opinion, they might go, and as they would go if they interfered themselves, they conclude that God, who is infinitely better and wiser than they, or rather wisdom and goodness itself, does not concern himself with these affairs.'

198. M. Diroys makes some apt remarks concerning this, which I will not repeat, since I have sufficiently answered the objection in more than one passage, and that has been the chief end of all my discourse. But he makes one assertion with which I cannot agree. He claims that the objection proves too much. One must again quote his own words with M. Bayle, p. 1059: 'If it does not behove the supreme Wisdom and Goodness to fail to do what is best and most perfect, it follows that all Beings are eternally, immutably and essentially as perfect and as good as they can be, since nothing can change except by passing either from a state less good to a better, or from a better to a less good. Now that cannot happen if it does not behove God to fail to do that which is best and most perfect, when he can do it. It will therefore be necessary that all beings be eternally and essentially filled with a knowledge and a virtue as perfect as God can give them. Now all that which is eternally and essentially as perfect as God can make it proceeds essentially from him; in a word, is eternally and essentially good as he is, and consequently it is God, as he is. That is the bearing of this maxim, that it is repugnant to supreme justice and goodness not to make things as good and perfect as they can be. For it is essential to essential wisdom and goodness to banish all that is repugnant to it altogether. One must therefore assert as a primary truth concerning the conduct of God in relation to creatures that there is nothing repugnant to this goodness and this wisdom in [251]making things less perfect than they could be, or in permitting the goods that it has produced either completely to cease to be or to change and deteriorate. For it causes no offence to God that there should be other Beings than he, that is beings who can be not what they are, and do not what they do or do what they do not.'

199. M. Bayle calls this answer paltry, but I find his counter-objection involved. M. Bayle will have those who are for the two principles to take their stand chiefly on the assumption of the supreme freedom of God: for if he were compelled to produce all that which he can, he would produce also sins and sorrows. Thus the Dualists could from the existence of evil conclude nothing contrary to the oneness of the principle, if this principle were as much inclined to evil as to good. There M. Bayle carries the notion of freedom too far: for even though God be supremely free, it does not follow that he maintains an indifference of equipoise: and even though he be inclined to act, it does not follow that he is compelled by this inclination to produce all that which he can. He will produce only that which he wills, for his inclination prompts him to good. I admit the supreme freedom of God, but I do not confuse it with indifference of equipoise, as if he could act without reason. M. Diroys therefore imagines that the Dualists, in their insistence that the single good principle produce no evil, ask too much; for by the same reason, according to M. Diroys, they ought also to ask that he should produce the greatest good, the less good being a kind of evil. I hold that the Dualists are wrong in respect of the first point, and that they would be right in respect of the second, where M. Diroys blames them without cause; or rather that one can reconcile the evil, or the less good, in some parts with the best in the whole. If the Dualists demanded that God should do the best, they would

not be demanding too much. They are mistaken rather in claiming that the best in the whole should be free from evil in the parts, and that therefore what God has made is not the best.

200. But M. Diroys maintains that if God always produces the best he will produce other Gods; otherwise each substance that he produced would not be the best nor the most perfect. But he is mistaken, through not taking into account the order and connexion of things. If each substance taken separately were perfect, all would be alike; which is neither fitting nor possible. If they [252]were Gods, it would not have been possible to produce them. The best system of things will therefore not contain Gods; it will always be a system of bodies (that is, things arranged according to time and place) and of souls which represent and are aware of bodies, and in accordance with which bodies are in great measure directed. So, as the design of a building may be the best of all in respect of its purpose, of expense and of circumstances; and as an arrangement of some figured representations of bodies which is given to you may be the best that one can find, it is easy to imagine likewise that a structure of the universe may be the best of all, without becoming a god. The connexion and order of things brings it about that the body of every animal and of every plant is composed of other animals and of other plants, or of other living and organic beings; consequently there is subordination, and one body, one substance serves the other: thus their perfection cannot be equal.

201. M. Bayle thinks (p. 1063) that M. Diroys has confused two different propositions. According to the one, God must do all things as wise and virtuous persons would wish that they should be done, by the rules of wisdom and of goodness that God has imprinted in them, and as they would be obliged themselves to do them if those things depended upon them. The other is that it is not consistent with supreme wisdom and goodness to fail to do what is best and most perfect. M. Diroys (in M. Bayle's opinion) sets up the first proposition as an objection for himself, and replies to the second. But therein he is justified, as it seems to me. For these two propositions are connected, the second is a result of the first: to do less good than one could is to be lacking in wisdom or in goodness. To be the best, and to be desired by those who are most virtuous and wise, comes to the same thing. And it may be said that, if we could understand the structure and the economy of the universe, we should find that it is made and directed as the wisest and most virtuous could wish it, since God cannot fail to do thus. This necessity nevertheless is only of a moral nature: and I admit that if God were forced by a metaphysical necessity to produce that which he makes, he would produce all the possibles, or nothing; and in this sense M. Bayle's conclusion would be fully correct. But as all the possibles are not compatible together in one and the same world-sequence, for that very reason all the possibles cannot be produced, and it must be said that God is not [253]forced, metaphysically speaking, into the creation of this world. One may say that as soon as God has decreed to create something there is a struggle between all the possibles, all of them laying claim to existence, and that those which, being united, produce most reality, most perfection, most significance carry the day. It is true that all this struggle can only be ideal, that is to say, it can only be a conflict of reasons in the most perfect understanding, which cannot fail to act in the most perfect way, and consequently to choose the best. Yet God is bound by a moral necessity, to make things in such a manner that there can be nothing better: otherwise not only would others have cause to criticize what he makes, but, more than that, he would not himself be satisfied with his work, he would blame himself for its imperfection; and that conflicts with the supreme felicity of the divine nature. This perpetual sense of his own fault or imperfection would be to him an inevitable source of grief, as M. Bayle says on another occasion (p.953).

202. M. Diroys' argument contains a false assumption, in his statement that nothing can change except by passing from a state less good to a better or from a better to a less good; and that thus, if God makes the best, what he has produced cannot be changed: it would be an eternal substance, a god. But I do not see why a thing cannot change its kind in relation to good or evil, without changing its degree. In the transition from enjoyment of music to enjoyment of painting, or *vice versa* from the pleasure of the eyes to that of the ears, the degree of enjoyment may remain the same, the latter gaining no advantage over the former save that of novelty. If the quadrature of the circle should come to pass or (what is the same thing) the circulation of the square, that is, if the circle were changed into a square of the same size, or the square into a circle, it would be difficult to say, on the whole, without having regard to some special use, whether one would have gained or lost. Thus the best may be changed into another which neither yields to it nor surpasses it: but there will always be an order among them, and that the best order possible. Taking the whole sequence of things, the best has no equal; but one part of the sequence may be equalled by another part of the same sequence. Besides it might be said that the whole sequence of things to infinity may be the best possible, although what exists all through the universe in each portion of time be not the best. It [254]might be therefore that the universe became even better and better, if the nature of things were such that it was not permitted to attain to the best all at once. But these are problems of which it is hard for us to judge.

203. M. Bayle says (p. 1064) that the question whether God could have made things more perfect than he made them is also very difficult, and that the reasons for and against are very strong. But it is, so it seems to me, as if

one were to question whether God's actions are consistent with the most perfect wisdom and the greatest goodness. It is a very strange thing, that by changing the terms a little one throws doubt upon what is, if properly understood, as clear as anything can be. The reasons to the contrary have no force, being founded only on the semblance of defects; and M. Bayle's objection, which tends to prove that the law of the best would impose upon God a true metaphysical necessity, is only an illusion that springs from the misuse of terms. M. Bayle formerly held a different opinion, when he commended that of Father Malebranche, which was akin to mine on this subject. But M. Arnauld having written in opposition to Father Malebranche, M. Bayle altered his opinion; and I suppose that his tendency towards doubt, which increased in him with the years, was conducive to that result. M. Arnauld was doubtless a great man, and his authority has great weight: he made sundry good observations in his writings against Father Malebranche, but he was not justified in contesting those of his statements that were akin to mine on the rule of the best.

204. The excellent author of *The Search for Truth*, having passed from philosophy to theology, published finally an admirable treatise on Nature and Grace. Here he showed in his way (as M. Bayle explained in his *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*, ch. 234) that the events which spring from the enforcement of general laws are not the object of a particular will of God. It is true that when one wills a thing one wills also in a sense everything that is necessarily attached to it, and in consequence God cannot will general laws without also willing in a sense all the particular effects that must of necessity be derived from them. But it is always true that these particular events are not willed for their own sake, and that is what is meant by the expression that they are not willed by a *particular* and direct will. There is no doubt that when God resolved to act outside himself, he made choice of a manner of action which [255]should be worthy of the supremely perfect Being, that is, which should be infinitely simple and uniform, but yet of an infinite productivity. One may even suppose that this manner of action by *general acts of will* appeared to him preferable—although there must thence result some superfluous events (and even bad if they are taken separately, that is my own addition)—to another manner more composed and more regular; such is Father Malebranche's opinion. Nothing is more appropriate than this assumption (according to the opinion of M. Bayle, when he wrote his *Divers Thoughts on the Comet*) to solve a thousand difficulties which are brought up against divine providence: 'To ask God', he says, 'why he has made things which serve to render men more wicked, that would be to ask why God has carried out his plan (which can only be of infinite beauty) by the simplest and most uniform methods, and why, by a complexity of decrees that would unceasingly cut across one another, he has not prevented the wrong use of man's free will.' He adds 'that miracles being particular acts of will must have an end worthy of God'.

205. On these foundations he makes some good reflexions (ch. 231) concerning the injustice of those who complain of the prosperity of the wicked. 'I shall have no scruples', he says, 'about saying that all those who are surprised at the prosperity of the wicked have pondered very little upon the nature of God, and that they have reduced the obligations of a cause which directs all things, to the scope of a providence altogether subordinate; and that is small-minded. What then! Should God, after having made free causes and necessary causes, in a mixture infinitely well fitted to show forth the wonders of his infinite wisdom, have established laws consistent with the nature of free causes, but so lacking in firmness that the slightest trouble that came upon a man would overthrow them entirely, to the ruin of human freedom? A mere city governor will become an object of ridicule if he changes his regulations and orders as often as someone is pleased to murmur against him. And shall God, whose laws concern a good so universal that all of the world that is visible to us perchance enters into it as no more than a trifling accessory, be bound to depart from his laws, because they to-day displease the one and to-morrow the other? Or again because a superstitious person, deeming wrongly that a monstrosity presages something deadly, proceeds from his error to a criminal sacrifice? Or because a good [256]soul, who yet does not value virtue highly enough to believe that to have none is punishment enough in itself, is shocked that a wicked man should become rich and enjoy vigorous health? Can one form any falser notions of a universal providence? Everyone agrees that this law of nature, the strong prevails over the weak, has been very wisely laid down, and that it would be absurd to maintain that when a stone falls on a fragile vase which is the delight of its owner, God should depart from this law in order to spare that owner vexation. Should one then not confess that it is just as absurd to maintain that God must depart from the same law to prevent a wicked man from growing rich at the expense of a good man? The more the wicked man sets himself above the promptings of conscience and of honour, the more does he exceed the good man in strength, so that if he comes to grips with the good man he must, according to the course of nature, ruin him. If, moreover, they are both engaged in the business of finance, the wicked man must, according to the same course of nature, grow richer than the good man, just as a fierce fire consumes more wood than a fire of straw. Those who would wish sickness for a wicked man are sometimes as unfair as those who would wish that a stone falling on a glass should not break it: for his organs being arranged as they are, neither the food that he takes nor the air that he breathes can, according to natural laws, be detrimental to his health. Therefore those who complain about his health complain of God's failure to violate the laws which he has established. And in this they are all the more unfair because, through combinations and

concatenations which were in the power of God alone, it happens often enough that the course of nature brings about the punishment of sin.'

206. It is a thousand pities that M. Bayle so soon quitted the way he had so auspiciously begun, of reasoning on behalf of providence: for his work would have been fruitful, and in saying fine things he would have said good things as well. I agree with Father Malebranche that God does things in the way most worthy of him. But I go a little further than he, with regard to 'general and particular acts of will'. As God can do nothing without reasons, even when he acts miraculously, it follows that he has no will about individual events but what results from some general truth or will. Thus I would say that God never has a *particular will* such as this Father implies, that is to say, a *particular primitive will*.

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207. I think even that miracles have nothing to distinguish them from other events in this regard: for reasons of an order superior to that of Nature prompt God to perform them. Thus I would not say, with this Father, that God departs from general laws whenever order requires it: he departs from one law only for another law more applicable, and what order requires cannot fail to be in conformity with the rule of order, which is one of the general laws. The distinguishing mark of miracles (taken in the strictest sense) is that they cannot be accounted for by the natures of created things. That is why, should God make a general law causing bodies to be attracted the one to the other, he could only achieve its operation by perpetual miracles. And likewise, if God willed that the organs of human bodies should conform to the will of the soul, according to the *system of occasional causes*, this law also would come into operation only through perpetual miracles.

208. Thus one must suppose that, among the general rules which are not absolutely necessary, God chooses those which are the most natural, which it is easiest to explain, and which also are of greatest service for the explanation of other things. That is doubtless the conclusion most excellent and most pleasing; and even though the System of Pre-established Harmony were not necessary otherwise, because it banishes superfluous miracles, God would have chosen it as being the most harmonious. The ways of God are those most simple and uniform: for he chooses rules that least restrict one another. They are also the most *productive* in proportion to the *simplicity of ways and means*. It is as if one said that a certain house was the best that could have been constructed at a certain cost. One may, indeed, reduce these two conditions, simplicity and productivity, to a single advantage, which is to produce as much perfection as is possible: thus Father Malebranche's system in this point amounts to the same as mine. Even if the effect were assumed to be greater, but the process less simple, I think one might say that, when all is said and done, the effect itself would be less great, taking into account not only the final effect but also the mediate effect. For the wisest mind so acts, as far as it is possible, that the *means* are also in a sense *ends*, that is, they are desirable not only on account of what they do, but on account of what they are. The more intricate processes take up too much ground, too much space, too much place, too much time that might have been better employed.

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209. Now since everything resolves itself into this greatest perfection, we return to my law of the best. For perfection includes not only the *moral good* and the *physical good* of intelligent creatures, but also the good which is purely *metaphysical*, and concerns also creatures devoid of reason. It follows that the evil that is in rational creatures happens only by concomitance, not by antecedent will but by a consequent will, as being involved in the best possible plan; and the metaphysical good which includes everything makes it necessary sometimes to admit physical evil and moral evil, as I have already explained more than once. It so happens that the ancient Stoics were not far removed from this system. M. Bayle remarked upon this himself in his *Dictionary* in the article on 'Chrysippus', rem. T. It is of importance to give his own words, in order sometimes to face him with his own objections and to bring him back to the fine sentiments that he had formerly pronounced: 'Chrysippus', he says (p. 930), 'in his work on Providence examined amongst other questions this one: Did the nature of things, or the providence that made the world and the human kind, make also the diseases to which men are subject? He answers that the chief design of Nature was not to make them sickly, that would not be in keeping with the cause of all good; but Nature, in preparing and producing many great things excellently ordered and of great usefulness, found that some drawbacks came as a result, and thus these were not in conformity with the original design and purpose; they came about as a sequel to the work, they existed only as consequences. For the formation of the human body, Chrysippus said, the finest idea as well as the very utility of the work demanded that the head should be composed of a tissue of thin, fine bones; but because of that it was bound to have the disadvantage of not being able to resist blows. Nature made health, and at the same time it was necessary by a kind of concomitance that the source of diseases should be opened up. The same thing applies with regard to virtue; the direct action of Nature, which brought it forth, produced by a counter stroke the brood of vices. I have not

translated literally, for which reason I give here the actual Latin of Aulus Gellius, for the benefit of those who understand that language (Aul. Gellius, lib. 6, cap. 1): “Idem Chrysippus in eod. lib. (quarto, περι προνοιας) tractat consideratque, dignumque esse id quaeri putat, εἰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων νοσοὶ κατὰ φύσιν γίνονται. Id est, naturane ipsa rerum, vel [259]providentia quae compagem hanc mundi et genus hominum fecit, morbos quoque et debilitates et aegritudines corporum, quas patiuntur homines, fecerit. Existimat autem non fuisse hoc principale naturae consilium, ut faceret homines morbis obnoxios. Nunquam enim hoc convenisse naturae auctori parentique rerum omnium bonarum. Sed quum multa, inquit, atque magna gigneret, pareretque aptissima et utilissima, alia quoque simul agnata sunt incommoda iis ipsis, quae faciebat, cohaerentia: eaque non per naturam, sed per sequelas quasdam necessarias facta dicit, quod ipse appellatκατὰ παρακολουθησιν. Sicut, inquit, quum corpora hominum natura fingeret, ratio subtilior et utilitas ipsa operis postulavit ut tenuissimis minutisque ossiculis caput compingeret. Sed hanc utilitatem rei majoris alia quaedam incommoditas extrinsecus consecuta est, ut fieret caput tenuiter munitum et ictibus offensionibusque parvis fragile. Proinde morbi quoque et aegritudines partae sunt, dum salus paritur. Sic Hercle, inquit, dum virtus hominibus per consilium naturae gignitur, vitia ibidem per affinitatem contrariam nata sunt.” I do not think that a pagan could have said anything more reasonable, considering his ignorance of the first man’s fall, the knowledge of which has only reached us through revelation, and which indeed is the true cause of our miseries. If we had sundry like extracts from the works of Chrysippus, or rather if we had his works, we should have a more favourable idea than we have of the beauty of his genius.’

210. Let us now see the reverse of the medal in the altered M. Bayle. After having quoted in his *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial* (vol. III, ch. 155, p. 962) these words of M. Jacquelot, which are much to my liking: ‘To change the order of the universe is something of infinitely greater consequence than the prosperity of a good man,’ he adds: ‘This thought has something dazzling about it: Father Malebranche has placed it in the best possible light; and he has persuaded some of his readers that a system which is simple and very productive is more consistent with God’s wisdom than a system more composite and less productive in proportion, but more capable of averting irregularities. M. Bayle was one of those who believed that Father Malebranche in that way gave a wonderful solution.’ (It is M. Bayle himself speaking.) ‘But it is almost impossible to be satisfied with it after having read M. Arnauld’s books against this system, and after having contemplated the vast and boundless idea of the supremely [260]perfect Being. This idea shows us that nothing is easier for God than to follow a plan which is simple, productive, regular and opportune for all creatures simultaneously.’

211. While I was in France I showed to M. Arnauld a dialogue I had composed in Latin on the cause of evil and the justice of God; it was not only before his disputes with Father Malebranche, but even before the book on *The Search for Truth* appeared. That principle which I uphold here, namely that sin had been permitted because it had been involved in the best plan for the universe, was already applied there; and M. Arnauld did not seem to be startled by it. But the slight contentions which he has since had with Father Malebranche have given him cause to examine this subject with closer attention, and to be more severe in his judgement thereof. Yet I am not altogether pleased with M. Bayle’s manner of expression here on this subject, and I am not of the opinion ‘that a more composite and less productive plan might be more capable of averting irregularities’. Rules are the expression of general will: the more one observes rules, the more regularity there is; simplicity and productivity are the aim of rules. I shall be met with the objection that a uniform system will be free from irregularities. I answer that it would be an irregularity to be too uniform, that would offend against the rules of harmony. *Et citharoedus Ridetur chorda qui semper oberrat eadem*. I believe therefore that God can follow a simple, productive, regular plan; but I do not believe that the best and the most regular is always opportune for all creatures simultaneously; and I judge *a posteriori*, for the plan chosen by God is not so. I have, however, also shown this *a priori* in examples taken from mathematics, and I will presently give another here. An Origenist who maintains that all rational creatures become happy in the end will be still easier to satisfy. He will say, in imitation of St. Paul’s saying about the sufferings of this life, that those which are finite are not worthy to be compared with eternal bliss.

212. What is deceptive in this subject, as I have already observed, is that one feels an inclination to believe that what is the best in the whole is also the best possible in each part. One reasons thus in geometry, when it is a question *de maximis et minimis*. If the road from A to B that one proposes to take is the shortest possible, and if this road passes by C, then the road from A to C, part of the first, must also be the shortest possible. But the inference from [261]quantity to quality is not always right, any more than that which is drawn from equals to similars. For *equals* are those whose quantity is the same, and *similars* are those not differing according to qualities. The late Herr Sturm, a famous mathematician in Altorf, while in Holland in his youth published there a small book under the title of *Euclides Catholicus*. Here he endeavoured to give exact and general rules in subjects not mathematical, being encouraged in the task by the late Herr Erhard Weigel, who had been his tutor. In this book he transfers to similars what Euclid had said of equals, and he formulates this axiom: *Si similibus addas similia, tota sunt similia*. But so many limitations were necessary to justify this new rule, that it would have been

better, in my opinion, to enounce it at the outset with a reservation, by saying, *Si similibus similia addas similiter, tota sunt similia*. Moreover, geometricians often require *non tantum similia, sed et similiter posita*.

213. This difference between quantity and quality appears also in our case. The part of the shortest way between two extreme points is also the shortest way between the extreme points of this part; but the part of the best Whole is not of necessity the best that one could have made of this part. For the part of a beautiful thing is not always beautiful, since it can be extracted from the whole, or marked out within the whole, in an irregular manner. If goodness and beauty always lay in something absolute and uniform, such as extension, matter, gold, water, and other bodies assumed to be homogeneous or similar, one must say that the part of the good and the beautiful would be beautiful and good like the whole, since it would always have resemblance to the whole: but this is not the case in things that have mutual relations. An example taken from geometry will be appropriate to explain my idea.

214. There is a kind of geometry which Herr Jung of Hamburg, one of the most admirable men of his time, called 'empiric'. It makes use of conclusive experiments and proves various propositions of Euclid, but especially those which concern the equality of two figures, by cutting the one in pieces, and putting the pieces together again to make the other. In this manner, by cutting carefully in parts the squares on the two sides of the right-angled triangle, and arranging these parts carefully, one makes from them the square on the hypotenuse; that is demonstrating empirically the 47th proposition of the first book of Euclid. Now supposing that some of these pieces taken from the two smaller [262]squares are lost, something will be lacking in the large square that is to be formed from them; and this defective combination, far from pleasing, will be disagreeably ugly. If then the pieces that remained, composing the faulty combination, were taken separately without any regard to the large square to whose formation they ought to contribute, one would group them together quite differently to make a tolerably good combination. But as soon as the lost pieces are retrieved and the gap in the faulty combination is filled, there will ensue a beautiful and regular thing, the complete large square: this perfect combination will be far more beautiful than the tolerably good combination which had been made from the pieces one had not mislaid alone. The perfect combination corresponds to the universe in its entirety, and the faulty combination that is a part of the perfect one corresponds to some part of the universe, where we find defects which the Author of things has allowed, because otherwise, if he had wished to re-shape this faulty part and make thereof a tolerably good combination, the whole would not then have been so beautiful. For the parts of the faulty combination, grouped better to make a tolerably good combination, could not have been used properly to form the whole and perfect combination. Thomas Aquinas had an inkling of these things when he said: *ad prudentem gubernatorem pertinet, negligere aliquem defectum bonitatis in parte, ut faciat augmentum bonitatis in toto* (Thom., *Contra Gentiles*, lib. 2, c. 71). Thomas Gatacre, in his Notes on the book of Marcus Aurelius (lib. 5, cap. 8, with M. Bayle), cites also passages from authors who say that the evil of the parts is often the good of the whole.

215. Let us return to M. Bayle's illustrations. He imagines a prince (p. 963) who is having a city built, and who, in bad taste, aims rather at airs of magnificence therein, and a bold and unusual style of architecture, than at the provision of conveniences of all kinds for the inhabitants. But if this prince has true magnanimity he will prefer the convenient to the magnificent architecture. That is M. Bayle's judgement. I consider, however, that there are cases where one will justifiably prefer beauty of construction in a palace to the convenience of a few domestics. But I admit that the construction would be bad, however beautiful it might be, if it were a cause of diseases to the inhabitants; provided it was possible to make one that would be better, taking into account beauty, convenience and health all together. It may be, indeed, that one cannot [263]have all these advantages at once. Thus, supposing one wished to build on the northern and more bracing side of the mountain, if the castle were then bound to be of an unendurable construction, one would prefer to make it face southward.

216. M. Bayle raises the further objection, that it is true that our legislators can never invent regulations such as are convenient for all individuals, 'Nulla lex satis commoda omnibus est; id modo quaeritur, si majori parti et in summam prodest. (Cato apud Livium, L. 34, circa init.)' But the reason is that the limited condition of their knowledge compels them to cling to laws which, when all is taken into account, are more advantageous than harmful. Nothing of all that can apply to God, who is as infinite in power and understanding as in goodness and true greatness. I answer that since God chooses the best possible, one cannot tax him with any limitation of his perfections; and in the universe not only does the good exceed the evil, but also the evil serves to augment the good.

217. He observes also that the Stoics derived a blasphemy from this principle, saying that evils must be endured with patience, or that they were necessary, not only to the well-being and completeness of the universe, but also to the felicity, perfection and conservation of God, who directs it. The Emperor Marcus Aurelius gave expression to that in the eighth chapter of the fifth book of his *Meditations*. 'Duplici ratione', he says, 'diligas oportet, quidquid evererit tibi; altera quod tibi natum et tibi coordinatum et ad te quodammodo affectum est; altera quod universi

gubernatori prosperitatis et consummationis atque adeo permansionis ipsius procurandae (της ευοδίας και της συντελειας και της συμμονης αυτης) ex parte causa est.' This precept is not the most reasonable of those stated by that great emperor. A *diligas oportet* (στεργειν χρη) is of no avail; a thing does not become pleasing just because it is necessary, and because it is destined for or attached to someone: and what for me would be an evil would not cease to be such because it would be my master's good, unless this good reflected back on me. One good thing among others in the universe is that the general good becomes in reality the individual good of those who love the Author of all good. But the principal error of this emperor and of the Stoics was their assumption that the good of the universe must please God himself, because they imagined God as the soul of the world. This error has nothing in [264]common with my dogma, according to which God is *Intelligentia extramundana*, as Martianus Capella calls him, or rather *supramundana*. Further, he acts to do good, and not to receive it. *Melius est dare quam accipere*; his bliss is ever perfect and can receive no increase, either from within or from without.

218. I come now to the principal objection M. Bayle, after M. Arnauld, brings up against me. It is complicated: they maintain that God would be under compulsion, that he would act of necessity, if he were bound to create the best; or at least that he would have been lacking in power if he could not have found a better expedient for excluding sins and other evils. That is in effect denying that this universe is the best, and that God is bound to insist upon the best. I have met this objection adequately in more than one passage: I have proved that God cannot fail to produce the best; and from that assumption it follows that the evils we experience could not have been reasonably excluded from the universe, since they are there. Let us see, however, what these two excellent men bring up, or rather let us see what M. Bayle's objection is, for he professes to have profited by the arguments of M. Arnauld.

219. 'Would it be possible', he says, *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 158, p. 890, 'that a nature whose goodness, holiness, wisdom, knowledge and power are infinite, who loves virtue supremely, and hates vice supremely, as our clear and distinct idea of him shows us, and as well-nigh every page of Scripture assures us, could have found in virtue no means fitting and suited for his ends? Would it be possible that vice alone had offered him this means? One would have thought on the contrary that nothing beseeemed this nature more than to establish virtue in his work to the exclusion of all vice.' M. Bayle here exaggerates things. I agree that some vice was connected with the best plan of the universe, but I do not agree with him that God could not find in virtue any means suited for his ends. This objection would have been valid if there were no virtue, if vice took its place everywhere. He will say it suffices that vice prevails and that virtue is trifling in comparison. But I am far from agreeing with him there, and I think that in reality, properly speaking, there is incomparably more moral good than moral evil in rational creatures; and of these we have knowledge of but few.

220. This evil is not even so great in men as it is declared to be. [265]It is only people of a malicious disposition or those who have become somewhat misanthropic through misfortunes, like Lucian's Timon, who find wickedness everywhere, and who poison the best actions by the interpretations they give to them. I speak of those who do it in all seriousness, to draw thence evil conclusions, by which their conduct is tainted; for there are some who only do it to show off their own acumen. People have found that fault in Tacitus, and that again is the criticism M. Descartes (in one of his letters) makes of Mr. Hobbes's book *De Cive*, of which only a few copies had at that time been printed for distribution among friends, but to which some notes by the author were added in the second edition which we have. For although M. Descartes acknowledges that this book is by a man of talent, he observes therein some very dangerous principles and maxims, in the assumption there made that all men are wicked, or the provision of them with motives for being so. The late Herr Jacob Thomasius said in his admirable *Tables of Practical Philosophy* that the πρωτον ψευδος, the primary cause of errors in this book by Mr. Hobbes, was that he took *statum legalem pro naturali*, that is to say that the corrupt state served him as a gauge and rule, whereas it is the state most befitting human nature which Aristotle had had in view. For according to Aristotle, that is termed *natural* which conforms most closely to the perfection of the nature of the thing; but Mr. Hobbes applies the term *natural state* to that which has least art, perhaps not taking into account that human nature in its perfection carries art with it. But the question of name, that is to say, of what may be called natural, would not be of great importance were it not that Aristotle and Hobbes fastened upon it the notion of natural right, each one following his own signification. I have said here already that I found in the book on the Falsity of human Virtues the same defect as M. Descartes found in Mr. Hobbes's *De Cive*.

221. But even if we assume that vice exceeds virtue in the human kind, as it is assumed the number of the damned exceeds that of the elect, it by no means follows that vice and misery exceed virtue and happiness in the universe: one should rather believe the opposite, because the City of God must be the most perfect of all possible states, since it was formed and is perpetually governed by the greatest and best of all Monarchs. This answer confirms the observation I made earlier, when speaking of the conformity of faith with reason, namely, that one of the greatest [266]sources of fallacy in the objections is the confusion of the apparent with the real. And here by

the apparent I mean not simply such as would result from an exact discussion of facts, but that which has been derived from the small extent of our experiences. It would be senseless to try to bring up appearances so imperfect, and having such slight foundation, in opposition to the proofs of reason and the revelations of faith.

222. Finally, I have already observed that love of virtue and hatred of vice, which tend in an undefined way to bring virtue into existence and to prevent the existence of vice, are only antecedent acts of will, such as is the will to bring about the happiness of all men and to save them from misery. These acts of antecedent will make up only a portion of all the antecedent will of God taken together, whose result forms the consequent will, or the decree to create the best. Through this decree it is that love for virtue and for the happiness of rational creatures, which is undefined in itself and goes as far as is possible, receives some slight limitations, on account of the heed that must be paid to good in general. Thus one must understand that God loves virtue supremely and hates vice supremely, and that nevertheless some vice is to be permitted.

223. M. Arnauld and M. Bayle appear to maintain that this method of explaining things and of establishing a best among all the plans for the universe, one such as may not be surpassed by any other, sets a limit to God's power. 'Have you considered', says M. Arnauld to Father Malebranche (in his *Reflexions on the New System of Nature and Grace*, vol. II, p. 385), 'that in making such assumptions you take it upon yourself to subvert the first article of the creed, whereby we make profession of believing in God the Father Almighty?' He had said already (p. 362): 'Can one maintain, without trying to blind oneself, that a course of action which could not fail to have this grievous result, namely, that the majority of men perish, bears the stamp of God's goodness more than a different course of action, which would have caused, if God had followed it, the salvation of all men?' And, as M. Jacquelot does not differ from the principles I have just laid down, M. Bayle raises like objections in his case (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 151, p. 900): 'If one adopts such explanations', he says, 'one sees oneself constrained to renounce the most obvious notions on the nature of the supremely perfect Being. These teach us that all things not implying contradiction [267]are possible for him, that consequently it is possible for him to save people whom he does not save: for what contradiction would result supposing the number of the elect were greater than it is? They teach us besides that, since he is supremely happy, he has no will which he cannot carry out. How, then, shall we understand that he wills to save all men and that he cannot do so? We sought some light to help us out of the perplexities we feel in comparing the idea of God with the state of the human kind, and lo! we are given elucidations that cast us into darkness more dense.'

224. All these obstacles vanish before the exposition I have just given. I agree with M. Bayle's principle, and it is also mine, that everything implying no contradiction is possible. But as for me, holding as I do that God did the best that was possible, or that he could not have done better than he has done, deeming also that to pass any other judgement upon his work in its entirety would be to wrong his goodness or his wisdom, I must say that to make something which surpasses in goodness the best itself, that indeed would imply contradiction. That would be as if someone maintained that God could draw from one point to another a line shorter than the straight line, and accused those who deny this of subverting the article of faith whereby we believe in God the Father Almighty.

225. The infinity of possibles, however great it may be, is no greater than that of the wisdom of God, who knows all possibles. One may even say that if this wisdom does not exceed the possibles extensively, since the objects of the understanding cannot go beyond the possible, which in a sense is alone intelligible, it exceeds them intensively, by reason of the infinitely infinite combinations it makes thereof, and its many deliberations concerning them. The wisdom of God, not content with embracing all the possibles, penetrates them, compares them, weighs them one against the other, to estimate their degrees of perfection or imperfection, the strong and the weak, the good and the evil. It goes even beyond the finite combinations, it makes of them an infinity of infinities, that is to say, an infinity of possible sequences of the universe, each of which contains an infinity of creatures. By this means the divine Wisdom distributes all the possibles it had already contemplated separately, into so many universal systems which it further compares the one with the other. The result of all these comparisons and deliberations is the choice of the best from [268]among all these possible systems, which wisdom makes in order to satisfy goodness completely; and such is precisely the plan of the universe as it is. Moreover, all these operations of the divine understanding, although they have among them an order and a priority of nature, always take place together, no priority of time existing among them.

226. The careful consideration of these things will, I hope, induce a different idea of the greatness of the divine perfections, and especially of the wisdom and goodness of God, from any that can exist in the minds of those who make God act at random, without cause or reason. And I do not see how they could avoid falling into an opinion so strange, unless they acknowledged that there are reasons for God's choice, and that these reasons are derived from his goodness: whence it follows of necessity that what was chosen had the advantage of goodness over what was not chosen, and consequently that it is the best of all the possibles. The best cannot be surpassed in goodness, and it is no restriction of the power of God to say that he cannot do the impossible. Is it possible,

said M. Bayle, that there is no better plan than that one which God carried out? One answers that it is very possible and indeed necessary, namely that there is none: otherwise God would have preferred it.

227. It seems to me that I have proved sufficiently that among all the possible plans of the universe there is one better than all the rest, and that God has not failed to choose it. But M. Bayle claims to infer thence that God is therefore not free. This is how he speaks on that question (*ubi supra*, ch. 151, p. 899): 'I thought to argue with a man who assumed as I do that the goodness and the power of God are infinite, as well as his wisdom; and now I see that in reality this man assumes that God's goodness and power are enclosed within rather narrow bounds.' As to that, the objection has already been met: I set no bounds to God's power, since I recognize that it extends *ad maximum, ad omnia*, to all that implies no contradiction; and I set none to his goodness, since it attains to the best, *ad optimum*. But M. Bayle goes on: 'There is therefore no freedom in God; he is compelled by his wisdom to create, and then to create precisely such a work, and finally to create it precisely in such ways. These are three servitudes which form a more than Stoic *fatum*, and which render impossible all that is not within their sphere. It seems that, according to this system, God could [269] have said, even before shaping his decrees: I cannot save such and such a man, nor condemn such and such another, *quippe vetor fatis*, my wisdom permits it not.'

228. I answer that it is goodness which prompts God to create with the purpose of communicating himself; and this same goodness combined with wisdom prompts him to create the best: a best that includes the whole sequence, the effect and the process. It prompts him thereto without compelling him, for it does not render impossible that which it does not cause him to choose. To call that *fatum* is taking it in a good sense, which is not contrary to freedom: *fatum* comes from *fari*, to speak, to pronounce; it signifies a judgement, a decree of God, the award of his wisdom. To say that one cannot do a thing, simply because one does not will it, is to misuse terms. The wise mind wills only the good: is it then a servitude when the will acts in accordance with wisdom? And can one be less a slave than to act by one's own choice in accordance with the most perfect reason? Aristotle used to say that that man is in a natural servitude (*natura servus*) who lacks guidance, who has need of being directed. Slavery comes from without, it leads to that which offends, and especially to that which offends with reason: the force of others and our own passions enslave us. God is never moved by anything outside himself, nor is he subject to inward passions, and he is never led to that which can cause him offence. It appears, therefore, that M. Bayle gives odious names to the best things in the world, and turns our ideas upside-down, applying the term slavery to the state of the greatest and most perfect freedom.

229. He had also said not long before (ch. 151, p. 891): 'If virtue, or any other good at all, had been as appropriate as vice for the Creator's ends, vice would not have been given preference; it must therefore have been the only means that the Creator could have used; it was therefore employed purely of necessity. As therefore he loves his glory, not with a freedom of indifference, but by necessity, he must by necessity love all the means without which he could not manifest his glory. Now if vice, as vice, was the only means of attaining to this end, it will follow that God of necessity loves vice as vice, a thought which can only inspire us with horror; and he has revealed quite the contrary to us.' He observes at the same time that certain doctors among the Supralapsarians (like Rutherford, for example) denied that God wills sin as sin, whilst [270] they admitted that he wills sin permissively in so far as it is punishable and pardonable. But he urges in objection, that an action is only punishable and pardonable in so far as it is vicious.

230. M. Bayle makes a false assumption in these words that we have just read, and draws from them false conclusions. It is not true that God loves his glory by necessity, if thereby it is understood that he is led by necessity to acquire his glory through his creatures. For if that were so, he would acquire his glory always and everywhere. The decree to create is free: God is prompted to all good; the good, and even the best, inclines him to act; but it does not compel him, for his choice creates no impossibility in that which is distinct from the best; it causes no implication of contradiction in that which God refrains from doing. There is therefore in God a freedom that is exempt not only from constraint but also from necessity. I mean this in respect of metaphysical necessity; for it is a moral necessity that the wisest should be bound to choose the best. It is the same with the means which God chooses to attain his glory. And as for vice, it has been shown in preceding pages that it is not an object of God's decree as *means*, but as *conditio sine qua non*, and that for that reason alone it is permitted. One is even less justified in saying that vice is *the only means*; it would be at most one of the means, but one of the least among innumerable others.

231. 'Another frightful consequence,' M. Bayle goes on, 'the fatality of all things, ensues: God will not have been free to arrange events in a different way, since the means he chose to show forth his glory was the only means befitting his wisdom.' This so-called fatality or necessity is only moral, as I have just shown: it does not affect freedom; on the contrary, it assumes the best use thereof; it does not render impossible the objects set aside by God's choice. 'What, then, will become', he adds, 'of man's free will? Will there not have been necessity and fatality for Adam to sin? For if he had not sinned, he would have overthrown the sole plan that God had of

necessity created.' That is again a misuse of terms. Adam sinning freely was seen of God among the ideas of the possibles, and God decreed to admit him into existence as he saw him. This decree does not change the nature of the objects: it does not render necessary that which was contingent in itself, or impossible that which was possible.

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232. M. Bayle goes on (p. 892): 'The subtle Scotus asserts with much discernment that if God had no freedom of indifference no creature could have this kind of freedom.' I agree provided it is not meant as an indifference of equipoise, where there is no reason inclining more to one side than the other. M. Bayle acknowledges (farther on in chapter 168, p. 1111) that what is termed indifference does not exclude prevenient inclinations and pleasures. It suffices therefore that there be no metaphysical necessity in the action which is termed free, that is to say, it suffices that a choice be made between several courses possible.

233. He goes on again in the said chapter 157, p. 893: 'If God is not determined to create the world by a free motion of his goodness, but by the interests of his glory, which he loves by necessity, and which is the only thing he loves, for it is not different from his substance; and if the love that he has for himself has compelled him to show forth his glory through the most fitting means, and if the fall of man was this same means, it is evident that this fall happened entirely by necessity and that the obedience of Eve and Adam to God's commands was impossible.' Still the same error. The love that God bears to himself is essential to him, but the love for his glory, or the will to acquire his glory, is not so by any means: the love he has for himself did not impel him by necessity to actions without; they were free; and since there were possible plans whereby the first parents should not sin, their sin was therefore not necessary. Finally, I say in effect what M. Bayle acknowledges here, 'that God resolved to create the world by a free motion of his goodness'; and I add that this same motion prompted him to the best.

234. The same answer holds good against this statement of M. Bayle's (ch. 165, p. 1071): 'The means most appropriate for attaining an end is of necessity one alone' (that is very well said, at least for the cases where God has chosen). 'Therefore if God was prompted irresistibly to employ this means, he employed it by necessity.' (He was certainly prompted thereto, he was determined, or rather he determined himself thereto: but that which is certain is not always necessary, or altogether irresistible; the thing might have gone otherwise, but that did not happen, and with good reason. God chose between different courses all possible: thus, metaphysically speaking, he could have chosen or done what was not the best; but he could not morally speaking have done so. [272] Let us make use of a comparison from geometry. The best way from one point to another (leaving out of account obstacles and other considerations accidental to the medium) is one alone: it is that one which passes by the shortest line, which is the straight line. Yet there are innumerable ways from one point to another. There is therefore no necessity which binds me to go by the straight line; but as soon as I choose the best, I am determined to go that way, although this is only a moral necessity in the wise. That is why the following conclusions fail.) 'Therefore he could only do that which he did. Therefore that which has not happened or will never happen is absolutely impossible.' (These conclusions fail, I say: for since there are many things which have never happened and never will happen, and which nevertheless are clearly conceivable, and imply no contradiction, how can one say they are altogether impossible? M. Bayle has refuted that himself in a passage opposing the Spinozists, which I have already quoted here, and he has frequently acknowledged that there is nothing impossible except that which implies contradiction: now he changes style and terminology.) 'Therefore Adam's perseverance in innocence was always impossible; therefore his fall was altogether inevitable, and even antecedently to God's decree, for it implied contradiction that God should be able to will a thing opposed to his wisdom: it is, after all, the same thing to say, that it is impossible for God, as to say, God could do it, if he so willed, but he cannot will it.' (It is misusing terms in a sense to say here: one can will, one will will; 'can' here concerns the actions that one does will. Nevertheless it implies no contradiction that God should will—directly or permissively—a thing not implying contradiction, and in this sense it is permitted to say that God can will it.)

235. In a word, when one speaks of the *possibility* of a thing it is not a question of the causes that can bring about or prevent its actual existence: otherwise one would change the nature of the terms, and render useless the distinction between the possible and the actual. This Abelard did, and Wyclif appears to have done after him, in consequence of which they fell needlessly into unsuitable and disagreeable expressions. That is why, when one asks if a thing is possible or necessary, and brings in the consideration of what God wills or chooses, one alters the issue. For God chooses among the possibles, and for that very reason he chooses freely, [273] and is not compelled; there would be neither choice nor freedom if there were but one course possible.

236. One must also answer M. Bayle's syllogisms, so as to neglect none of the objections of a man so gifted: they occur in Chapter 151 of his *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial* (vol. III, pp. 900, 901).

## FIRST SYLLOGISM

'God can will nothing that is opposed to the necessary love which he has for his wisdom.

'Now the salvation of all men is opposed to the necessary love which God has for his wisdom.

'Therefore God cannot will the salvation of all men.'

The major is self-evident, for one can do nothing whereof the opposite is necessary. But the minor cannot be accepted, for, albeit God loves his wisdom of necessity, the actions whereto his wisdom prompts him cannot but be free, and the objects whereto his wisdom does not prompt him do not cease to be possible. Moreover, his wisdom has prompted him to will the salvation of all men, but not by a consequent and decretory will. Yet this consequent will, being only a result of free antecedent acts of will, cannot fail to be free also.

## SECOND SYLLOGISM

'The work most worthy of God's wisdom involves amongst other things the sin of all men and the eternal damnation of the majority of men.

'Now God wills of necessity the work most worthy of his wisdom.

'He wills therefore of necessity the work that involves amongst other things the sin of all men and the eternal damnation of the majority of men.'

The major holds good, but the minor I deny. The decrees of God are always free, even though God be always prompted thereto by reasons which lie in the intention towards good: for to be morally compelled by wisdom, to be bound by the consideration of good, is to be free; it is not compulsion in the metaphysical sense. And metaphysical necessity alone, as I have observed so many times, is opposed to freedom.

238. I shall not examine the syllogisms that M. Bayle urges in objection in the following chapter (Ch. 152), against the system of the Supralapsarians, and particularly against the oration made by [274]Theodore de Bèze at the Conference of Montbéliard in the year 1586. This conference also only served to increase the acrimony of the parties. 'God created the World to his glory: his glory is not known (according to Bèze), if his mercy and his justice are not declared; for this cause simply by his grace he decreed for some men life eternal, and for others by a just judgement eternal damnation. Mercy presupposes misery, justice presupposes guilt.' (He might have added that misery also supposes guilt.) 'Nevertheless God being good, indeed goodness itself, he created man good and righteous, but unstable, and capable of sinning of his own free will. Man did not fall at random or rashly, or through causes ordained by some other God, as the Manichaeans hold, but by the providence of God; in such a way notwithstanding, that God was not involved in the fault, inasmuch as man was not constrained to sin.'

239. This system is not of the best conceived: it is not well fitted to show forth the wisdom, the goodness and the justice of God; and happily it is almost abandoned to-day. If there were not other more profound reasons capable of inducing God to permit guilt, the source of misery, there would be neither guilt nor misery in the world, for the reasons alleged here do not suffice. He would declare his mercy better in preventing misery, and he would declare his justice better in preventing guilt, in advancing virtue, in recompensing it. Besides, one does not see how he who not only causes a man to be capable of falling, but who so disposes circumstances that they contribute towards causing his fall, is not culpable, if there are no other reasons compelling him thereto. But when one considers that God, altogether good and wise, must have produced all the virtue, goodness, happiness whereof the best plan of the universe is capable, and that often an evil in some parts may serve the greater good of the whole, one readily concludes that God may have given room for unhappiness, and even permitted guilt, as he has done, without deserving to be blamed. It is the only remedy that supplies what all systems lack, however they arrange the decrees. These thoughts have already been favoured by St. Augustine, and one may say of Eve what the poet said of the hand of Mucius Scaevola:

*Si non errasset, fecerat illa minus.*

240. I find that the famous English prelate who wrote an ingenious book on the origin of evil, some passages of which were [275]disputed by M. Bayle in the second volume of his *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, while disagreeing with some of the opinions that I have upheld here and appearing to resort sometimes to a despotic power, as if the will of God did not follow the rules of wisdom in relation to good or evil, but decreed arbitrarily that such and such a thing must be considered good or evil; and as if even the will of the creature, in so far as it is free, did not choose because the object appears good to him, but by a purely arbitrary determination, independent

of the representation of the object; this bishop, I say, in other passages nevertheless says things which seem more in favour of my doctrine than of what appears contrary thereto in his own. He says that what an infinitely wise and free cause has chosen is better than what it has not chosen. Is not that recognizing that goodness is the object and the reason of his choice? In this sense one will here aptly say:

*Sic placuit superis; quaerere plura, nefas.*

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## GOTTFRIED LEIBNIZ: THEODICY (PART 3)

241. Now at last I have disposed of the cause of moral evil; *physical evil*, that is, sorrows, sufferings, miseries, will be less troublesome to explain, since these are results of moral evil. *Poena est malum passionis, quod infligitur ob malum actionis*, according to Grotius. One suffers because one has acted; one suffers evil because one does evil.

*Nostrorum causa malorum*

*Nos sumus.*

It is true that one often suffers through the evil actions of others; but when one has no part in the offence one must look upon it as a certainty that these sufferings prepare for us a greater happiness. The question of *physical evil*, that is, of the origin of sufferings, has difficulties in common with that of the origin of *metaphysical evil*, examples whereof are furnished by the monstrosities and other apparent irregularities of the universe. But one must believe that even sufferings and monstrosities are part of order; and it is well to bear in mind not only that it was better to admit these defects and these monstrosities than to violate general laws, as Father Malebranche sometimes argues, but also that these very monstrosities are in the rules, and are in conformity with general acts of will, though we be not capable of discerning this conformity. [277] It is just as sometimes there are appearances of irregularity in mathematics which issue finally in a great order when one has finally got to the bottom of them: that is why I have already in this work observed that according to my principles all individual events, without exception, are consequences of general acts of will.

242. It should be no cause for astonishment that I endeavour to elucidate these things by comparisons taken from pure mathematics, where everything proceeds in order, and where it is possible to fathom them by a close contemplation which grants us an enjoyment, so to speak, of the vision of the ideas of God. One may propose a succession or series of numbers perfectly irregular to all appearance, where the numbers increase and diminish variably without the emergence of any order; and yet he who knows the key to the formula, and who understands the origin and the structure of this succession of numbers, will be able to give a rule which, being properly understood, will show that the series is perfectly regular, and that it even has excellent properties. One may make this still more evident in lines. A line may have twists and turns, ups and downs, points of reflexion and points of inflexion, interruptions and other variations, so that one sees neither rhyme nor reason therein, especially when taking into account only a portion of the line; and yet it may be that one can give its equation and construction, wherein a geometrician would find the reason and the fittingness of all these so-called irregularities. That is how we must look upon the irregularities constituted by monstrosities and other so-called defects in the universe.

243. In this sense one may apply that fine adage of St. Bernard (Ep. 276, Ad Eugen., III): 'Ornatissimum est, minus interdum ordinate fieri aliquid.' It belongs to the great order that there should be some small disorder. One may even say that this small disorder is apparent only in the whole, and it is not even apparent when one considers the happiness of those who walk in the ways of order.

244. When I mention monstrosities I include numerous other apparent defects besides. We are acquainted with hardly anything but the surface of our globe; we scarce penetrate into its interior beyond a few hundred fathoms.

That which we find in this crust of the globe appears to be the effect of some great upheavals. It seems that this globe was once on fire, and that the rocks forming the base of this crust of the earth are scoria remaining from a great [278]fusion. In their entrails are found metal and mineral products, which closely resemble those emanating from our furnaces: and the entire sea may be a kind of *oleum per deliquium*, just as tartaric oil forms in a damp place. For when the earth's surface cooled after the great conflagration the moisture that the fire had driven into the air fell back upon the earth, washed its surface and dissolved and absorbed the solid salt that was left in the cinders, finally filling up this great cavity in the surface of our globe, to form the ocean filled with salt water.

245. But, after the fire, one must conclude that earth and water made ravages no less. It may be that the crust formed by the cooling, having below it great cavities, fell in, so that we live only on ruins, as among others Thomas Burnet, Chaplain to the late King of Great Britain, aptly observed. Sundry deluges and inundations have left deposits, whereof traces and remains are found which show that the sea was in places that to-day are most remote from it. But these upheavals ceased at last, and the globe assumed the shape that we see. Moses hints at these changes in few words: the separation of light from darkness indicates the melting caused by the fire; and the separation of the moist from the dry marks the effects of inundations. But who does not see that these disorders have served to bring things to the point where they now are, that we owe to them our riches and our comforts, and that through their agency this globe became fit for cultivation by us. These disorders passed into order. The disorders, real or apparent, that we see from afar are sunspots and comets; but we do not know what uses they supply, nor the rules prevailing therein. Time was when the planets were held to be wandering stars: now their motion is found to be regular. Peradventure it is the same with the comets: posterity will know.

246. One does not include among the disorders inequality of conditions, and M. Jacquelot is justified in asking those who would have everything equally perfect, why rocks are not crowned with leaves and flowers? why ants are not peacocks? And if there must needs be equality everywhere, the poor man would serve notice of appeal against the rich, the servant against the master. The pipes of an organ must not be of equal size. M. Bayle will say that there is a difference between a privation of good and a disorder; between a disorder in inanimate things, which is purely metaphysical, and a disorder in rational creatures, which is composed of crime and [279]sufferings. He is right in making a distinction between them, and I am right in combining them. God does not neglect inanimate things: they do not feel, but God feels for them. He does not neglect animals: they have not intelligence, but God has it for them. He would reproach himself for the slightest actual defect there were in the universe, even though it were perceived of none.

247. It seems M. Bayle does not approve any comparison between the disorders which may exist in inanimate things and those which trouble the peace and happiness of rational creatures; nor would he agree to our justifying the permission of vice on the pretext of the care that must be taken to avoid disturbing the laws of motion. One might thence conclude, according to him (posthumous Reply to M. Jacquelot, p. 183), 'that God created the world only to display his infinite skill in architecture and mechanics, whilst his property of goodness and love of virtue took no part in the construction of this great work. This God would pride himself only on skill; he would prefer to let the whole human kind perish rather than suffer some atoms to go faster or more slowly than general laws require.' M. Bayle would not have made this antithesis if he had been informed on the system of general harmony which I assume, which states that the realm of efficient causes and that of final causes are parallel to each other; that God has no less the quality of the best monarch than that of the greatest architect; that matter is so disposed that the laws of motion serve as the best guidance for spirits; and that consequently it will prove that he has attained the utmost good possible, provided one reckon the metaphysical, physical and moral goods together.

248. But (M. Bayle will say) God having power to avert innumerable evils by one small miracle, why did he not employ it? He gives so much extraordinary help to fallen men; but slight help of such a kind given to Eve would have prevented her fall and rendered the temptation of the serpent ineffective. I have sufficiently met objections of this sort with this general answer, that God ought not to make choice of another universe since he has chosen the best, and has only made use of the miracles necessary thereto. I had answered M. Bayle that miracles change the natural order of the universe. He replies, that that is an illusion, and that the miracle of the wedding at Cana (for instance) made no change in the air of the room, except that instead of receiving [280]into its pores some corpuscles of water, it received corpuscles of wine. But one must bear in mind that once the best plan of things has been chosen nothing can be changed therein.

249. As for miracles (concerning which I have already said something in this work), they are perhaps not all of one and the same kind: there are many, to all appearances, which God brings about through the ministry of invisible substances, such as the angels, as Father Malebranche also believes. These angels or these substances act according to the ordinary laws of their nature, being combined with bodies more rarefied and more vigorous than those we have at our command. And such miracles are only so by comparison, and in relation to us; just as our works would be considered miraculous amongst animals if they were capable of remarking upon

them. The changing of water into wine might be a miracle of this kind. But the Creation, the Incarnation and some other actions of God exceed all the power of creatures and are truly miracles, or indeed Mysteries. If, nevertheless, the changing of water into wine at Cana was a miracle of the highest kind, God would have thereby changed the whole course of the universe, because of the connexion of bodies; or else he would have been bound to prevent this connexion miraculously also, and cause the bodies not concerned in the miracle to act as if no miracle had happened. After the miracle was over, it would have been necessary to restore all things in those very bodies concerned to the state they would have reached without the miracle: whereafter all would have returned to its original course. Thus this miracle demanded more than at first appears.

250. As for physical evil in creatures, to wit their sufferings, M. Bayle contends vigorously against those who endeavour to justify by means of particular reasons the course of action pursued by God in regard to this. Here I set aside the sufferings of animals, and I see that M. Bayle insists chiefly on those of men, perhaps because he thinks that brute beasts have no feeling. It is on account of the injustice there would be in the sufferings of beasts that divers Cartesians wished to prove that they are only machines, *quoniam sub Deo justo nemo innocens miser est*: it is impossible that an innocent creature should be unhappy under such a master as God. The principle is good, but I do not think it warrants the inference that beasts have no feeling, because I think that, properly speaking, perception is not sufficient to cause misery if it is not accompanied [281]by reflexion. It is the same with happiness: without reflexion there is none.

*O fortunatos nimium, sua qui bona norint!*

One cannot reasonably doubt the existence of pain among animals; but it seems as if their pleasures and their pains are not so keen as they are in man: for animals, since they do not reflect, are susceptible neither to the grief that accompanies pain, nor to the joy that accompanies pleasure. Men are sometimes in a state approaching that of the beasts, when they act almost on instinct alone and simply on the impressions made by the experience of the senses: and, in this state, their pleasures and their pains are very slight.

251. But let us pass from the beasts and return to rational creatures. It is with regard to them that M. Bayle discusses this question: whether there is more physical evil than physical good in the world? (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. II, ch. 75.) To settle it aright, one must explain wherein these goods and evils lie. We are agreed that physical evil is simply displeasure and under that heading I include pain, grief, and every other kind of discomfort. But does physical good lie solely in pleasure? M. Bayle appears to be of this opinion; but I consider that it lies also in a middle state, such as that of health. One is well enough when one has no ill; it is a degree of wisdom to have no folly:

*Sapientia prima est,*

*Stultitia caruisse.*

In the same way one is worthy of praise when one cannot with justice be blamed:

*Si non culpabor, sat mihi laudis erit.*

That being the case, all the sensations not unpleasing to us, all the exercises of our powers that do not incommode us, and whose prevention would incommode us, are physical goods, even when they cause us no pleasure; for privation of them is a physical evil. Besides we only perceive the good of health, and other like goods, when we are deprived of them. On those terms I would dare to maintain that even in this life goods exceed evils, that our comforts exceed our discomforts, and that M. Descartes was justified in writing (vol. I, Letter 9) 'that natural reason teaches us that we have more goods than evils in this life'.

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252. It must be added that pleasures enjoyed too often and to excess would be a very great evil. There are some which Hippocrates compared to the falling sickness, and Scioppius doubtless only made pretence of envying the sparrows in order to be agreeably playful in a learned and far from playful work. Highly seasoned foods are injurious to health and impair the niceness of a delicate sense; and in general bodily pleasures are a kind of expenditure of the spirit, though they be made good in some better than in others.

253. As proof, however, that the evil exceeds the good is quoted the instance of M. de la Motte le Vayer (Letter 134), who would not have been willing to return to the world, supposing he had had to play the same part as providence had already assigned to him. But I have already said that I think one would accept the proposal of him

who could re-knot the thread of Fate if a new part were promised to us, even though it should not be better than the first. Thus from M. de la Motte le Vayer's saying it does not follow that he would not have wished for the part he had already played, provided it had been new, as M. Bayle seems to take it.

254. The pleasures of the mind are the purest, and of greatest service in making joy endure. Cardan, when already an old man, was so content with his state that he protested solemnly that he would not exchange it for the state of the richest of young men who at the same time was ignorant. M. de la Motte le Vayer quotes the saying himself without criticizing it. Knowledge has doubtless charms which cannot be conceived by those who have not tasted them. I do not mean a mere knowledge of facts without that of reasons, but knowledge like that of Cardan, who with all his faults was a great man, and would have been incomparable without those faults.

*Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas!*

*Ille metus omnes et inexorabile fatum*

*Subjecit pedibus.*

It is no small thing to be content with God and with the universe, not to fear what destiny has in store for us, nor to complain of what befalls us. Acquaintance with true principles gives us this advantage, quite other than that the Stoics and the Epicureans derived from their philosophy. There is as much difference [283]between true morality and theirs as there is between joy and patience: for their tranquillity was founded only on necessity, while ours must rest upon the perfection and beauty of things, upon our own happiness.

255. What, then, shall we say of bodily sufferings? May they not be sufficiently acute to disturb the sage's tranquillity? Aristotle assents; the Stoics were of a different opinion, and even the Epicureans likewise. M. Descartes revived the doctrine of these philosophers; he says in the letter just quoted: 'that even amid the worst misfortunes and the most overwhelming sufferings one may always be content, if only one knows how to exercise reason'. M. Bayle says concerning this (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 157, p. 991) 'that it is saying nothing, that it is prescribing for us a remedy whose preparation hardly anyone understands'. I hold that the thing is not impossible, and that men could attain it by dint of meditation and practice. For apart from the true martyrs and those who have been aided in wonderful wise from on high, there have been counterfeits who imitated them. That Spanish slave who killed the Carthaginian governor in order to avenge his master and who evinced great joy in his deed, even in the greatest tortures, may shame the philosophers. Why should not one go as far as he? One may say of an advantage, as of a disadvantage:

*Cuivis potest accidere, quod cuiquam potest.*

256. But even to-day entire tribes, such as the Hurons, the Iroquois, the Galibis and other peoples of America teach us a great lesson on this matter: one cannot read without astonishment of the intrepidity and well-nigh insensibility wherewith they brave their enemies, who roast them over a slow fire and eat them by slices. If such people could retain their physical superiority and their courage, and combine them with our acquirements, they would surpass us in every way,

*Extat ut in mediis turris aprica casis.*

They would be, in comparison with us, as a giant to a dwarf, a mountain to a hill:

*Quantus Eryx, et quantus Athos, gaudetque nivali*

*Vertice se attollens pater Apenninus ad auras.*

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257. All that which is effected by a wonderful vigour of body and mind in these savages, who persist obstinately in the strangest point of honour, might be acquired in our case by training, by well-seasoned mortifications, by an overmastering joy founded on reason, by great practice in preserving a certain presence of mind in the midst of the distractions and impressions most liable to disturb it. Something of this kind is related of the ancient Assassins, subjects and pupils of the Old Man or rather the Seigneur (*Senior*) of the Mountain. Such a school (for a better purpose) would be good for missionaries who would wish to return to Japan. The Gymnosophists of the ancient Indians had perhaps something resembling this, and that Calanus, who provided for Alexander the Great the spectacle of his burning alive, had doubtless been encouraged by the great examples of his masters and

trained by great sufferings not to fear pain. The wives of these same Indians, who even to-day ask to be burned with the bodies of their husbands, seem still to keep something of the courage of those ancient philosophers of their country. I do not expect that there should straightway be founded a religious order whose purpose would be to exalt man to that high pitch of perfection: such people would be too much above the rest, and too formidable for the authorities. As it rarely happens that people are exposed to extremes where such great strength of mind would be needed, one will scarce think of providing for it at the expense of our usual comforts, albeit incomparably more would be gained than lost thereby.

258. Nevertheless the very fact that one has no need of that great remedy is a proof that the good already exceeds the evil. Euripides also said:

πλειω τα χρηστα των κακων ειναι βροτοις.

*Mala nostra longe judico vinci a bonis.*

Homer and divers other poets were of another mind, and men in general agree with them. The reason for this is that the evil arouses our attention rather than the good: but this same reason proves that the evil is more rare. One must therefore not credit the petulant expressions of Pliny, who would have it that Nature is a stepmother, and who maintains that man is the most unhappy and most vain of all creatures. These two epithets do not agree: one is not so very unhappy, when one is full of oneself. It is true [285] that men hold human nature only too much in contempt, apparently because they see no other creatures capable of arousing their emulation; but they have all too much self-esteem, and individually are but too easily satisfied. I therefore agree with Meric Casaubon, who in his notes on the Xenophanes of Diogenes Laertius praises exceedingly the admirable sentiments of Euripides, going so far as to credit him with having said things *quae spirant θεορνευστον pectus*. Seneca (Lib. 4, c. 5, *De Benefic.*) speaks eloquently of the blessings Nature has heaped upon us. M. Bayle in his *Dictionary*, article 'Xenophanes', brings up sundry authorities against this, and among others that of the poet Diphilus in the Collections of Stobaeus, whose Greek might be thus expressed in Latin:

*Fortuna cyathis bibere nos datis jubens,*

*Infundit uno terna pro bono mala.*

259. M. Bayle believes that if it were a question only of the evil of guilt, or of moral evil among men, the case would soon be terminated to the advantage of Pliny, and Euripides would lose his action. To that I am not opposed; our vices doubtless exceed our virtues, and this is the effect of original sin. It is nevertheless true that also on that point men in general exaggerate things, and that even some theologians disparage man so much that they wrong the providence of the Author of mankind. That is why I am not in favour of those who thought to do great honour to our religion by saying that the virtues of the pagans were only *splendida peccata*, splendid vices. It is a sally of St. Augustine's which has no foundation in holy Scripture, and which offends reason. But here we are only discussing a physical good and evil, and one must compare in detail the prosperities and the adversities of this life. M. Bayle would wish almost to set aside the consideration of health; he likens it to the rarefied bodies, which are scarcely felt, like air, for example; but he likens pain to the bodies that have much density and much weight in slight volume. But pain itself makes us aware of the importance of health when we are bereft of it. I have already observed that excess of physical pleasures would be a real evil, and the matter ought not to be otherwise; it is too important for the spirit to be free. Lactantius (*Divin. Instit.*, lib. 3, cap. 18) had said that men are so squeamish that they complain of the slightest ill, as if it swallowed up all the goods they have enjoyed. M. Bayle says, concerning this, that the very fact that [286] men have this feeling warrants the judgement that they are in evil case, since it is feeling which measures the extent of good or evil. But I answer that present feeling is anything rather than the true measure of good and evil past and future. I grant that one is in evil case while one makes these peevish reflexions; but that does not exclude a previous state of well-being, nor imply that, everything reckoned in and all allowance made, the good does not exceed the evil.

260. I do not wonder that the pagans, dissatisfied with their gods, made complaints against Prometheus and Epimetheus for having forged so weak an animal as man. Nor do I wonder that they acclaimed the fable of old Silenus, foster-father of Bacchus, who was seized by King Midas, and as the price of his deliverance taught him that ostensibly fine maxim that the first and the greatest of goods was not to be born, and the second, to depart from this life with dispatch (Cic., *Tuscul.*, lib. 1). Plato believed that souls had been in a happier state, and many of the ancients, amongst others Cicero in his Consolation (according to the account of Lactantius), believed that for their sins they were confined in bodies as in a prison. They rendered thus a reason for our ills, and asserted their prejudices against human life: for there is no such thing as a beautiful prison. But quite apart from the consideration that, even according to these same pagans, the evils of this life would be counterbalanced and

exceeded by the goods of past and future lives, I make bold to say that we shall find, upon unbiassed scrutiny of the facts, that taking all in all human life is in general tolerable. And adding thereto the motives of religion, we shall be content with the order God has set therein. Moreover, for a better judgement of our goods and our evils, it will be well to read Cardan, *De Utilitate ex Adversis Capienda*, and Novarini, *De Occultis Dei Beneficiis*.

261. M. Bayle dilates upon the misfortunes of the great, who are thought to be the most fortunate: the constant experience of the fair aspect of their condition renders them unaware of good, but greatly aware of evil. Someone will say: so much the worse for them; if they know not how to enjoy the advantages of nature and fortune, is that the fault of either? There are nevertheless great men possessed of more wisdom, who know how to profit by the favours God has shown them, who are easily consoled for their misfortunes, and who even turn their own faults to account. M. [287]Bayle pays no heed to that: he prefers to listen to Pliny, who thinks that Augustus, one of the princes most favoured by fortune, experienced at least as much evil as good. I admit that he found great causes of trouble in his family and that remorse for having crushed the Republic may have tormented him; but I think that he was too wise to grieve over the former, and that Maecenas apparently made him understand that Rome had need of a master. Had not Augustus been converted on this point, Vergil would never have said of a lost soul:

*Vendidit hic auro patriam Dominumque potentem*

*Imposuit, fixit leges pretio atque refixit.*

Augustus would have thought that he and Caesar were alluded to in these lines, which speak of a master given to a free state. But there is every indication that he applied it just as little to his dominion, which he regarded as compatible with liberty and as a necessary remedy for public evils, as the princes of to-day apply to themselves the words used of the kings censured in M. de Cambray's *Telemachus*. Each one considers himself within his rights. Tacitus, an unbiassed writer, justifies Augustus in two words, at the beginning of his *Annals*. But Augustus was better able than anyone to judge of his good fortune. He appears to have died content, as may be inferred from a proof he gave of contentedness with his life: for in dying he repeated to his friends a line in Greek, which has the signification of that *Plaudite* that was wont to be spoken at the conclusion of a well-acted play. Suetonius quotes it:

Δοτε κροτον και παντες 'υμεις μετα χαρας κτυπησατε.

262. But even though there should have fallen to the lot of the human kind more evil than good, it is enough where God is concerned that there is incomparably more good than evil in the universe. Rabbi Maimonides (whose merit is not sufficiently recognized in the statement that he is the first of the Rabbis to have ceased talking nonsense) also gave wise judgement on this question of the predominance of good over evil in the world. Here is what he says in his *Doctor Perplexorum* (cap. 12, p. 3): 'There arise often in the hearts of ill-instructed persons thoughts which persuade them there is more evil than good in the world: and one often finds in the poems and songs of the pagans that it is as it were a miracle when something good comes to pass, whereas [288]evils are usual and constant. This error has taken hold not of the common herd only, those very persons who wish to be considered wise have been beguiled thereby. A celebrated writer named Alrasi, in his *Sepher Elohuth*, or Theosophy, amongst other absurdities has stated that there are more evils than goods, and that upon comparison of the recreations and the pleasures man enjoys in times of tranquillity with the pains, the torments, the troubles, faults, cares, griefs and afflictions whereby he is overwhelmed our life would prove to be a great evil, and an actual penalty inflicted upon us to punish us.' Maimonides adds that the cause of their extravagant error is their supposition that Nature was made for them only, and that they hold of no account what is separate from their person; whence they infer that when something displeasing to them occurs all goes ill in the universe.

263. M. Bayle says that this observation of Maimonides is not to the point, because the question is whether among men evil exceeds good. But, upon consideration of the Rabbi's words, I find that the question he formulates is general, and that he wished to refute those who decide it on one particular motive derived from the evils of the human race, as if all had been made for man; and it seems as though the author whom he refutes spoke also of good and evil in general. Maimonides is right in saying that if one took into account the littleness of man in relation to the universe one would comprehend clearly that the predominance of evil, even though it prevailed among men, need not on that account occur among the angels, nor among the heavenly bodies, nor among the elements and inanimate compounds, nor among many kinds of animals. I have shown elsewhere that in supposing that the number of the damned exceeds that of the saved (a supposition which is nevertheless not altogether certain) one might admit that there is more evil than good in respect of the human kind known to us. But I pointed out that that neither precludes the existence of incomparably more good than evil, both moral and physical, in rational creatures in general, nor prevents the city of God, which contains all creatures, from being the most perfect state. So also on consideration of the metaphysical good and evil which is in all substances, whether

endowed with or devoid of intelligence, and which taken in such scope would include physical good and moral good, one must say that the universe, such as it actually is, must be the best of all systems.

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264. Moreover, M. Bayle will not have it that our transgression should have anything to do with the consideration of our sufferings. He is right when it is simply a matter of appraising these sufferings; but the case is not the same when one asks whether they should be ascribed to God, this indeed being the principal cause of M. Bayle's difficulties when he places reason or experience in opposition to religion. I know that he is wont to say that it is of no avail to resort to our free will, since his objections tend also to prove that the misuse of free will must no less be laid to the account of God, who has permitted it and who has co-operated therein. He states it as a maxim that for one difficulty more or less one must not abandon a system. This he advances especially in favour of the methods of the strict and the dogma of the Supralapsarians. For he supposes that one can subscribe to their opinion, although he leaves all the difficulties in their entirety, because the other systems, albeit they put an end to some of the difficulties, cannot meet them all. I hold that the true system I have expounded satisfies all. Nevertheless, even were that not so, I confess that I cannot relish this maxim of M. Bayle's, and I should prefer a system which would remove a great portion of the difficulties, to one which would meet none of them. And the consideration of the wickedness of men, which brings upon them well-nigh all their misfortunes, shows at least that they have no right to complain. No justice need trouble itself over the origin of a scoundrel's wickedness when it is only a question of punishing him: it is quite another matter when it is a question of prevention. One knows well that disposition, upbringing, conversation, and often chance itself, have much share in that origin: is the man any the less deserving of punishment?

265. I confess that there still remains another difficulty. If God is not bound to account to the wicked for their wickedness, it seems as if he owes to himself, and to those who honour him and love him, justification for his course of action with regard to the permission of vice and crime. But God has already given that satisfaction, as far as it is needed here on earth: by granting us the light of reason he has bestowed upon us the means whereby we may meet all difficulties. I hope that I have made it plain in this discourse, and have elucidated the matter in the preceding portion of these Essays, almost as far as it can be done through general arguments. Thereafter, the permission of sin being justified, the [290]other evils that are a consequence thereof present no further difficulty. Thus also I am justified in restricting myself here to the evil of guilt to account for the evil of punishment, as Holy Scripture does, and likewise well-nigh all the Fathers of the Church and the Preachers. And, to the end that none may say that is only good *per la predica*, it is enough to consider that, after the solutions I have given, nothing must seem more right or more exact than this method. For God, having found already among things possible, before his actual decrees, man misusing his freedom and bringing upon himself his misfortune, yet could not avoid admitting him into existence, because the general plan required this. Wherefore it will no longer be necessary to say with M. Jurieu that one must dogmatize like St. Augustine and preach like Pelagius.

266. This method, deriving the evil of punishment from the evil of guilt, cannot be open to censure, and serves especially to account for the greatest physical evil, which is damnation. Ernst Sonner, sometime Professor of Philosophy at Altorf (a university established in the territory of the free city of Nuremberg), who was considered an excellent Aristotelian, but was finally recognized as being secretly a Socinian, had composed a little discourse entitled: *Demonstration against the Eternity of Punishment*. It was founded on this somewhat trite principle, that there is no proportion between an infinite punishment and a finite guilt. It was conveyed to me, printed (so it seemed) in Holland; and I replied that there was one thing to be considered which had escaped the late Herr Sonner: namely that it was enough to say that the duration of the guilt caused the duration of the penalty. Since the damned remained wicked they could not be withdrawn from their misery; and thus one need not, in order to justify the continuation of their sufferings, assume that sin has become of infinite weight through the infinite nature of the object offended, who is God. This thesis I had not explored enough to pass judgement thereon. I know that the general opinion of the Schoolmen, according to the Master of the Sentences, is that in the other life there is neither merit nor demerit; but I do not think that, taken literally, it can pass for an article of faith. Herr Fecht, a famous theologian at Rostock, well refuted that in his book on *The State of the Damned*. It is quite wrong, he says (§ 59); God cannot change his nature; justice is essential to him; death has closed the door of grace, but not that of justice.

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267. I have observed that sundry able theologians have accounted for the duration of the pains of the damned as I have just done. Johann Gerhard, a famous theologian of the Augsburg Confession (in *Locis Theol.*, loco de Inferno, § 60), brings forward amongst other arguments that the damned have still an evil will and lack the grace that could render it good. Zacharias Ursinus, a theologian of Heidelberg, who follows Calvin, having formulated

this question (in his treatise *De Fide*) why sin merits an eternal punishment, advances first the common reason, that the person offended is infinite, and then also this second reason, *quod non cessante peccato non potest cessare poena*. And the Jesuit Father Drexler says in his book entitled *Nicetas, or Incontinence Overcome* (book 2, ch. 11, § 9): 'Nec mirum damnatos semper torqueri, continue blasphemant, et sic quasi semper peccant, semper ergo plectuntur.' He declares and approves the same reason in his work on *Eternity* (book 2, ch. 15) saying: 'Sunt qui dicant, nec displicet responsum: scelerati in locis infernis semper peccant, ideo semper puniuntur.' And he indicates thereby that this opinion is very common among learned men in the Roman Church. He alleges, it is true, another more subtle reason, derived from Pope Gregory the Great (lib. 4, Dial. c. 44), that the damned are punished eternally because God foresaw by a kind of *mediate knowledge* that they would always have sinned if they had always lived upon earth. But it is a hypothesis very much open to question. Herr Fecht quotes also various eminent Protestant theologians for Herr Gerhard's opinion, although he mentions also some who think differently.

268. M. Bayle himself in various places has supplied me with passages from two able theologians of his party, which have some reference to these statements of mine. M. Jurieu in his book on the *Unity of the Church*, in opposition to that written by M. Nicole on the same subject, gives the opinion (p. 379) 'that reason tells us that a creature which cannot cease to be criminal can also not cease to be miserable'. M. Jacquelot in his book on *The Conformity of Faith with Reason* (p. 220) is of opinion 'that the damned must remain eternally deprived of the glory of the blessed, and that this deprivation might well be the origin and the cause of all their pains, through the reflexions these unhappy creatures make upon their crimes which have deprived them of an eternal bliss. One knows what burning regrets, what pain envy causes to those who see themselves deprived of a good, of a notable honour which had [292]been offered to them, and which they rejected, especially when they see others invested with it.' This position is a little different from that of M. Jurieu, but both agree in this sentiment, that the damned are themselves the cause of the continuation of their torments. M. le Clerc's Origenist does not entirely differ from this opinion when he says in the *Select Library* (vol. 7, p. 341): 'God, who foresaw that man would fall, does not condemn him on that account, but only because, although he has the power to recover himself, he yet does not do so, that is, he freely retains his evil ways to the end of his life.' If he carries this reasoning on beyond this life, he will ascribe the continuation of the pains of the wicked to the continuation of their guilt.

269. M. Bayle says (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 175, p. 1188) 'that this dogma of the Origenist is heretical, in that it teaches that damnation is not founded simply on sin, but on voluntary impenitence': but is not this voluntary impenitence a continuation of sin? I would not simply say, however, that it is because man, having the power to recover himself, does not; and would wish to add that it is because man does not take advantage of the succour of grace to aid him to recover himself. But after this life, though one assume that the succour ceases, there is always in the man who sins, even when he is damned, a freedom which renders him culpable, and a power, albeit remote, of recovering himself, even though it should never pass into action. And there is no reason why one may not say that this degree of freedom, exempt from necessity, but not exempt from certainty, remains in the damned as well as in the blessed. Moreover, the damned have no need of a succour that is needed in this life, for they know only too well what one must believe here.

270. The illustrious prelate of the Anglican Church who published recently a book on the origin of evil, concerning which M. Bayle made some observations in the second volume of his *Reply*, speaks with much subtlety about the pains of the damned. This prelate's opinion is presented (according to the author of the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, June 1703) as if he made 'of the damned just so many madmen who will feel their miseries acutely, but who will nevertheless congratulate themselves on their own behaviour, and who will rather choose to be, and to be that which they are, than not to be at all. They will love their state, unhappy as it will be, even as angry people, lovers, the ambitious, [293]the envious take pleasure in the very things that only augment their misery. Furthermore the ungodly will have so accustomed their mind to wrong judgements that they will henceforth never make any other kind, and will perpetually pass from one error into another. They will not be able to refrain from desiring perpetually things whose enjoyment will be denied them, and, being deprived of which, they will fall into inconceivable despair, while experience can never make them wiser for the future. For by their own fault they will have altogether corrupted their understanding, and will have rendered it incapable of passing a sound judgement on any matter.'

271. The ancients already imagined that the Devil dwells remote from God voluntarily, in the midst of his torments, and that he is unwilling to redeem himself by an act of submission. They invented a tale that an anchorite in a vision received a promise from God that he would receive into grace the Prince of the bad angels if he would acknowledge his fault; but that the devil rebuffed this mediator in a strange manner. At the least, the theologians usually agree that the devils and the damned hate God and blaspheme him; and such a state cannot but be followed by continuation of misery. Concerning that, one may read the learned treatise of Herr Fecht on the *State of the Damned*.

272. There were times when the belief was held that it was not impossible for a lost soul to be delivered. The story told of Pope Gregory the Great is well known, how by his prayers he had withdrawn from hell the soul of the Emperor Trajan, whose goodness was so renowned that to new emperors the wish was offered that they should surpass Augustus in good fortune and Trajan in goodness. It was this that won for the latter the pity of the Holy Father. God acceded to his prayers (it is said), but he forbade him to make the like prayers in future. According to this fable, the prayers of St. Gregory had the force of the remedies of Aesculapius, who recalled Hippolytus from Hades; and, if he had continued to make such prayers, God would have waxed wroth, like Jupiter in Vergil:

*At pater omnipotens aliquem indignatus ab umbris*

*Mortalem infernis ad lumina surgere vitae,*

*Ipse repertorem medicinae talis et artis*

*Fulmine Phoebigenam Stygias detrusit ad undas.*

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Godescalc, a monk of the ninth century, who set at variance the theologians of his day, and even those of our day, maintained that the reprobate should pray God to render their pains more bearable; but one is never justified in believing oneself reprobate so long as one is alive. The passage in the Mass for the dead is more reasonable: it asks for the abatement of the torments of the damned, and, according to the hypothesis that I have just stated, one must wish for them *melio rem mentem*. Origen having applied the passage from Psalm lxxvii, verse 10: God will not forget to be gracious, neither will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure, St. Augustine replies (*Enchirid.*, c. 112) that it is possible that the pains of the damned last eternally, and that they may nevertheless be mitigated. If the text implied that, the abatement would, as regards its duration, go on to infinity; and yet that abatement would, as regards its extent, have a *non plus ultra*. Even so there are asymptote figures in geometry where an infinite length makes only a finite progress in breadth. If the parable of the wicked rich man represented the state of a definitely lost soul, the hypothesis which makes these souls so mad and so wicked would be groundless. But the charity towards his brothers attributed to him in the parable does not seem to be consistent with that degree of wickedness which is ascribed to the damned. St. Gregory the Great (*IX Mor.*, 39) thinks that the rich man was afraid lest their damnation should increase his: but it seems as though this fear is not sufficiently consistent with the disposition of a perfectly wicked will. Bonaventura, on the Master of the Sentences, says that the wicked rich man would have desired to see everyone damned; but since that was not to be, he desired the salvation of his brothers rather than that of the rest. This reply is by no means sound. On the contrary, the mission of Lazarus that he desired would have served to save many people; and he who takes so much pleasure in the damnation of others that he desires it for everyone will perhaps desire that damnation for some more than others; but, generally speaking, he will have no inclination to gain salvation for anyone. However that may be, one must admit that all this detail is problematical, God having revealed to us all that is needed to put us in fear of the greatest of misfortunes, and not what is needed for our understanding thereof.

273. Now since it is henceforth permitted to have recourse to the misuse of free will, and to evil will, in order to account for other [295] evils, since the divine permission of this misuse is plainly enough justified, the ordinary system of the theologians meets with justification at the same time. Now we can seek with confidence *the origin of evil in the freedom of creatures*. The first wickedness is well known to us, it is that of the Devil and his angels: the Devil sinneth from the beginning, and for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil (1 John iii. 8). The Devil is the father of wickedness, he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth (John viii. 44). And therefore God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement (2 Pet. ii. 4). And the angels which kept not their own habitation, he hath reserved in *eternal* (that is to say everlasting) chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day (Jude i. 6). Whence it is easy to observe that one of these two letters must have been seen by the author of the other.

274. It seems as if the author of the Apocalypse wished to throw light upon what the other canonical writers had left obscure: he gives us an account of a battle that took place in Heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his angels. 'But they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: and he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him' (Rev. xii. 7, 8, 9). For although this account is placed after the flight of the woman into the wilderness, and it may have been intended to indicate thereby some revulsion favourable to the Church, it appears as though the author's design was to show simultaneously the old fall of the first enemy and a new fall of a new enemy.

275. Lying or wickedness springs from the Devil's own nature, εκ των ιδιων from his will, because it was written in the book of the eternal verities, which contains the things possible before any decree of God, that this creature would freely turn toward evil if it were created. It is the same with Eve and Adam; they sinned freely, albeit the Devil tempted them. God gives the wicked over to a reprobate mind (Rom. i. 28), abandoning them to themselves and denying them a grace which he owes them not, and indeed ought to deny to them.

276. It is said in the Scriptures that God hardeneth (Exod. iv. [296]21 and vii. 3; Isa. lxiii. 17); that God sendeth a lying spirit (1 Kings xxii. 23); strong delusion that they should believe a lie (2 Thess. ii. 11); that he deceived the prophet (Ezek. xiv. 9); that he commanded Shimei to curse (2 Sam xvi. 10); that the children of Eli hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them (1 Sam. ii. 25); that the Lord took away Job's substance, even although that was done through the malice of brigands (Job i. 21); that he raised up Pharaoh, to show his power in him (Exod. ix. 19; Rom. ix. 17) that he is like a potter who maketh a vessel unto dishonour (Rom. ix. 21); that he hideth the truth from the wise and prudent (Matt. xi. 25); that he speaketh in parables unto them that are without, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest at any time they might be converted, and their sins might be forgiven them (Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10); that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God (Acts ii. 23); that Pontius Pilate and Herod with the Gentiles and the people of Israel did that which the hand and the counsel of God had determined before to be done (Acts iv. 27, 28); that it was of the Lord to harden the hearts of the enemy, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour (Joshua xi. 20); that the Lord mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt, and caused it to err in all its works, like a drunken man (Isa. xix. 14); that Rehoboam hearkened not unto the word of the people, for the cause was from the Lord (1 Kings xii. 15); that he turned the hearts of the Egyptians to hate his people (Ps. cv. 25). But all these and other like expressions suggest only that the things God has done are used as occasion for ignorance, error, malice and evil deeds, and contribute thereto, God indeed foreseeing this, and intending to use it for his ends, since superior reasons of perfect wisdom have determined him to permit these evils, and even to co-operate therein. 'Sed non sineret bonus fieri male, nisi omnipotens etiam de malo posset facere bene', in St. Augustine's words. But this has been expounded more fully in the preceding part.

277. God made man in his image (Gen. i. 26); he made him upright (Eccles. vii. 29). But also he made him free. Man has behaved badly, he has fallen; but there remains still a certain freedom after the fall. Moses said as from God: 'I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life [297]and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life' (Deut. xxx. 19). 'Thus saith the Lord: Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death' (Jer. xxi. 8). He has left man in the power of his counsel, giving him his ordinances and his commandments. 'If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments' (or they shall keep thee). 'He hath set before thee fire and water, to stretch forth thine hand to whichever thou wilt' (Sirach xv. 14, 15, 16). Fallen and unregenerate man is under the domination of sin and of Satan, because it pleases him so to be; he is a voluntary slave through his evil lust. Thus it is that free will and will in bondage are one and the same thing.

278. 'Let no man say, I am tempted of God'; 'but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed' (Jas. i. 13, 14). And Satan contributes thereto. He 'blindeth the minds of them which believe not' (2 Cor. iv. 4). But man is delivered up to the Devil by his covetous desire: the pleasure he finds in evil is the bait that hooks him. Plato has said so already, and Cicero repeats it: 'Plato voluptatem dicebat escam malorum.' Grace sets over against it a greater pleasure, as St. Augustine observed. All *pleasure* is a feeling of some perfection; one *loves* an object in proportion as one feels its perfections; nothing surpasses the divine perfections. Whence it follows that charity and love of God give the greatest pleasure that can be conceived, in that proportion in which one is penetrated by these feelings, which are not common among men, busied and taken up as men are with the objects that are concerned with their passions.

279. Now as our corruption is not altogether invincible and as we do not necessarily sin even when we are under the bondage of sin, it must likewise be said that we are not aided invincibly; and, however efficacious divine grace may be, there is justification for saying that one can resist it. But when it indeed proves victorious, it is certain and infallible beforehand that one will yield to its allurements, whether it have its strength of itself or whether it find a way to triumph through the congruity of circumstances. Thus one must always distinguish between the infallible and the necessary.

280. The system of those who call themselves Disciples of St. Augustine is not far removed from this, provided one exclude certain obnoxious things, whether in the expressions or in the dogmas themselves. In the *expressions* I find that it is principally the [298]use of terms like 'necessary' or 'contingent', 'possible' or 'impossible', which sometimes gives a handle and causes much ado. That is why, as Herr Löscher the younger aptly observed in a learned dissertation on the *Paroxysms of the Absolute Decree*, Luther desired, in his book *On the Will in Bondage*, to find a word more fitting for that which he wished to express than the word necessity.

Speaking generally, it appears more reasonable and more fitting to say that obedience to God's precepts is always *possible*, even for the unregenerate; that the grace of God is always *resistible*, even in those most holy, and that *freedom* is exempt not only from *constraint* but also from *necessity*, although it be never without infallible *certainty* or without inclining *determination*.

281. Nevertheless there is on the other hand a sense wherein it would be permitted to say, in certain conjunctures, that the *power* to do good is often lacking, even in the just; that sins are often *necessary*, even in the regenerate; that it is *impossible* sometimes for one not to sin; that grace is *irresistible*; that freedom is not exempt from *necessity*. But these expressions are less exact and less pleasing in the circumstances that prevail about us to-day. They are also in general more open to misuse; and moreover they savour somewhat of the speech of the people, where terms are employed with great latitude. There are, however, circumstances which render them acceptable and even serviceable. It is the case that sacred and orthodox writers, and even the holy Scriptures, have made use of expressions on both sides, and no real contradiction has arisen, any more than between St. Paul and St. James, or any error on either side that might be attributable to the ambiguity of the terms. One is so well accustomed to these various ways of speaking that often one is put to it to say precisely which sense is the more ordinary and the more natural, and even that more intended by the author (*quis sensus magis naturalis, obvius, intentus*). For the same writer has different aims in different passages, and the same ways of speaking are more or less accepted or acceptable before or after the decision of some great man or of some authority that one respects and follows. As a result of this one may well authorize or ban, as opportunity arises and at certain times, certain expressions; but it makes no difference to the sense, or to the content of faith, if sufficient explanations of the terms are not added.

282. It is therefore only necessary to understand fully some distinctions, such as that I have very often urged between the [299]necessary and the certain, and between metaphysical necessity and moral necessity. It is the same with possibility and impossibility, since the event whose opposite is possible is contingent, even as that whose opposite is impossible is necessary. A distinction is rightly drawn also between a proximate potency and a remote potency; and, according to these different senses, one says now that a thing may be and now that it may not be. It may be said in a certain sense that it is necessary that the blessed should not sin; that the devils and the damned should sin; that God himself should choose the best; that man should follow the course which after all attracts him most. But this necessity is not opposed to contingency; it is not of the kind called logical, geometrical or metaphysical, whose opposite implies contradiction. M. Nicole has made use somewhere of a comparison which is not amiss. It is considered impossible that a wise and serious magistrate, who has not taken leave of his senses, should publicly commit some outrageous action, as it would be, for instance, to run about the streets naked in order to make people laugh. It is the same, in a sense, with the blessed; they are still less capable of sinning, and the necessity that forbids them to sin is of the same kind. Finally I also hold that 'will' is a term as equivocal as potency and necessity. For I have already observed that those who employ this axiom, that one does not fail to do what one wills when one can, and who thence infer that God therefore does not will the salvation of all, imply a *decretory will*. Only in that sense can one support this proposition, that wisdom never wills what it knows to be among the things that shall not happen. On the other hand, one may say, taking will in a sense more general and more in conformity with customary use, that the wise will is *inclined* antecedently to all good, although it *decrees* finally to do that which is most fitting. Thus one would be very wrong to deny to God the serious and strong inclination to save all men, which Holy Scripture attributes to him; or even to attribute to him an original distaste which diverts him from the salvation of a number of persons, *odium antecedaneum*. One should rather maintain that the wise mind tends towards all good, as good, in proportion to his knowledge and his power, but that he only produces the best that can be achieved. Those who admit that, and yet deny to God the antecedent will to save all men, are wrong only in their misuse of the term, provided that they acknowledge, besides, that God gives [300]to all help sufficient to enable them to win salvation if only they have the will to avail themselves thereof.

283. In the *dogmas* themselves held by the Disciples of St. Augustine I cannot approve the damnation of unregenerate children, nor in general damnation resulting from original sin alone. Nor can I believe that God condemns those who are without the necessary light. One may believe, with many theologians, that men receive more aid than we are aware of, were it only when they are at the point of death. It does not appear necessary either that all those who are saved should always be saved through a grace efficacious of itself, independently of circumstances. Also I consider it unnecessary to say that all the virtues of the pagans were false or that all their actions were sins; though it be true that what does not spring from faith, or from the uprightness of the soul before God, is infected with sin, at least virtually. Finally I hold that God cannot act as if at random by an absolutely absolute decree, or by a will independent of reasonable motives. And I am persuaded that he is always actuated, in the dispensation of his grace, by reasons wherein the nature of the objects participates. Otherwise he would not act in accordance with wisdom. I grant nevertheless that these reasons are not of necessity bound up with the good or the less evil natural qualities of men, as if God gave his grace only according to these good qualities. Yet

I hold, as I have explained already here, that these qualities are taken into consideration like all the other circumstances, since nothing can be neglected in the designs of supreme wisdom.

284. Save for these points, and some few others, where St. Augustine appears obscure or even repellent, it seems as though one can conform to his system. He states that from the substance of God only a God can proceed, and that thus the creature is derived from nothingness (Augustine *De Lib. Arb.*, lib. 1, c. 2). That is what makes the creature imperfect, faulty and corruptible (*De Genesi ad Lit.*, c. 15, *Contra Epistolam Manichaei*, c. 36). Evil comes not from nature, but from evil will (Augustine, in the whole book *On the Nature of Good*). God can command nothing that would be impossible. 'Firmissime creditur Deum justum et bonum impossibilia non potuisse praecipere' (*Lib. de Nat. et Grat.*, c. 43, p. 69). Nemo peccat in eo, quod caveri non potest (lib. 3, *De Lib. Arb.*, c. 16, 17, lib. 1 *Retract.* c. 11, 13, 15). Under a just God, none can be unhappy who deserves not so to be, 'neque sub Deo justo [301] miser esse quisquam, nisi mereatur, potest' (lib. 1, c. 39). Free will cannot carry out God's commands without the aid of grace (*Ep. ad Hilar. Caesaraugustan.*). We know that grace is not given according to deserts (Ep. 106, 107, 120). Man in the state of innocence had the aid necessary to enable him to do good if he wished; but the wish depended on free will, 'habebat adjutorium, per quod posset, et sine quo non vellet, sed non adjutorium quo vellet' (*Lib. de Corrept.*, c. 11 et c. 10, 12). God let angels and men try what they could do by their free will, and after that what his grace and his justice could achieve (ibid., c. 10, 11, 12). Sin turned man away from God, to turn him towards creatures (lib. 1, qu. 2, *Ad Simplicium*). To take pleasure in sinning is the freedom of a slave (*Enchirid.*, c. 103). 'Liberum arbitrium usque adeo in peccatore non perit, ut per illud peccent maxime omnes, qui cum delectatione peccant' (lib. 1, *Ad Bonifac.*, c. 2, 3).

285. God said to Moses: 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy' (Exod. xxxiii. 19). 'So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy' (Rom. ix. 15, 16). That does not prevent all those who have good will, and who persevere therein, from being saved. But God gives them the willing and the doing. 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth' (Rom. ix. 18). And yet the same Apostle says that God willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; which I would not interpret in accordance with some passages of St. Augustine, as if it signified that no men are saved except those whose salvation he wills, or as if he would save *non singulos generum, sed genera singulorum*. But I would rather say that there is none whose salvation he willeth not, in so far as this is permitted by greater reasons. For these bring it about that God only saves those who accept the faith he has offered to them and who surrender themselves thereto by the grace he has given them, in accordance with what was consistent with the plan of his works in its entirety, than which none can be better conceived.

286. As for predestination to salvation, it includes also, according to St. Augustine, the ordinance of the means that shall lead to salvation. 'Praedestinatio sanctorum nihil aliud est, quam praescientia et praeparatio beneficiorum Dei, quibus certissime liberantur quicumque liberantur' (*Lib. de Persev.*, c. 14). He does [302] not then understand it there as an absolute decree; he maintains that there is a grace which is not rejected by any hardened heart, because it is given in order to remove especially the hardness of hearts (*Lib. de Praedest.*, c. 8; *Lib. de Grat.*, c. 13, 14). I do not find, however, that St. Augustine conveys sufficiently that this grace, which subdues the heart, is always efficacious of itself. And one might perhaps have asserted without offence to him that the same degree of inward grace is victorious in the one, where it is aided by outward circumstances, but not in the other.

287. Will is proportionate to the sense we have of the good, and follows the sense which prevails. 'Si utrumque tantundem diligimus, nihil horum dabimus. Item: Quod amplius nos delectat, secundum id operemur necesse est' (in c. 5, *Ad Gal.*). I have explained already how, despite all that, we have indeed a great power over our will. St. Augustine takes it somewhat differently, and in a way that does not go far, when he says that nothing is so much within our power as the action of our will. And he gives a reason which is almost tautological: for (he says) this action is ready at the moment when we will. 'Nihil tam in nostra potestate est, quam ipsa voluntas, ea enim mox ut volumus praesto est' (lib. 3, *De Lib. Arb.*, c. 3; lib. 5, *De Civ. Dei*, c. 10). But that only means that we will when we will, and not that we will that which we wish to will. There is more reason for saying with him: '*aut voluntas non est, aut libera dicenda est*' (d. 1, 3, c. 3); and that what inclines the will towards good infallibly, or certainly, does not prevent it from being free. 'Perquam absurdum est, ut ideo dicamus non pertinere ad voluntatem [libertatem] nostram, quod beati esse volumus, quia id omnino nolle non possumus, nescio qua bona constrictione naturae. Nec dicere audemus ideo Deum non voluntatem [libertatem], sed necessitatem habere justitiae, quia non potest velle peccare. Certe Deus ipse numquid quia peccare non potest, ideo liberum arbitrium habere negandus est?' (*De Nat. et Grat.*, c. 46, 47, 48, 49). He also says aptly, that God gives the first good impulse, but that afterwards man acts also. 'Aguntur ut agant, non ut ipsi nihil agant' (*De Corrept.*, c. 2).

288. I have proved that free will is the proximate cause of the evil of guilt, and consequently of the evil of punishment; although it is true that the original imperfection of creatures, which is already presented in the eternal ideas, is the first and most remote [303]cause. M. Bayle nevertheless always disputes this use of the notion of free will; he will not have the cause of evil ascribed to it. One must listen to his objections, but first it will be well to throw further light on the nature of freedom. I have shown that freedom, according to the definition required in the schools of theology, consists in intelligence, which involves a clear knowledge of the object of deliberation, in spontaneity, whereby we determine, and in contingency, that is, in the exclusion of logical or metaphysical necessity. Intelligence is, as it were, the soul of freedom, and the rest is as its body and foundation. The free substance is self-determining and that according to the motive of good perceived by the understanding, which inclines it without compelling it: and all the conditions of freedom are comprised in these few words. It is nevertheless well to point out that the imperfection present in our knowledge and our spontaneity, and the infallible determination that is involved in our contingency, destroy neither freedom nor contingency.

289. Our knowledge is of two kinds, distinct or confused. Distinct knowledge, or *intelligence*, occurs in the actual use of reason; but the senses supply us with confused thoughts. And we may say that we are immune from bondage in so far as we act with a distinct knowledge, but that we are the slaves of passion in so far as our perceptions are confused. In this sense we have not all the freedom of spirit that were to be desired, and we may say with St. Augustine that being subject to sin we have the freedom of a slave. Yet a slave, slave as he is, nevertheless has freedom to choose according to the state wherein he is, although more often than not he is under the stern necessity of choosing between two evils, because a superior force prevents him from attaining the goods whereto he aspires. That which in a slave is effected by bonds and constraint in us is effected by passions, whose violence is sweet, but none the less pernicious. In truth we will only that which pleases us: but unhappily what pleases us now is often a real evil, which would displease us if we had the eyes of the understanding open. Nevertheless that evil state of the slave, which is also our own, does not prevent us, any more than him, from making a free choice of that which pleases us most, in the state to which we are reduced, in proportion to our present strength and knowledge.

290. As for spontaneity, it belongs to us in so far as we have within us the source of our actions, as Aristotle rightly conceived. [304]The impressions of external things often, indeed, divert us from our path, and it was commonly believed that, at least in this respect, some of the sources of our actions were outside ourselves. I admit that one is bound to speak thus, adapting oneself to the popular mode of expression, as one may, in a certain sense, without doing violence to truth. But when it is a question of expressing oneself accurately I maintain that our spontaneity suffers no exception and that external things have no physical influence upon us, I mean in the strictly philosophical sense.

291. For better understanding of this point, one must know that true spontaneity is common to us and all simple substances, and that in the intelligent or free substance this becomes a mastery over its actions. That cannot be better explained than by the System of Pre-established Harmony, which I indeed propounded some years ago. There I pointed out that by nature every simple substance has perception, and that its individuality consists in the perpetual law which brings about the sequence of perceptions that are assigned to it, springing naturally from one another, to represent the body that is allotted to it, and through its instrumentality the entire universe, in accordance with the point of view proper to this simple substance and without its needing to receive any physical influence from the body. Even so the body also for its part adapts itself to the wishes of the soul by its own laws, and consequently only obeys it according to the promptings of these laws. Whence it follows that the soul has in itself a perfect spontaneity, so that it depends only upon God and upon itself in its actions.

292. As this system was not known formerly, other ways were sought for emerging from this labyrinth, and the Cartesians themselves were in difficulties over the subject of free will. They were no longer satisfied by the 'faculties' of the Schoolmen, and they considered that all the actions of the soul appear to be determined by what comes from without, according to the impressions of the senses, and that, ultimately, all is controlled in the universe by the providence of God. Thence arose naturally the objection that there is therefore no freedom. To that M. Descartes replied that we are assured of God's providence by reason; but that we are likewise assured of our freedom by experience thereof within ourselves; and that we must believe in both, even though we see not how it is possible to reconcile them.

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293. That was cutting the Gordian knot, and answering the conclusion of an argument not by refuting it but by opposing thereto a contrary argument. Which procedure does not conform to the laws for philosophical disputes. Notwithstanding, most of the Cartesians contented themselves with this, albeit the inward experience they adduce does not prove their assertion, as M. Bayle has clearly shown. M. Regis (*Philos.*, vol. 1, *Metaph.*, book 2, part 2,

c. 22) thus paraphrases M. Descartes' doctrine: 'Most philosophers', he says, 'have fallen into error. Some, not being able to understand the relation existing between free actions and the providence of God, have denied that God was the first efficient cause of free will: but that is sacrilegious. The others, not being able to apprehend the relation between God's efficacy and free actions, have denied that man was endowed with freedom: and that is a blasphemy. The mean to be found between these two extremes is to say' (id. *ibid.*, p. 485) 'that, even though we were not able to understand all the relations existing between freedom and God's providence, we should nevertheless be bound to acknowledge that we are free and dependent upon God. For both these truths are equally known, the one through experience, and the other through reason; and prudence forbids one to abandon truths whereof one is assured, under the pretext that one cannot apprehend all the relations existing between them and other truths well known.'

294. M. Bayle here remarks pertinently in the margin, 'that these expressions of M. Regis fail to point out that we are aware of relations between man's actions and God's providence, such as appear to us to be incompatible with our freedom.' He adds that these expressions are over-circumspect, weakening the statement of the problem. 'Authors assume', he says, 'that the difficulty arises solely from our lack of enlightenment; whereas they ought to say that it arises in the main from the enlightenment which we have, and cannot reconcile' (in M. Bayle's opinion) 'with our Mysteries.' That is exactly what I said at the beginning of this work, that if the Mysteries were irreconcilable with reason, and if there were unanswerable objections, far from finding the mystery incomprehensible, we should comprehend that it was false. It is true that here there is no question of a mystery, but only of natural religion.

295. This is how M. Bayle combats those inward experiences, [306]whereon the Cartesians make freedom rest: but he begins by reflexions with which I cannot agree. 'Those who do not make profound examination', he says (*Dictionary*, art. 'Helen.', lit. TΔ), 'of that which passes within them easily persuade themselves that they are free, and that, if their will prompts them to evil, it is their fault, it is through a choice whereof they are the masters. Those who judge otherwise are persons who have studied with care the springs and the circumstances of their actions, and who have thought over the progress of their soul's impulses. Those persons usually have doubts about their free will, and even come to persuade themselves that their reason and mind are slaves, without power to resist the force that carries them along where they would not go. It was principally persons of this kind who ascribed to the gods the cause of their evil deeds.'

296. These words remind me of those of Chancellor Bacon, who says that a little philosophy inclineth us away from God, but that depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to him. It is the same with those who reflect upon their actions: it appears to them at first that all we do is only impulsion from others, and that all we apprehend comes from without through the senses, and is traced upon the void of our mind *tanquam in tabula rasa*. But more profound meditation shows us that all (even perceptions and passions) comes to us from our own inner being, with complete spontaneity.

297. Yet M. Bayle cites poets who pretend to exonerate men by laying the blame upon the gods. Medea in Ovid speaks thus:

*Frustra, Medea, repugnas,*

*Nescio quid Deus obstat, ait.*

And a little later Ovid makes her add:

*Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque Cupido,*

*Mens aliud suadet; video meliora proboque,*

*Deteriora sequor.*

But one could set against that a passage from Vergil, who makes Nisus say with far more reason:

*Di ne hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,*

*Euryale, an sua cuique Deus fit dira cupido?*

298. Herr Wittich seems to have thought that in reality our independence is only apparent. For in his *Diss. de providentia Dei* [307]actuali (n. 61) he makes free will consist in our being inclined towards the objects that

present themselves to our soul for affirmation or denial, love or hate, in such a way that we *do not feel* we are being determined by any outward force. He adds that it is when God himself causes our volitions that we act with most freedom; and that the more efficacious and powerful God's action is upon us, the more we are masters of our actions. 'Quia enim Deus operatur ipsum velle, quo efficacius operatur, eo magis volumus; quod autem, cum volumus, facimus, id maxime habemus in nostra potestate.' It is true that when God causes a volition in us he causes a free action. But it seems to me that the question here is not of the universal cause or of that production of our will which is proper to it in so far as it is a created effect, whose positive elements are actually created continually through God's co-operation, like all other absolute reality of things. We are concerned here with the reasons for willing, and the means God uses when he gives us a good will or permits us to have an evil will. It is always we who produce it, good or evil, for it is our action: but there are always reasons that make us act, without impairing either our spontaneity or our freedom. Grace does no more than give impressions which are conducive to making will operate through fitting motives, such as would be an attention, *a dic cur hic*, a prevenient pleasure. And it is quite evident that that does not interfere with freedom, any more than could a friend who gives counsel and furnishes motives. Thus Herr Wittich has not supplied an answer to the question, any more than M. Bayle, and recourse to God is of no avail here.

299. But let me give another much more reasonable passage from the same M. Bayle, where he disputes with greater force the so-called lively sense of freedom, which according to the Cartesians is a proof of freedom. His words are indeed full of wit, and worthy of consideration, and occur in the *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial* (vol. III, ch. 140, p. 761 *seqq.*). Here they are: 'By the clear and distinct sense we have of our existence we do not discern whether we exist through ourselves or derive our being from another. We discern that only by reflexion, that is, through meditation upon our powerlessness in the matter of conserving ourselves as much as we would, and of freeing ourselves from dependence upon the beings that surround us, etc. It is indeed certain that the pagans (the same must be said of the Socinians, since they deny [308]the creation) never attained to the knowledge of that true dogma that we were created from nothing, and that we are derived from nothingness at every moment of our continuance. They therefore thought erroneously that all substances in the universe exist of themselves and can never be reduced to nothing, and that thus they depend upon no other thing save in respect of their modifications, which are liable to be destroyed by the action of an external cause. Does not this error spring from the fact that we are unconscious of the creative action which conserves us, and that we are only conscious of our existence? That we are conscious of it, I say, in such a way that we should for ever remain ignorant of the cause of our being if other knowledge did not aid us? Let us say also, that the clear and distinct sense we have of the acts of our will cannot make us discern whether we give them ourselves to ourselves or receive them from that same cause which gives us existence. We must have recourse to reflexion or to meditation in order to effect this discrimination. Now I assert that one can never by purely philosophical meditations arrive at an established certainty that we are the efficient cause of our volitions: for every person who makes due investigation will recognize clearly, that if we were only passive subjects with regard to will we should have the same sensations of experience as we have when we think that we are free. Assume, for the sake of argument, that God so ordered the laws of the union between soul and body that all the modalities of the soul, without a single exception, are of necessity linked together with the interposition of the modalities of the brain. You will then understand that nothing will happen to us except that of which we are conscious: there will be in our soul the same sequence of thoughts from the perception of objects of the senses, which is its first step, up to the most definite volitions, which are its final step. There will be in this sequence the consciousness of ideas, that of affirmations, that of irresolutions, that of velleities and that of volitions. For whether the act of willing be impressed upon us by an external cause or we bring it about ourselves, it will be equally true that we will, and that we feel that we will. Moreover, as this external cause can blend as much pleasure as it will with the volition which it impresses upon us, we shall be able to feel at times that the acts of our will please us infinitely, and that they lead us according to the bent of our strongest inclinations. We shall feel no constraint; you know the maxim: *voluntas non [309]potest cogi*. Do you not clearly understand that a weather-vane, always having communicated to it simultaneously (in such a way, however, that priority of nature or, if one will, a real momentary priority, should attach to the desire for motion) movement towards a certain point on the horizon, and the wish to turn in that direction, would be persuaded that it moved of itself to fulfil the desires which it conceived? I assume that it would not know that there were winds, or that an external cause changed everything simultaneously, both its situation and its desires. That is the state we are in by our nature: we know not whether an invisible cause makes us pass sufficiently from one thought to another. It is therefore natural that men are persuaded that they determine their own acts. But it remains to be discovered whether they are mistaken in that, as in countless other things they affirm by a kind of instinct and without having made use of philosophic meditation. Since therefore there are two hypotheses as to what takes place in man: the one that he is only a passive subject, the other that he has active virtues, one cannot in reason prefer the second to the first, so long as one can only adduce proofs of feeling. For we should feel with an equal force that we wish this or that, whether all our volitions were imprinted upon our soul by an exterior and invisible cause, or we formed them ourselves.'

300. There are here excellent arguments, which are valid against the usual systems; but they fail in respect of the System of Pre-established Harmony, which takes us further than we were able to go formerly. M. Bayle asserts, for instance, 'that by purely philosophical meditations one can never attain to an established certainty that we are the efficient cause of our volitions'. But this is a point which I do not concede to him: for the establishment of this system demonstrates beyond a doubt that in the course of nature each substance is the sole cause of all its actions, and that it is free of all physical influence from every other substance, save the customary co-operation of God. And this system shows that our spontaneity is real, and not only apparent, as Herr Wittich believed it to be. M. Bayle asserts also on the same reasons (ch. 170, p. 1132) that if there were a *fatum Astrologicum* this would not destroy freedom; and I would concede that to him, if freedom consisted only in an apparent spontaneity.

301. The spontaneity of our actions can therefore no longer be questioned; and Aristotle has defined it well, saying that an [310]action is *spontaneous* when its source is in him who acts. 'Spontaneum est, cujus principium est in agente.' Thus it is that our actions and our wills depend entirely upon us. It is true that we are not directly the masters of our will, although we be its cause; for we do not choose volitions, as we choose our actions by our volitions. Yet we have a certain power also over our will, because we can contribute indirectly towards willing another time that which we would fain will now, as I have here already shown: that, however, is no *velleity*, properly speaking. There also we have a mastery, individual and even perceptible, over our actions and our wills, resulting from a combination of spontaneity with intelligence.

302. Up to this point I have expounded the two conditions of freedom mentioned by Aristotle, that is, *spontaneity* and *intelligence*, which are found united in us in deliberation, whereas beasts lack the second condition. But the Schoolmen demand yet a third, which they call *indifference*. And indeed one must admit it, if indifference signifies as much as 'contingency'; for I have already said here that freedom must exclude an absolute and metaphysical or logical necessity. But, as I have declared more than once, this indifference, this contingency, this non-necessity, if I may venture so to speak, which is a characteristic attribute of freedom, does not prevent one from having stronger inclinations towards the course one chooses; nor does it by any means require that one be absolutely and equally indifferent towards the two opposing courses.

303. I therefore admit indifference only in the one sense, implying the same as contingency, or non-necessity. But, as I have declared more than once, I do not admit an indifference of equipoise, and I do not think that one ever chooses when one is absolutely indifferent. Such a choice would be, as it were, mere chance, without determining reason, whether apparent or hidden. But such a chance, such an absolute and actual fortuity, is a chimera which never occurs in nature. All wise men are agreed that chance is only an apparent thing, like fortune: only ignorance of causes gives rise to it. But if there were such a vague indifference, or rather if we were to choose without having anything to prompt us to the choice, chance would then be something actual, resembling what, according to Epicurus, took place in that little deviation of the atoms, occurring without cause or reason. Epicurus had [311]introduced it in order to evade necessity, and Cicero with good reason ridiculed it.

304. This deviation had a final cause in the mind of Epicurus, his aim being to free us from fate; but it can have no efficient cause in the nature of things, it is one of the most impossible of chimeras. M. Bayle himself refutes it admirably, as we shall see presently. And yet it is surprising that he appears to admit elsewhere himself something of like nature with this supposed deviation: here is what he says, when speaking of Buridan's ass (*Dictionary*, art. 'Buridan', lit. 13): 'Those who advocate free will properly so called admit in man a power of determining, either to the right hand or the left, even when the motives are perfectly uniform on the side of each of the two opposing objects. For they maintain that our soul can say, without having any reason other than that of using its freedom: "I prefer this to that, although I see nothing more worthy of my choice in the one than the other".'

305. All those who admit a free will properly so called will not for that reason concede to M. Bayle this determination springing from an indeterminate cause. St. Augustine and the Thomists believe that all is determined. And one sees that their opponents resort also to the circumstances which contribute to our choice. Experience by no means approves the chimera of an indifference of equipoise; and one can employ here the argument that M. Bayle himself employed against the Cartesians' manner of proving freedom by the lively sense of our independence. For although I do not always see the reason for an inclination which makes me choose between two apparently uniform courses, there will always be some impression, however imperceptible, that determines us. The mere desire to make use of one's freedom has no effect of specifying, or determining us to the choice of one course or the other.

306. M. Bayle goes on: 'There are at the very least two ways whereby man can extricate himself from the snares of equipoise. One, which I have already mentioned, is for a man to flatter himself with the pleasing fancy that he is master in his own house, and that he does not depend upon objects.' This way is blocked: for all that one might

wish to play master in one's own house, that has no determining effect, nor does it favour one course more than the other. M. Bayle goes on: 'He would make this Act: I will prefer [312]this to that, because it pleases me to behave thus.' But these words, 'because it pleases me', 'because such is my pleasure', imply already a leaning towards 'the object that pleases'.

307. There is therefore no justification for continuing thus: 'And so that which determined him would not be taken from the object; the motive would be derived only from the ideas men have of their own perfections, or of their natural faculties. The other way is that of the lot or chance: the short straw would decide.' This way has an outlet, but it does not reach the goal: it would alter the issue, for in such a case it is not man who decides. Or again if one maintains that it is still the man who decides by lot, man himself is no longer in equipoise, because the lot is not, and the man has attached himself to it. There are always reasons in Nature which cause that which happens by chance or through the lot. I am somewhat surprised that a mind so shrewd as M. Bayle's could have allowed itself to be so misled on this point. I have set out elsewhere the true rejoinder to the Buridan sophism: it is that the case of perfect equipoise is impossible, since the universe can never be halved, so as to make all impressions equivalent on both sides.

308. Let us see what M. Bayle himself says elsewhere against the chimerical or absolutely undefined indifference. Cicero had said (in his book *De Fato*) that Carneades had found something more subtle than the deviation of atoms, attributing the cause of a so-called absolutely undefined indifference to the voluntary motions of souls, because these motions have no need of an external cause, coming as they do from our nature. But M. Bayle (*Dictionary*, art. 'Epicurus', p. 1143) aptly replies that all that which springs from the nature of a thing is determined: thus determination always remains, and Carneades' evasion is of no avail.

309. He shows elsewhere (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 90, l. 2, p. 229) 'that a freedom far removed from this so-called equipoise is incomparably more beneficial. I mean', he says, 'a freedom such as may always follow the judgements of the mind, and such as cannot resist objects clearly recognized as good. I know of no people who do not agree that truth clearly recognized necessitates' (determines rather, unless one speak of a moral necessity) 'the assent of the soul; experience teaches us that. In the schools they teach constantly that as the true is the object of [313]the understanding, so the good is the object of the will. So likewise they teach that as the understanding can never affirm anything save that which is shown to it under the semblance of truth, the will can never love anything which to it does not appear to be good. One never believes the false as such, and one never loves evil as evil. There is in the understanding a natural determination towards the true in general, and towards each individual truth clearly recognized. There is in the will a natural determination towards good in general; whence many philosophers conclude that from the moment when individual goods are clearly recognized by us we are of necessity compelled to love them. The understanding suspends its actions only when its objects show themselves obscurely, so that there is cause for doubt as to whether they are false or true. That leads many persons to the conclusion that the will remains in equipoise only when the soul is uncertain whether the object presented to it is a good with regard to it; but that also, the moment the soul decides in the affirmative, it of necessity clings to that object until other judgements of the mind determine it otherwise. Those who expound freedom in this fashion think to find therein plentiful enough material for merit or demerit. For they assume that these judgements of the mind proceed from a free attention of the soul in examining the objects, comparing them together, and discriminating between them. I must not forget that there are very learned men' (such as Bellarmine, lib. 3, *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, c. 8, et 9, and Cameron, in *Responsione ad Epistolam Viri Docti, id est Episcopi*) 'who maintain with very cogent reasons that the will always of necessity follows the last practical act of the understanding.'

310. One must make some observations on this discourse. A very clear recognition of the best *determines* the will; but it does not necessitate it, properly speaking. One must always distinguish between the necessary and the certain or infallible, as I have already observed more than once, and distinguish metaphysical necessity from moral necessity. I think also that it is only God's will which always follows the judgements of the understanding: all intelligent creatures are subject to some passions, or to perceptions at least, that are not composed entirely of what I call *adequate ideas*. And although in the blessed these passions always tend towards the true good, by virtue of the laws of Nature and the system of things pre-established in relation to them, yet this [314]does not always happen in such a way that they have a perfect knowledge of that good. It is the same with them as with us, who do not always understand the reason for our instincts. The angels and the blessed are created beings, even as we are, in whom there is always some confused perception mingled with distinct knowledge. Suarez said something similar concerning them. He thinks (*Treatise on Prayer*, book I, ch. 11) that God has so ordered things beforehand that their prayers, when they are made with a full will, always succeed: that is an example of a pre-established harmony. As for us, in addition to the judgement of the understanding, of which we have an express knowledge, there are mingled therewith confused perceptions of the senses, and these beget passions and even

imperceptible inclinations, of which we are not always aware. These movements often thwart the judgement of the practical understanding.

311. As for the parallel between the relation of the understanding to the true and that of the will to the good, one must know that a clear and distinct perception of a truth contains within it actually the affirmation of this truth: thus the understanding is necessitated in that direction. But whatever perception one may have of the good, the effort to act in accordance with the judgement, which in my opinion forms the essence of the will, is distinct from it. Thus, since there is need of time to raise this effort to its climax, it may be suspended, and even changed, by a new perception or inclination which passes athwart it, which diverts the mind from it, and which even causes it sometimes to make a contrary judgement. Hence it comes that our soul has so many means of resisting the truth which it knows, and that the passage from mind to heart is so long. Especially is this so when the understanding to a great extent proceeds only by faint *thoughts*, which have only slight power to affect, as I have explained elsewhere. Thus the connexion between judgement and will is not so necessary as one might think.

312. M. Bayle goes on to say, with truth (p. 221): 'Indeed, it cannot be a fault in man's soul that it has no freedom of indifference as regards good in general. It would be rather a disorder, an inordinate imperfection, if one could say truthfully: It is all one to me whether I am happy or unhappy; I have no more determination to love the good than to hate it; I can do both equally. Now if it is a praiseworthy and advantageous quality to be determinate [315]as regards good in general, it cannot be a fault if one is necessitated as regards each individual good recognized plainly as for our good. It seems even as though it were a necessary conclusion, that if the soul has no freedom of indifference as regards good in general, it also has none in respect of particular goods which after due examination it judges to be goods in relation to it. What should we think of a soul which, having formed that judgement, had, and prided itself on having, the power not to love these goods, and even to hate them, and which said: I recognize clearly that these are goods for me, I have all the enlightenment necessary on that point; nevertheless I will not love them, I will hate them; my decision is made, I act upon it; it is not that any reason' (that is, any other reason than that which is founded upon 'Such is my good pleasure') 'urges me thereto, but it pleases me so to behave: what should we think, I say, of such a soul? Should we not find it more imperfect and more unhappy than if it had not this freedom of indifference?

313. 'Not only does the doctrine that subjects the will to the final acts of the understanding give a more favourable idea of the state of the soul, but it shows also that it is easier to lead man to happiness along that road than along the road of indifference. It will suffice to enlighten his mind upon his true interests, and straightway his will will comply with the judgements that reason shall have pronounced. But if he has a freedom independent of reason and of the quality of objects clearly recognized, he will be the most intractable of all animals, and it will never be possible to rely upon making him choose the right course. All the counsels, all the arguments in the world may prove unavailing; you will give him explanations, you will convince his mind, and yet his will will play the haughty madam and remain motionless as a rock. Vergil, *Aen.*, lib. 6, v. 470:

*Non magis incepto vultum sermone movetur,*

*Quam si dura silix, aut stet Marpesia cautes.*

A caprice, an empty whim will make her stiffen against reasons of all kinds; it will not please her to love her clearly recognized good, it will please her to hate it. Do you consider such a faculty, sir, to be the richest present God can have made to man, and the sole instrument of our happiness? Is it not rather an obstacle to our felicity? Is there cause for boasting in being able to say: "I have [316]scorned all the judgements of my reason, and I have followed an altogether different path, simply from considerations of my own good pleasure?" With what regrets would one not be torn, in that case, if the determination made had an ill result? Such a freedom would therefore be more harmful than profitable to men, because the understanding would not present all the goodness of the objects clearly enough to deprive the will of the power of rejection. It would be therefore infinitely better for man to be always of necessity determined by the judgement of the understanding, than to permit the will to suspend its action. For by this means it would achieve its aim with greater ease and certainty.'

314. Upon this discourse I make the further observation, that it is very true that a freedom of indifference, undefined and without any determining reason, would be as harmful, and even objectionable, as it is impracticable and chimerical. The man who wished to behave thus, or at the least appear to be acting without due cause, would most certainly be looked upon as irrational. But it is very true also that the thing is impossible, when it is taken strictly in accordance with the assumption. As soon as one tries to give an example of it one misses one's aim and stumbles upon the case of a man who, while he does not come to a decision without cause, does so rather under the influence of inclination or passion than of judgement. As soon as one says: 'I scorn the

judgements of my reason simply from considerations of my own good pleasure, it pleases me to behave thus', it is as if one were to say: I prefer my inclination to my interest, my pleasure to my profit.

315. Even so some capricious man, fancying that it is ignominious for him to follow the advice of his friends or his servants, might prefer the satisfaction of contradicting them to the profit he could derive from their counsel. It may happen, however, that in a matter of small moment a wise man acts irregularly and against his own interest in order to thwart another who tries to restrain him or direct him, or that he may disconcert those who watch his steps. It is even well at times to imitate Brutus by concealing one's wit, and even to feign madness, as David did before the King of the Philistines.

316. M. Bayle admirably supplements his remarks with the object of showing that to act against the judgement of the understanding would be a great imperfection. He observes (p. 225) that, [317]even according to the Molinists, 'the understanding which does its duty well indicates that which is the best'. He introduces God (ch. 91, p. 227) saying to our first parents in the Garden of Eden: 'I have given you my knowledge, the faculty of judging things, and full power to dispose your wills. I shall give you instructions and orders; but the free will that I have bestowed upon you is of such a nature that you have equal power (according to circumstances) to obey me and to disobey me. You will be tempted: if you make a good use of your freedom you will be happy; and if you use it ill you will be unhappy. It is for you to see if you wish to ask of me, as a new grace, either that I permit you to abuse your freedom when you shall make resolve to do so, or that I prevent you from doing so. Consider carefully, I give you four and twenty hours. Do you not clearly understand' (adds M. Bayle) 'that their reason, which had not yet been obscured by sin, would have made them conclude that they must ask God, as the crowning point of the favours wherewith he had honoured them, not to permit them to destroy themselves by an ill use of their powers? And must one not admit that if Adam, through wrongly making it a point of honour to order his own goings, had refused a divine direction that would have safeguarded his happiness, he would have been the prototype of all such as Phaeton and Icarus? He would have been well-nigh as ungodly as the Ajax of Sophocles, who wished to conquer without the aid of the gods, and who said that the most craven would put their enemies to flight with such aid.'

317. M. Bayle also shows (ch. 80) that one congratulates oneself no less, or even takes more credit to oneself, for having been aided from above, than for owing one's happiness to one's own choice. And if one does well through having preferred a tumultuous instinct, which arose suddenly, to reasons maturely considered, one feels an extraordinary joy in this; for one assumes that either God, or our Guardian Angel, or something or other which one pictures to oneself under the vague name of *good luck* has impelled us thereto. Indeed, Sulla and Caesar boasted more of their good luck than of their prudence. The pagans, and particularly the poets (Homer especially), determined their heroes' acts by divine promptings. The hero of the *Aeneid* proceeds only under the direction of a God. It was very great praise offered to the Emperors if one said that they were victorious both through their [318]troops and through their gods whom they lent to their generals: 'Te copias, te consilium et tuos praebente Divos,' said Horace. The generals fought under the auspices of the Emperors, as if trusting to the Emperor's good luck, for subordinate officers had no rights regarding the auspices. One takes credit to oneself for being a favourite of heaven, one rates oneself more highly for the possession of good fortune than of talent. There are no people that think themselves more fortunate than the mystics, who imagine that they keep still while God acts within them.

318. 'On the other hand', M. Bayle adds (ch. 83), 'a Stoic philosopher, who attaches to everything an inevitable necessity, is as susceptible as another man to the pleasure of having chosen well. And every man of sense will find that, far from taking pleasure in the thought of having deliberated long and finally chosen the most honourable course, one feels incredible satisfaction in persuading oneself that one is so firmly rooted in the love of virtue that without the slightest resistance one would repel a temptation. A man to whom is suggested the doing of a deed contrary to his duty, his honour and his conscience, who answers forthwith that he is incapable of such a crime, and who is certainly not capable of it, is far more contented with himself than if he asked for time to consider it, and were for some hours in a state of indecision as to which course to take. One is on many occasions regretful over not being able to make up one's mind between two courses, and one would be well pleased that the counsel of a good friend, or some succour from above, should impel us to make a good choice.' All that demonstrates for us the advantage a determinate judgement has over that vague indifference which leaves us in uncertainty. But indeed I have proved sufficiently that only ignorance or passion has power to keep us in doubt, and have thus given the reason why God is never in doubt. The nearer one comes to him, the more perfect is freedom, and the more it is determined by the good and by reason. The character of Cato, of whom Velleius said that it was impossible for him to perform a dishonourable action, will always be preferred to that of a man who is capable of wavering.

319. I have been well pleased to present and to support these arguments of M. Bayle against vague indifference, as much for the elucidation of the subject as to confront him with himself, and to demonstrate that he ought

therefore not to complain of the [319]alleged necessity imposed upon God, of choosing the best way that is possible. For either God will act through a vague indifference and at random, or again he will act on caprice or through some other passion, or finally he must act through a prevailing inclination of reason which prompts him to the best. But passions, which come from the confused perception of an apparent good, cannot occur in God; and vague indifference is something chimerical. It is therefore only the strongest reason that can regulate God's choice. It is an imperfection in our freedom that makes us capable of choosing evil instead of good, a greater evil instead of the lesser evil, the lesser good instead of the greater good. That arises from the appearances of good and evil, which deceive us; whereas God is always prompted to the true and the greatest good, that is, to the absolutely true good, which he cannot fail to know.

320. This false idea of freedom, conceived by those who, not content with exempting it, I do not say from constraint, but from necessity itself, would also exempt it from certainty and determination, that is, from reason and perfection, nevertheless pleased some Schoolmen, people who often become entangled in their own subtleties, and take the straw of terms for the grain of things. They assume some chimerical notion, whence they think to derive some use, and which they endeavour to maintain by quibblings. Complete indifference is of this nature: to concede it to the will is to grant it a privilege of the kind that some Cartesians and some mystics find in the divine nature, of being able to do the impossible, to produce absurdities, to cause two contradictory propositions to be true simultaneously. To claim that a determination comes from a complete indifference absolutely indeterminate is to claim that it comes naturally from nothing. Let it be assumed that God does not give this determination: it has accordingly no fountainhead in the soul, nor in the body, nor in circumstances, since all is assumed to be indeterminate; and yet there it is, appearing and existing without preparation, nothing making ready for it, no angel, not even God himself, being able to see or to show how it exists. That would be not only the emergence of something from nothing, but its emergence thence *of itself*. This doctrine introduces something as preposterous as the theory already mentioned, of the deviation of atoms, whereby Epicurus asserted that one of these small bodies, going in a straight line, would turn aside all at [320]once from its path, without any reason, simply because the will so commands. Take note moreover that he resorted to that only to justify this alleged freedom of complete indifference, a chimerical notion which appears to be of very ancient origin; and one may with good reason say: *Chimaera Chimaeram parit*.

321. This is the way Signor Marchetti has expressed it in his admirable translation of Lucretius into Italian verse, which has not yet been published (Book 2):

*Mà ch'ì principii poi non corran punto*

*Della lor dritta via, chi veder puote?*

*Sì finalmente ogni lor moto sempre*

*Insieme s'aggruppa, e dall' antico*

*Sempre con ordin certo il nuovo nasce;*

*Ne tracciando i primi semi, fanno*

*Di moto un tal principio, il qual poi rompa*

*I decreti del fato, acciò non segua*

*L'una causa dell' altra in infinito;*

*Onde han questa, dich' io, del fato sciolta*

*Libera volontà, per cui ciascuno*

*Va dove più l'agrada? I moti ancora*

*Si declinan sovente, e non in tempo*

*Certo, ne certa region, mà solo*

*Quando e dove commanda il nostro arbitrio;*

*Poiche senz' alcun dubbio à queste cose*

*Dà sol principio il voler proprio, e quindi*

*Van poi scorrendo per le membra i moti.*

It is comical that a man like Epicurus, after having discarded the gods and all incorporeal substances, could have supposed that the will, which he himself takes as composed of atoms, could have had control over the atoms, and diverted them from their path, without its being possible for one to say how.

322. Carneades, not going so far back as to the atoms, claimed to find at once in the soul of man the reason for the so-called vague indifference, assuming as reason for the thing just that for which Epicurus sought a reason. Carneades gained nothing thereby, except that he more easily deceived careless people, in transferring the absurdity from one subject, where it is somewhat too evident, to another subject where it is easier to confuse matters, that is to say, from the body to the soul. For most philosophers [321] had not very distinct notions of the nature of the soul. Epicurus, who composed it of atoms, was at least right in seeking the origin of its determination in that which he believed to be the origin of the soul itself. That is why Cicero and M. Bayle were wrong to find so much fault with him, and to be indulgent towards, and even praise, Carneades, who is no less irrational. I do not understand how M. Bayle, who was so clear-sighted, was thus satisfied by a disguised absurdity, even to the extent of calling it the greatest effort the human mind can make on this matter. It is as if the soul, which is the seat of reason, were more capable than the body of acting without being determined by some reason or cause, internal or external; or as if the great principle which states that nothing comes to pass without cause only related to the body.

323. It is true that the Form or the Soul has this advantage over matter, that it is the source of action, having within itself the principle of motion or of change, in a word, το αυτοκινητον, as Plato calls it; whereas matter is simply passive, and has need of being impelled to act, *agitur, ut agat*. But if the soul is active of itself (as it indeed is), for that very reason it is not of itself absolutely indifferent to the action, like matter, and it must find in itself a ground of determination. According to the System of Pre-established Harmony the soul finds in itself, and in its ideal nature anterior to existence, the reasons for its determinations, adjusted to all that shall surround it. That way it was determined from all eternity in its state of mere possibility to act freely, as it does, when it attains to existence.

324. M. Bayle himself remarks aptly that freedom of indifference (such as must be admitted) does not exclude inclinations and does not demand equipoise. He demonstrates amply enough (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, ch. 139, p. 748 *seqq.*) that the soul may be compared to a balance, where reasons and inclinations take the place of weights. According to him, one can explain what passes in our resolutions by the hypothesis that the will of man is like a balance which is at rest when the weights of its two pans are equal, and which always inclines either to one side or the other according to which of the pans is the more heavily laden. A new reason makes a heavier weight, a new idea shines more brightly than the old; the fear of a heavy penalty prevails over some pleasure; when two passions dispute the ground, it is always the stronger which gains the mastery, unless the other be [322] assisted by reason or by some other contributing passion. When one flings away merchandise in order to save oneself, the action, which the Schoolmen call mixed, is voluntary and free; and yet love of life indubitably prevails over love of possessions. Grief arises from remembrance of lost possessions, and one has all the greater difficulty in making one's resolve, the nearer the approach to even weight in the opposing reasons, as also we see that the balance is determined more promptly when there is a great difference between the weights.

325. Nevertheless, as very often there are divers courses to choose from, one might, instead of the balance, compare the soul with a force which puts forth effort on various sides simultaneously, but which acts only at the spot where action is easiest or there is least resistance. For instance, air if it is compressed too firmly in a glass vessel will break it in order to escape. It puts forth effort at every part, but finally flings itself upon the weakest. Thus do the inclinations of the soul extend over all the goods that present themselves: they are antecedent acts of will; but the consequent will, which is their result, is determined in the direction of that which touches most closely.

326. This ascendancy of inclinations, however, does not prevent man from being master in his own domain, provided that he knows how to make use of his power. His dominion is that of reason: he has only to prepare himself in good time to resist the passions, and he will be capable of checking the vehemence of the most furious. Let us assume that Augustus, about to give orders for putting to death Fabius Maximus, acts, as is his wont, upon the advice a philosopher had given him, to recite the Greek alphabet before doing anything in the first heat of his anger: this reflexion will be capable of saving the life of Fabius and the glory of Augustus. But without some fortunate reflexion, which one owes sometimes to a special divine mercy, or without some skill acquired

beforehand, like that of Augustus, calculated to make us reflect fittingly as to time and place, passion will prevail over reason. The driver is master over the horses if he controls them as he should, and as he can; but there are occasions when he becomes negligent, and then for a time he will have to let go the reins:

*Fertur equis auriga, nec audit currus habenas.*

327. One must admit that there is always within us enough [323]power over our will, but we do not always bethink ourselves of employing it. That shows, as I have observed more than once, that the power of the soul over its inclinations is a control which can only be exercised in an *indirect* manner, almost as Bellarmine would have had the Popes exercise rights over the temporal power of kings. In truth, the external actions that do not exceed our powers depend absolutely upon our will; but our volitions depend upon our will only through certain artful twists which give us means of suspending our resolutions, or of changing them. We are masters in our own house, not as God is in the world, he having but to speak, but as a wise prince is in his dominions or as a good father of a family is in his home. M. Bayle sometimes takes the matter differently, as though we must have, in order to boast of a free will, an absolute power over ourselves, independent of reasons and of means. But even God has not such a power, and must not have in this sense, in relation to his will: he cannot change his nature, nor act otherwise than according to method; and how could man transform himself all of a sudden? I have already said God's dominion, the dominion of wisdom, is that of reason. It is only God, however, who always wills what is most to be desired, and consequently he has no need of the power to change his will. 328. If the soul is mistress in its own house (says M. Bayle, p. 753) it has only to will, and straightway that vexation and pain which is attendant upon victory over the passions will vanish away. For this effect it would suffice, in his opinion, to give oneself indifference to the objects of the passions (p. 758). Why, then, do men not give themselves this indifference (he says), if they are masters in their own house? But this objection is exactly as if I were to ask why a father of a family does not give himself gold when he has need thereof? He can acquire some, but through skill, and not, as in the age of the fairies, or of King Midas, through a mere command of the will or by his touch. It would not suffice to be master in one's own house; one must be master of all things in order to give oneself all that one wishes; for one does not find everything in one's own house. Working thus upon oneself, one must do as in working upon something else; one must have knowledge of the constitution and the qualities of one's object, and adapt one's operations thereto. It is therefore not in a moment and by a mere act of the will that one corrects oneself, and that one acquires a better will.

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329. Nevertheless it is well to observe that the vexations and pains attendant upon victory over the passions in some people turn into pleasure, through the great satisfaction they find in the lively sense of the force of their mind, and of the divine grace. Ascetics and true mystics can speak of this from experience; and even a true philosopher can say something thereof. One can attain to that happy state, and it is one of the principal means the soul can use to strengthen its dominion.

330. If the Scotists and the Molinists appear to favour vague indifference (appear, I say, for I doubt whether they do so in reality, once they have learnt to know it), the Thomists and the disciples of Augustine are for predetermination. For one must have either the one or the other. Thomas Aquinas is a writer who is accustomed to reason on sound principles, and the subtle Scotus, seeking to contradict him, often obscures matters instead of throwing light upon them. The Thomists as a general rule follow their master, and do not admit that the soul makes its resolve without the existence of some predetermination which contributes thereto. But the predetermination of the new Thomists is not perhaps exactly that which one needs. Durand de Saint-Pourçain, who often enough formed a party of his own, and who opposed the idea of the special co-operation of God, was nevertheless in favour of a certain predetermination. He believed that God saw in the state of the soul, and of its surroundings, the reason for his determinations.

331. The ancient Stoics were in that almost of the same opinion as the Thomists. They were at the same time in favour of determination and against necessity, although they have been accused of attaching necessity to everything. Cicero says in his book *De Fato* that Democritus, Heraclitus, Empedocles and Aristotle believed that fate implied necessity; that others were opposed to that (he means perhaps Epicurus and the Academicians); and that Chrysippus sought a middle course. I think that Cicero is mistaken as regards Aristotle, who fully recognized contingency and freedom, and went even too far, saying (inadvertently, as I think) that propositions on contingent futurities had no determinate truth; on which point he was justifiably abandoned by most of the Schoolmen. Even Cleanthes, the teacher of Chrysippus, although he upheld the determinate truth of future events, denied their necessity. Had the Schoolmen, so fully convinced of this [325]determination of contingent futurities (as were for instance the Fathers of Coimbra, authors of a famous Course of Philosophy), seen the connexion between things in the form wherein the System of General Harmony proclaims it, they would have judged that one cannot admit

preliminary certainty, or determination of futurity, without admitting a predetermination of the thing in its causes and in its reasons.

332. Cicero has endeavoured to expound for us the middle course taken by Chrysippus; but Justus Lipsius observed, in his *Stoic Philosophy*, that the passage from Cicero was mutilated, and that Aulus Gellius has preserved for us the whole argument of the Stoic philosopher (*Noct. Att.*, lib. 6, c. 2). Here it is in epitome. Fate is the inevitable and eternal connexion of all events. Against this is urged in objection, that it follows that the acts of the will would be necessary, and that criminals, being coerced into evil, should not be punished. Chrysippus answers that evil springs from the original constitution of souls, which forms part of the destined sequence; that souls which are of a good natural disposition offer stronger resistance to the impressions of external causes; but that those whose natural defects had not been corrected by discipline allowed themselves to be perverted. Next he distinguishes (according to Cicero) between principal causes and accessory causes, and uses the comparison of a cylinder, whose rotatory force and speed or ease in motion comes chiefly from its shape, whereas it would be retarded by any roughness in formation. Nevertheless it has need of impulsion, even as the soul needs to be acted upon by the objects of the senses, and receives this impression according to its own constitution.

333. Cicero considers that Chrysippus becomes so confused that, whether he will or no, he confirms the necessity of fate. M. Bayle is almost of the same opinion (*Dictionary*, art. 'Chrysippus', lit. H). He says that this philosopher does not get out of the bog, since the cylinder is regular or uneven according to what the craftsman has made it; and thus God, providence, fate will be the causes of evil in such a way as to render it necessary. Justus Lipsius answers that, according to the Stoics, evil came from matter. That is (to my mind) as if he had said that the stone on which the craftsman worked was sometimes too rough and too irregular to produce a good cylinder. M. Bayle cites against Chrysippus the fragments of Onomaus and Diogenianus that [326]Eusebius has preserved for us in the *Praeparatio Evangelica* (lib. 6, c. 7, 8); and above all he relies upon Plutarch's refutation in his book against the Stoics, quoted art. 'Paulicians', lit. G. But this refutation does not amount to very much. Plutarch maintains that it would be better to deny power to God than to impute to him the permission of evils; and he will not admit that evil may serve a greater good. I have already shown, on the contrary, that God cannot but be all-powerful, even though he can do no better than produce the best, which includes the permission of evil. Moreover, I have pointed out repeatedly that what is to the disadvantage of a part taken separately may serve the perfection of the whole.

334. Chrysippus had already made an observation to this effect, not only in his fourth book on Providence, as given by Aulus Gellius (lib. 6, c. 1) where he asserts that evil serves to bring the good to notice (a reason which is not sufficient here), but still better when he applies the comparison of a stage play, in his second book on Nature (as Plutarch quotes it himself). There he says that there are sometimes portions in a comedy which are of no worth in themselves and which nevertheless lend grace to the whole poem. He calls these portions epigrams or inscriptions. We have not enough acquaintance with the nature of the ancient comedy for full understanding of this passage from Chrysippus; but since Plutarch assents to the fact, there is reason to believe that this comparison was not a poor one. Plutarch replies in the first place that the world is not like a play to provide entertainment. But that is a poor answer: the comparison lies in this point alone, that one bad part may make the whole better. He replies secondly that this bad passage is only a small part of the comedy, whereas human life swarms with evils. This reply is of no value either: for he ought to have taken into account that what we know is also a very small part of the universe.

335. But let us return to the cylinder of Chrysippus. He is right in saying that vice springs from the original constitution of some minds. He was met with the objection that God formed them, and he could only reply by pointing to the imperfection of matter, which did not permit God to do better. This reply is of no value, for matter in itself is indifferent to all forms, and God made it. Evil springs rather from the *Forms* themselves in their detached state, that is, from the ideas that God has not produced by an act [327]of his will, any more than he thus produced numbers and figures, and all possible essences which one must regard as eternal and necessary; for they are in the ideal region of the possibles, that is, in the divine understanding. God is therefore not the author of essences in so far as they are only possibilities. But there is nothing actual to which he has not decreed and given existence; and he has permitted evil because it is involved in the best plan existing in the region of possibles, a plan which supreme wisdom could not fail to choose. This notion satisfies at once the wisdom, the power and the goodness of God, and yet leaves a way open for the entrance of evil. God gives perfection to creatures in so far as it is possible in the universe. One gives a turn to the cylinder, but any roughness in its shape restricts the swiftness of its motion. This comparison made by Chrysippus does not greatly differ from mine, which was taken from a laden boat that is carried along by the river current, its pace becoming slower as the load grows heavier. These comparisons tend towards the same end; and that shows that if we were sufficiently informed concerning the opinions of ancient philosophers, we should find therein more reason than is supposed.

336. M. Bayle himself commends the passage from Chrysippus (art. 'Chrysippus', lit. T) that Aulus Gellius quotes in the same place, where this philosopher maintains that evil has come *by concomitance*. That also is made clear by my system. For I have demonstrated that the evil which God permitted was not an object of his will, as an end or a means, but simply as a condition, since it had to be involved in the best. Yet one must confess that the cylinder of Chrysippus does not answer the objection of necessity. He ought to have added, in the first place, that it is by the free choice of God that some of the possibles exist; secondly, that rational creatures act freely also, in accordance with their original nature, which existed already in the eternal ideas; and lastly, that the motive power of good inclines the will without compelling it.

337. The advantage of freedom which is in the creature without doubt exists to an eminent degree in God. That must be understood in so far as it is genuinely an advantage and in so far as it presupposes no imperfection. For to be able to make a mistake and go astray is a disadvantage, and to have control over the passions is in truth an advantage, but one that presupposes an imperfection, [328]namely passion itself, of which God is incapable. Scotus was justified in saying that if God were not free and exempt from necessity, no creature would be so. But God is incapable of being indeterminate in anything whatsoever: he cannot be ignorant, he cannot doubt, he cannot suspend his judgement; his will is always decided, and it can only be decided by the best. God can never have a primitive particular will, that is, independent of laws or general acts of will; such a thing would be unreasonable. He cannot determine upon Adam, Peter, Judas or any individual without the existence of a reason for this determination; and this reason leads of necessity to some general enunciation. The wise mind always acts *according to principles*; always *according to rules*, and never *according to exceptions*, save when the rules come into collision through opposing tendencies, where the strongest carries the day: or else, either they will stop one another or some third course will emerge as a result. In all these cases one rule serves as an exception to the other, and there are never any *original exceptions* with one who always acts in a regular way.

338. If there are people who believe that election and reprobation are accomplished on God's part by a despotic absolute power, not only without any apparent reason but actually without any reason, even a concealed one, they maintain an opinion that destroys alike the nature of things and the divine perfections. Such an *absolutely absolute decree* (so to speak) would be without doubt insupportable. But Luther and Calvin were far from such a belief: the former hopes that the life to come will make us comprehend the just reasons of God's choice; and the latter protests explicitly that these reasons are just and holy, although they be unknown to us. I have already in that connexion quoted Calvin's treatise on predestination, and here are the actual words: 'God before the fall of Adam had reflected upon what he had to do, and that for causes concealed from us.... It is evident therefore that he had just causes for the reprobation of some of mankind, but causes to us unknown.'

339. This truth, that all God does is reasonable and cannot be better done, strikes at the outset every man of good sense, and extorts, so to speak, his approbation. And yet the most subtle of philosophers have a fatal propensity for offending sometimes without observing it, during the course and in the heat of disputes, against the first principles of good sense, when these are shrouded [329]in terms that disguise them. We have here already seen how the excellent M. Bayle, with all his shrewdness, has nevertheless combated this principle which I have just indicated, and which is a sure consequence of the supreme perfection of God. He thought to defend in that way the cause of God and to exempt him from an imaginary necessity, by leaving him the freedom to choose from among various goods the least. I have already spoken of M. Diroys and others who have also been deluded by this strange opinion, one that is far too commonly accepted. Those who uphold it do not observe that it implies a wish to preserve for, or rather bestow upon, God a false freedom, which is the freedom to act unreasonably. That is rendering his works subject to correction, and making it impossible for us to say or even to hope that anything reasonable can be said upon the permission of evil.

340. This error has much impaired M. Bayle's arguments, and has barred his way of escape from many perplexities. That appears again in relation to the laws of the realm of Nature: he believes them to be arbitrary and indifferent, and he objects that God could better have attained his end in the realm of grace if he had not clung to these laws, if he had more often dispensed with their observance, or even if he had made others. He believed this especially with regard to the law of the union between the soul and the body. For he is persuaded, with the modern Cartesians, that the ideas of the perceptible qualities that God gives (according to them) to the soul, occasioned by movements of the body, have nothing representing these movements or resembling them. Accordingly it was a purely arbitrary act on God's part to give us the ideas of heat, cold, light and other qualities which we experience, rather than to give us quite different ideas occasioned in the same way. I have often wondered that people so talented should have been capable of relishing notions so unphilosophic and so contrary to the fundamental maxims of reason. For nothing gives clearer indication of the imperfection of a philosophy than the necessity experienced by the philosopher to confess that something comes to pass, in accordance with his system, for which there is no reason. That applies to the idea of Epicurus on the deviation of atoms. Whether it be God or Nature that operates, the operation will always have its reasons. In the operations of Nature, these

reasons will depend either upon necessary truths or upon the laws that God has found the most reasonable; and in the operations of [330]God, they will depend upon the choice of the supreme reason which causes them to act.

341. M. Regis, a famous Cartesian, had asserted in his 'Metaphysics' (part 2, book 2, c. 29) that the faculties God has given to men are the most excellent that they were capable of in conformity with the general order of nature. 'Considering only', he says, 'the power of God and the nature of man by themselves, it is very easy to conceive that God could have made man more perfect: but if one will consider man, not in himself and separately from all other creatures, but as a member of the universe and a portion which is subject to the general laws of motions, one will be bound to acknowledge that man is as perfect as he could have been.' He adds 'that we cannot conceive that God could have employed any other means more appropriate than pain for the conservation of our bodies'. M. Regis is right in a general way in saying that God cannot do better than he has done in relation to all. And although there be apparently in some places in the universe rational animals more perfect than man, one may say that God was right to create every kind of species, some more perfect than others. It is perhaps not impossible that there be somewhere a species of animals much resembling man and more perfect than we are. It may be even that the human race will attain in time to a greater perfection than that which we can now envisage. Thus the laws of motions do not prevent man from being more perfect: but the place God has assigned to man in space and in time limits the perfections he was able to receive.

342. I also doubt, with M. Bayle, whether pain be necessary in order to warn men of peril. But this writer goes too far (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. II, ch. 77, p. 104): he seems to think that a feeling of pleasure could have the same effect, and that, in order to prevent a child from going too near the fire, God could give him ideas of pleasure in proportion to the distance he kept from it. This expedient does not appear very practicable with regard to all evils, unless a miracle were involved. It is more natural that what if it were too near would cause an evil should cause some foreboding of evil when it is a little less near. Yet I admit that it is possible such a foreboding will be something less than pain, and usually this is the case. Thus it indeed appears that pain is not necessary for causing one to shun present peril; it is wont rather to serve as a penalty for having actually plunged into [331]evil, and a warning against further lapse. There are also many painful evils the avoidance whereof rests not with us. As a dissolution of the continuity of our body is a consequence of many accidents that may happen to us, it was natural that this imperfection of the body should be represented by some sense of imperfection in the soul. Nevertheless I would not guarantee that there were no animals in the universe whose structure was cunning enough to cause a sense of indifference as accompaniment to this dissolution of continuity, as for instance when a gangrenous limb is cut off; or even a sense of pleasure, as if one were only scratching oneself. For the imperfection that attends the dissolution of the body might lead to the sense of a greater perfection, which was suspended or checked by the continuity which is now broken: and in this respect the body would be as it were a prison.

343. There is also nothing to preclude the existence in the universe of animals resembling that one which Cyrano de Bergerac encountered in the sun. The body of this animal being a sort of fluid composed of innumerable small animals, that were capable of ranging themselves in accordance with the desires of the great animal, by this means it transformed itself in a moment, just as it pleased; and the dissolution of continuity caused it no more hurt than the stroke of an oar can cause to the sea. But, after all, these animals are not men, they are not in our globe or in our present century; and God's plan ensured that there should not be lacking here on earth a rational animal clothed in flesh and bones, whose structure involves susceptibility to pain.

344. But M. Bayle further opposes this on another principle, one which I have already mentioned. It seems that he thinks the ideas which the soul conceives in relation to the feelings of the body are arbitrary. Thus God might have caused the dissolution of continuity to give us pleasure. He even maintains that the laws of motion are entirely arbitrary. 'I would wish to know', he says (vol. III, ch. 166, p. 1080), 'whether God established by an act of his freedom of indifference general laws on the communication of movements, and the particular laws on the union of the human soul with an organic body? In this case, he could have established quite different laws, and adopted a system whose results involved neither moral evil nor physical evil. But if the answer is given that God was constrained by supreme wisdom to establish the laws that he has established, there we have neither more nor [332]less than the *Fatum* of the Stoics. Wisdom will have marked out a way for God, the abandonment whereof will have been as impossible to him as his own self-destruction.' This objection has been sufficiently overthrown: it is only a moral necessity; and it is always a happy necessity to be bound to act in accordance with the rules of perfect wisdom.

345. Moreover, it appears to me that the reason for the belief held by many that the laws of motion are arbitrary comes from the fact that few people have properly examined them. It is known now that M. Descartes was much mistaken in his statement of them. I have proved conclusively that conservation of the same quantity of motion cannot occur, but I consider that the same quantity of force is conserved, whether absolute or directive and

respective, whether total or partial. My principles, which carry this subject as far as it can go, have not yet been published in full; but I have communicated them to friends competent to judge of them, who have approved them, and have converted some other persons of acknowledged erudition and ability. I discovered at the same time that the laws of motion actually existing in Nature, and confirmed by experiments, are not in reality absolutely demonstrable, as a geometrical proposition would be; but neither is it necessary that they be so. They do not spring entirely from the principle of necessity, but rather from the principle of perfection and order; they are an effect of the choice and the wisdom of God. I can demonstrate these laws in divers ways, but must always assume something that is not of an absolutely geometrical necessity. Thus these admirable laws are wonderful evidence of an intelligent and free being, as opposed to the system of absolute and brute necessity, advocated by Strato or Spinoza.

346. I have found that one may account for these laws by assuming that the effect is always equal in force to its cause, or, which amounts to the same thing, that the same force is conserved always: but this axiom of higher philosophy cannot be demonstrated geometrically. One may again apply other principles of like nature, for instance the principle that action is always equal to reaction, one which assumes in things a distaste for external change, and cannot be derived either from extension or impenetrability; and that other principle, that a simple movement has the same properties as those which might belong to a compound [333]movement such as would produce the same phenomena of locomotion. These assumptions are very plausible, and are successful as an explanation of the laws of motion: nothing is so appropriate, all the more since they are in accord with each other. But there is to be found in them no absolute necessity, such as may compel us to admit them, in the way one is compelled to admit the rules of logic, of arithmetic and geometry.

347. It seems, when one considers the indifference of matter to motion and to rest, that the largest body at rest could be carried along without any resistance by the smallest body in motion, in which case there would be action without reaction and an effect greater than its cause. There is also no necessity to say of the motion of a ball which runs freely on an even, horizontal plane, with a certain degree of speed, termed A, that this motion must have the properties of that motion which it would have if it were going with lesser speed in a boat, itself moving in the same direction with the residue of the speed, to ensure that the ball, seen from the bank, advance with the same degree A. For, although the same appearance of speed and of direction results through this medium of the boat, it is not because it is the same thing. Nevertheless it happens that the effects of the collision of the balls in the boat, the motion in each one separately combined with that of the boat giving the appearance of that which goes on outside the boat, also give the appearance of the effects that these same balls colliding would have outside the boat. All that is admirable, but one does not see its absolute necessity. A movement on the two sides of the right-angled triangle composes a movement on the hypotenuse; but it does not follow that a ball moving on the hypotenuse must produce the effect of two balls of its own size moving on the two sides: yet that is true. Nothing is so appropriate as this result, and God has chosen the laws that produce it: but one sees no geometrical necessity therein. Yet it is this very lack of necessity which enhances the beauty of the laws that God has chosen, wherein divers admirable axioms exist in conjunction, and it is impossible for one to say which of them is the primary.

348. I have also shown that therein is observed that excellent law of continuity, which I have perhaps been the first to state, and which is a kind of touchstone whose test the rules of M. Descartes, of Father Fabry, Father Pardies, Father de Malebranche and others cannot pass. In virtue of this law, one must be able to [334]regard rest as a movement vanishing after having continually diminished, and likewise equality as an inequality that vanishes also, as would happen through the continual diminution of the greater of two unequal bodies, while the smaller retains its size. As a consequence of this consideration, the general rule for unequal bodies, or bodies in motion, must apply also to equal bodies or to bodies one of which is at rest, as to a particular case of the rule. This does result in the true laws of motion, and does not result in certain laws invented by M. Descartes and by some other men of talent, which already on that score alone prove to be ill-concerted, so that one may predict that experiment will not favour them.

349. These considerations make it plain that the laws of Nature regulating movements are neither entirely necessary nor entirely arbitrary. The middle course to be taken is that they are a choice of the most perfect wisdom. And this great example of the laws of motion shows with the utmost clarity how much difference there is between these three cases, to wit, firstly *an absolute necessity*, metaphysical or geometrical, which may be called blind, and which does not depend upon any but efficient causes; in the second place, *a moral necessity*, which comes from the free choice of wisdom in relation to final causes; and finally in the third place, *something absolutely arbitrary*, depending upon an indifference of equipoise, which is imagined, but which cannot exist, where there is no sufficient reason either in the efficient or in the final cause. Consequently one must conclude how mistaken it is to confuse either that which is absolutely necessary with that which is determined by the reason of the best, or the freedom that is determined by reason with a vague indifference.

350. This also settles M. Bayle's difficulty, for he fears that, if God is always determinate, Nature could dispense with him and bring about that same effect which is attributed to him, through the necessity of the order of things. That would be true if the laws of motion for instance, and all the rest, had their source in a geometrical necessity of efficient causes; but in the last analysis one is obliged to resort to something depending upon final causes and upon what is fitting. This also utterly destroys the most plausible reasoning of the Naturalists. Dr. Johann Joachim Becher, a German physician, well known for his books on chemistry, had composed a prayer which looked like getting him into trouble. It [335]began: 'O sancta mater natura, aeternae rerum ordo'. And it ended by saying that this Nature must forgive him his errors, since she herself was their cause. But the nature of things, if taken as without intelligence and without choice, has in it nothing sufficiently determinant. Herr Becher did not sufficiently take into account that the Author of things (*natura naturans*) must be good and wise, and that we can be evil without complicity on his part in our acts of wickedness. When a wicked man exists, God must have found in the region of possibles the idea of such a man forming part of that sequence of things, the choice of which was demanded by the greatest perfection of the universe, and in which errors and sins are not only punished but even repaired to greater advantage, so that they contribute to the greatest good.

351. M. Bayle, however, has extended the free choice of God a little too far. Speaking of the Peripatetic Strato (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 180, p. 1239), who asserted that everything had been brought forth by the necessity of a nature devoid of intelligence, he maintains that this philosopher, on being asked why a tree has not the power to form bones and veins, might have asked in his turn: Why has matter precisely three dimensions? why should not two have sufficed for it? why has it not four? 'If one had answered that there can be neither more nor less than three dimensions he would have demanded the cause of this impossibility.' These words lead one to believe that M. Bayle suspected that the number of the dimensions of matter depended upon God's choice, even as it depended upon him to cause or not to cause trees to produce animals. Indeed, how do we know whether there are not planetary globes or earths situated in some more remote place in the universe where the fable of the Barnacle-geese of Scotland (birds that were said to be born of trees) proves true, and even whether there are not countries where one could say:

... *populos umbrosa creavit*

*Fraxinus, et foeta viridis puer excidit alno?*

But with the dimensions of matter it is not thus: the ternary number is determined for it not by the reason of the best, but by a geometrical necessity, because the geometers have been able to prove that there are only three straight lines perpendicular to one another which can intersect at one and the same point. [336]Nothing more appropriate could have been chosen to show the difference there is between the moral necessity that accounts for the choice of wisdom and the brute necessity of Strato and the adherents of Spinoza, who deny to God understanding and will, than a consideration of the difference existing between the reason for the laws of motion and the reason for the ternary number of the dimensions: for the first lies in the choice of the best and the second in a geometrical and blind necessity.

352. Having spoken of the laws of bodies, that is, of the rules of motion, let us come to the laws of the union between body and soul, where M. Bayle believes that he finds again some vague indifference, something absolutely arbitrary. Here is the way he speaks of it in his *Reply* (vol. II, ch. 84, p. 163): 'It is a puzzling question whether bodies have some natural property of doing harm or good to man's soul. If one answers yes, one plunges into an insane labyrinth: for, as man's soul is an immaterial substance, one will be bound to say that the local movement of certain bodies is an efficient cause of the thoughts in a mind, a statement contrary to the most obvious notions that philosophy imparts to us. If one answers no, one will be constrained to admit that the influence of our organs upon our thoughts depends neither upon the internal qualities of matter, nor upon the laws of motion, but upon an *arbitrary institution* of the creator. One must then admit that it depended altogether upon God's freedom to combine particular thoughts of our soul with particular modifications of our body, even when he had once established all the laws for the action of bodies one upon another. Whence it results that there is in the universe no portion of matter which by its proximity can harm us, save when God wills it; and consequently, that the earth is as capable as any other place of being the abode of the happy man.... In short it is evident that there is no need, in order to prevent the wrong choices of freedom, to transport man outside the earth. God could do on earth with regard to all the acts of the will what he does in respect of the good works of the predestined when he settles their outcome, whether by efficacious or by sufficient grace: and that grace, without in any way impairing freedom, is always followed by the assent of the soul. It would be as easy for him on earth as in heaven to bring about the determination of our souls to a good choice.'

353. I agree with M. Bayle that God could have so ordered [337]bodies and souls on this globe of earth, whether by ways of nature or by extraordinary graces, that it would have been a perpetual paradise and a foretaste of the

celestial state of the blessed. There is no reason why there should not be worlds happier than ours; but God had good reasons for willing that ours should be such as it is. Nevertheless, in order to prove that a better state would have been possible here, M. Bayle had no need to resort to the system of occasional causes: it abounds in miracles and in hypotheses for which their very originators confess there is no justification; and these are two defects such as will most of all estrange a system from true philosophy. It is a cause for surprise, in the first place, that M. Bayle did not bethink himself of the System of Pre-established Harmony which he had examined before, and which for this matter was so opportune. But as in this system all is connected and harmonious, all following from reasons and nothing being left incomplete or exposed to the rash discretion of perfect indifference, it seems that it was not pleasing to M. Bayle: for he was here somewhat biassed in favour of such indifference, which, notwithstanding, he contested so strongly on other occasions. He was much given to passing from one extreme to the other, not with an ill intention or against his own conviction, but because there was as yet nothing settled in his mind on the question concerned. He contented himself with whatever suited him for frustrating the opponent he had in mind, his aim being only to perplex philosophers, and show the weakness of our reason; and never, in my opinion, did either Arcesilaus or Carneades argue for and against with more eloquence and more wit. But, after all, one must not doubt for the sake of doubting: doubts must serve us as a gangway to the truth. That is what I often said to the late Abbé Foucher, a few specimens of whose work prove that he designed to do with regard to the Academicians what Lipsius and Scioppius had done for the Stoics, and M. Gassendi for Epicurus, and what M. Dacier has so well begun for Plato. It must not be possible for us to offer true philosophers such a reproach as that implied in the celebrated Casaubon's answer to those who, in showing him the hall of the Sorbonne, told him that debate had been carried on there for some centuries. What conclusions have been reached? he said to them.

354. M. Bayle goes on (p. 166): 'It is true that since the laws of motion were instituted in such forms as we see now in the world, it is an inevitable necessity that a hammer striking a nut should [338]break it, and that a stone falling on a man's foot should cause some bruise or some derangement of its parts. But that is all that can follow the action of this stone upon the human body. If you want it in addition to cause a feeling of pain, then one must assume the institution of a code other than that one which regulates the action and reaction of bodies one upon another; one must, I say, have recourse to the particular system of the laws of union between the soul and certain bodies. Now as this system is not of necessity connected with the other, the indifference of God does not cease in relation to the one immediately upon his choice of the other. He therefore combined these two systems with a complete freedom, like two things which did not follow naturally the one from the other. Thus it is by an arbitrary institution he has ordained that wounds in the body should cause pain in the soul which is united to this body. It therefore only rested with him to have chosen another system of union between soul and body: he was therefore able to choose one in accordance wherewith wounds only evoke the idea of the remedy and an intense but agreeable desire to apply it. He was able to arrange that all bodies which were on the point of breaking a man's head or piercing his heart should evoke a lively sense of danger, and that this sense should cause the body to remove itself promptly out of reach of the blow. All that would have come to pass without miracles, since there would have been general laws on this subject. The system which we know by experience teaches us that the determination of the movement of certain bodies changes in pursuance of our desires. It was therefore possible for a combination to be effected between our desires and the movement of certain bodies, whereby the nutritive juices were so modified that the good arrangement of our organs was never affected.'

355. It is evident that M. Bayle believes that everything accomplished through general laws is accomplished without miracles. But I have shown sufficiently that if the law is not founded on reasons and does not serve to explain the event through the nature of things, it can only be put into execution by a miracle. If, for example, God had ordained that bodies must have a circular motion, he would have needed perpetual miracles, or the ministry of angels, to put this order into execution: for that is contrary to the nature of motion, whereby the body naturally abandons the circular line to continue in the tangent straight line if nothing [339]holds it back. Therefore it is not enough for God to ordain simply that a wound should excite an agreeable sensation: natural means must be found for that purpose. The real means whereby God causes the soul to be conscious of what happens in the body have their origin in the nature of the soul, which represents the bodies, and is so made beforehand that the representations which are to spring up one from another within it, by a natural sequence of thoughts, correspond to the changes in the body.

356. The representation has a natural relation to that which is to be represented. If God should have the round shape of a body represented by the idea of a square, that would be an unsuitable representation: for there would be angles or projections in the representation, while all would be even and smooth in the original. The representation often suppresses something in the objects when it is imperfect; but it can add nothing: that would render it, not more than perfect, but false. Moreover, the suppression is never complete in our perceptions, and there is in the representation, confused as it is, more than we see there. Thus there is reason for supposing that the ideas of heat, cold, colours, etc., also only represent the small movements carried out in the organs, when

one is conscious of these qualities, although the multiplicity and the diminutive character of these movements prevents their clear representation. Almost in the same way it happens that we do not distinguish the blue and the yellow which play their part in the representation as well as in the composition of the green, when the microscope shows that what appears to be green is composed of yellow and blue parts.

357. It is true that the same thing may be represented in different ways; but there must always be an exact relation between the representation and the thing, and consequently between the different representations of one and the same thing. The projections in perspective of the conic sections of the circle show that one and the same circle may be represented by an ellipse, a parabola and a hyperbola, and even by another circle, a straight line and a point. Nothing appears so different nor so dissimilar as these figures; and yet there is an exact relation between each point and every other point. Thus one must allow that each soul represents the universe to itself according to its point of view, and through a relation which is peculiar to it; but a perfect harmony always subsists therein. God, if he wished to effect representation [340]of the dissolution of continuity of the body by an agreeable sensation in the soul, would not have neglected to ensure that this very dissolution should serve some perfection in the body, by giving it some new relief, as when one is freed of some burden or loosed from some bond. But organic bodies of such kinds, although possible, do not exist upon our globe, which doubtless lacks innumerable inventions that God may have put to use elsewhere. Nevertheless it is enough that, due allowance being made for the place our world holds in the universe, nothing can be done for it better than what God does. He makes the best possible use of the laws of nature which he has established and (as M. Regis also acknowledged in the same passage) 'the laws that God has established in nature are the most excellent it is possible to conceive'.

358. I will add to that the remark from the *Journal des Savants* of the 16th March 1705, which M. Bayle has inserted in chapter 162 of the *Reply to the Questions of a Provincial* (vol. III, p. 1030). The matter in question is the extract from a very ingenious modern book on the Origin of Evil, to which I have already referred here. It is stated: 'that the general solution in respect of physical evil which this book gives is that the universe must be regarded as a work composed of various pieces which form a whole; that, according to the laws established in nature, some parts cannot be better unless others become worse, whence would result a system less perfect as a whole. This principle', the writer goes on, 'is good; but if nothing is added to it, it does not appear sufficient. Why has God established laws that give rise to so many difficulties? philosophers who are somewhat precise will say. Could he not have established others of a kind not subject to any defects? And to cut the matter short, how comes it that he has prescribed laws for himself? Why does he not act without general laws, in accordance with all his power and all his goodness? The writer has not carried the difficulty as far as that. By disentangling his ideas one might indeed possibly find means of solving the difficulty, but there is no development of the subject in his work.'

359. I suppose that the gifted author of this extract, when he thought the difficulty could be solved, had in mind something akin to my principles on this matter. If he had vouchsafed to declare himself in this passage, he would to all appearance have replied, like M. Regis, that the laws God established were the most excellent that could be established. He would have acknowledged, [341]at the same time, that God could not have refrained from establishing laws and following rules, because laws and rules are what makes order and beauty; that to act without rules would be to act without reason; and that because God *called into action all his goodness* the exercise of his omnipotence was consistent with the laws of wisdom, to secure as much good as was possible of attainment. Finally, he would have said, the existence of certain particular disadvantages which strike us is a sure indication that the best plan did not permit of their avoidance, and that they assist in the achievement of the total good, an argument wherewith M. Bayle in more than one place expresses agreement.

360. Now that I have proved sufficiently that everything comes to pass according to determinate reasons, there cannot be any more difficulty over these principles of God's foreknowledge. Although these determinations do not compel, they cannot but be certain, and they foreshadow what shall happen. It is true that God sees all at once the whole sequence of this universe, when he chooses it, and that thus he has no need of the connexion of effects and causes in order to foresee these effects. But since his wisdom causes him to choose a sequence in perfect connexion, he cannot but see one part of the sequence in the other. It is one of the rules of my system of general harmony, *that the present is big with the future*, and that he who sees all sees in that which is that which shall be. What is more, I have proved conclusively that God sees in each portion of the universe the whole universe, owing to the perfect connexion of things. He is infinitely more discerning than Pythagoras, who judged the height of Hercules by the size of his footprint. There must therefore be no doubt that effects follow their causes determinately, in spite of contingency and even of freedom, which nevertheless exist together with certainty or determination.

361. Durand de Saint-Pourçain, among others, has indicated this clearly in saying that contingent futurities are seen determinately in their causes, and that God, who knows all, seeing all that shall have power to tempt or repel

the will, will see therein the course it shall take. I could cite many other authors who have said the same thing, and reason does not allow the possibility of thinking otherwise. M. Jacquelot implies also (*Conformity of Faith with Reason*, p. 318 *et seqq.*), as M. Bayle observes (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 142, p. 796), that the dispositions of the human heart and those of circumstances acquaint God [342]unerringly with the choice that man shall make. M. Bayle adds that some Molinists say the same, and refers us to those who are quoted in the *Suavis Concordia* of Pierre de S. Joseph, the Feuillant (pp. 579, 580).

362. Those who have confused this determination with necessity have fabricated monsters in order to fight them. To avoid a reasonable thing which they had disguised under a hideous shape, they have fallen into great absurdities. For fear of being obliged to admit an imaginary necessity, or at least one different from that in question, they have admitted something which happens without the existence of any cause or reason for it. This amounts to the same as the absurd deviation of atoms, which according to Epicurus happened without any cause. Cicero, in his book on Divination, saw clearly that if the cause could produce an effect towards which it was entirely indifferent there would be a true chance, a genuine luck, an actual fortuitous case, that is, one which would be so not merely in relation to us and our ignorance, according to which one may say:

*Sed Te*

*Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, caeloque locamus,*

but even in relation to God and to the nature of things. Consequently it would be impossible to foresee events by judging of the future by the past. He adds fittingly in the same passage: 'Qui potest provideri, quicquam futurum esse, quod neque causam habet ullam, neque notam cur futurum sit?' and soon after: 'Nihil est tam contrarium rationi et constantiae, quam fortuna; ut mihi ne in Deum quidem cadere videatur, ut sciat quid casu et fortuito futurum sit. Si enim scit, certe illud eveniet: sin certe eveniet, nulla fortuna est.' If the future is certain, there is no such thing as luck. But he wrongly adds: 'Est autem fortuna; rerum igitur fortuitarum nulla praesensio est.' There is luck, therefore future events cannot be foreseen. He ought rather to have concluded that, events being predetermined and foreseen, there is no luck. But he was then speaking against the Stoics, in the character of an Academician.

363. The Stoics already derived from the decrees of God the prevision of events. For, as Cicero says in the same book: 'Sequitur porro nihil Deos ignorare, quod omnia ab iis sint constituta.' And, according to my system, God, having seen the possible world that [343]he desired to create, foresaw everything therein. Thus one may say that the *divine knowledge of vision differs from the knowledge of simple intelligence* only in that it adds to the latter the acquaintance with the actual decree to choose this sequence of things which simple intelligence had already presented, but only as possible; and this decree now makes the present universe.

364. Thus the Socinians cannot be excused for denying to God the certain knowledge of future events, and above all of the future resolves of a free creature. For even though they had supposed that there is a freedom of complete indifference, so that the will can choose without cause, and that thus this effect could not be seen in its cause (which is a great absurdity), they ought always to take into account that God was able to foresee this event in the idea of the possible world that he resolved to create. But the idea which they have of God is unworthy of the Author of things, and is not commensurate with the skill and wit which the writers of this party often display in certain particular discussions. The author of the *Reflexion on the Picture of Socinianism* was not altogether mistaken in saying that the God of the Socinians would be ignorant and powerless, like the God of Epicurus, every day confounded by events and living from one day to the next, if he only knows by conjecture what the will of men is to be.

365. The whole difficulty here has therefore only come from a wrong idea of contingency and of freedom, which was thought to have need of a complete indifference or equipoise, an imaginary thing, of which neither a notion nor an example exists, nor ever can exist. Apparently M. Descartes had been imbued with the idea in his youth, at the College of la Flèche. That caused him to say (part I of his *Principles*, art. 41): 'Our thought is finite, and the knowledge and omnipotence of God, whereby he has not only known from all eternity everything that is, or that can be, but also has willed it, is infinite. Thus we have enough intelligence to recognize clearly and distinctly that this power and this knowledge are in God; but we have not enough so to comprehend their extent that we can know how they leave the actions of men entirely free and indeterminate.' The continuation has already been quoted above. 'Entirely free', that is right; but one spoils everything by adding 'entirely indeterminate'. One has no need of infinite knowledge in order to see that the foreknowledge and the providence of God allow freedom to our actions, since God has foreseen those [344]actions in his ideas, just as they are, that is, free. Laurentius Valla indeed, in his *Dialogue against Boethius* (which I will presently quote in epitome) ably undertakes to reconcile freedom with foreknowledge, but does not venture to hope that he can reconcile it with providence. Yet there is no

more difficulty in the one than the other, because the decree to give existence to this action no more changes its nature than does one's mere consciousness thereof. But there is no knowledge, however infinite it be, which can reconcile the knowledge and providence of God with actions of an indeterminate cause, that is to say, with a chimerical and impossible being. The actions of the will are determined in two ways, by the foreknowledge or providence of God, and also by the dispositions of the particular immediate cause, which lie in the inclinations of the soul. M. Descartes followed the Thomists on this point; but he wrote with his usual circumspection, so as not to come into conflict with some other theologians.

366. M. Bayle relates (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 142, p. 804) that Father Gibieuf of the Oratory published a Latin treatise on the freedom of God and of the creature, in the year 1639; that he was met with protests, and was shown a collection of seventy contradictions taken from the first book of his work; and that, twenty years after, Father Annat, Confessor to the King of France, reproached him in his book *De Incoacta Libertate* (ed. Rome, 1654, in 4to.), for the silence he still maintained. Who would not think (adds M. Bayle), after the uproar of the *de Auxiliis* Congregations, that the Thomists taught things touching the nature of free will which were entirely opposed to the opinion of the Jesuits? When, however, one considers the passages that Father Annat quoted from the works of the Thomists (in a pamphlet entitled: *Jansenius a Thomistis, gratiae per se ipsam efficacis defensoribus, condemnatus*, printed in Paris in the year 1654 in 4to.) one can in reality only see verbal controversies between the two sects. The grace efficacious of itself, according to the one side, leaves to free will quite as much power of resistance as the congruent grace of the others. M. Bayle thinks one can say almost as much of Jansenius himself. He was (so he says) an able man, of a methodical mind and of great assiduity. He worked for twenty-two years at his *Augustinus*. One of his aims was to refute the Jesuits on the dogma of free will; yet no decision has yet been reached as to whether he rejects or adopts freedom of indifference. [345] From his work innumerable passages are quoted for and against this opinion, as Father Annat has himself shown in the work that has just been mentioned, *De Incoacta Libertate*. So easy is it to render this subject obscure, as M. Bayle says at the conclusion of this discourse. As for Father Gibieuf, it must be admitted that he often alters the meaning of his terms, and that consequently he does not answer the question in the main, albeit he often writes with good sense.

367. Indeed, confusion springs, more often than not, from ambiguity in terms, and from one's failure to take trouble over gaining clear ideas about them. That gives rise to these eternal, and usually mistaken, contentions on necessity and contingency, on the possible and the impossible. But provided that it is understood that necessity and possibility, taken metaphysically and strictly, depend solely upon this question, whether the object in itself or that which is opposed to it implies contradiction or not; and that one takes into account that contingency is consistent with the inclinations, or reasons which contribute towards causing determination by the will; provided also that one knows how to distinguish clearly between necessity and determination or certainty, between metaphysical necessity, which admits of no choice, presenting only one single object as possible, and moral necessity, which constrains the wisest to choose the best; finally, provided that one is rid of the chimera of complete indifference, which can only be found in the books of philosophers, and on paper (for they cannot even conceive the notion in their heads, or prove its reality by an example in things) one will easily escape from a labyrinth whose unhappy Daedalus was the human mind. That labyrinth has caused infinite confusion, as much with the ancients as with those of later times, even so far as to lead men into the absurd error of the Lazy Sophism, which closely resembles fate after the Turkish fashion. I do not wonder if in reality the Thomists and the Jesuits, and even the Molinists and the Jansenists, agree together on this matter more than is supposed. A Thomist and even a wise Jansenist will content himself with certain determination, without going on to necessity: and if someone goes so far, the error mayhap will lie only in the word. A wise Molinist will be content with an indifference opposed to necessity, but such as shall not exclude prevalent inclinations.

368. These difficulties, however, have greatly impressed M. Bayle, [346] who was more inclined to dwell on them than to solve them, although he might perhaps have had better success than anyone if he had thought fit to turn his mind in that direction. Here is what he says of them in his *Dictionary*, art. 'Jansenius', lit. G, p. 1626: 'Someone has said that the subject of Grace is an ocean which has neither shore nor bottom. Perhaps he would have spoken more correctly if he had compared it to the Strait of Messina, where one is always in danger of striking one reef while endeavouring to avoid another.'

*Dextrum Scylla latus, laevum implacata Charybdis*

*Obsidet.*

Everything comes back in the end to this: Did Adam sin freely? If you answer yes, then you will be told, his fall was not foreseen. If you answer no, then you will be told, he is not guilty. You may write a hundred volumes against the one or the other of these conclusions, and yet you will confess, either that the infallible prevision of a

contingent event is a mystery impossible to conceive, or that the way in which a creature which acts without freedom sins nevertheless is altogether incomprehensible.'

369. Either I am greatly mistaken or these two alleged incomprehensibilities are ended altogether by my solutions. Would to God it were as easy to answer the question how to cure fevers, and how to avoid the perils of two chronic sicknesses that may originate, the one from not curing the fever, the other from curing it wrongly. When one asserts that a free event cannot be foreseen, one is confusing freedom with indetermination, or with indifference that is complete and in equipoise; and when one maintains that the lack of freedom would prevent man from being guilty, one means a freedom exempt, not from determination or from certainty, but from necessity and from constraint. This shows that the dilemma is not well expressed, and that there is a wide passage between the two perilous reefs. One will reply, therefore, that Adam sinned freely, and that God saw him sinning in the possible state of Adam, which became actual in accordance with the decree of the divine permission. It is true that Adam was determined to sin in consequence of certain prevailing inclinations: but this determination destroys neither contingency nor freedom. Moreover, the certain determination to sin which exists in man does not deprive him of the power to avoid sinning (speaking generally) or, [347]since he does sin, prevent him from being guilty and deserving punishment. This is more especially so since the punishment may be of service to him or others, to contribute towards determining them another time not to sin. There is besides punitive justice, which goes beyond compensation and amendment, and wherein also there is nothing liable to be shaken by the certain determination of the contingent resolutions of the will. It may be said, on the contrary, that the penalties and rewards would be to some extent unavailing, and would fail in one of their aims, that of amendment, if they could not contribute towards determining the will to do better another time.

370. M. Bayle continues: 'Where freedom is concerned there are only two courses to take: one is to say that all the causes distinct from the soul, and co-operating with it, leave it the power to act or not to act; the other is to say that they so determine it to act that it cannot forbear to do so. The first course is that taken by the Molinists, the other is that of the Thomists and Jansenists and the Protestants of the Geneva Confession. Yet the Thomists have clamorously maintained that they were not Jansenists; and the latter have maintained with equal warmth that where freedom was concerned they were not Calvinists. On the other hand, the Molinists have maintained that St. Augustine did not teach Jansenism. Thus the one side not wishing to admit that they were in conformity with people who were considered heretics, and the other side not wishing to admit that they were in opposition to a learned saint whose opinions were always considered orthodox, have both performed a hundred feats of contortion, etc.'

371. The two courses which M. Bayle distinguishes here do not exclude a third course, according to which the determination of the soul does not come solely from the co-operation of all the causes distinct from the soul, but also from the state of the soul itself and its inclinations which mingle with the impressions of the senses, strengthening or weakening them. Now all the internal and external causes taken together bring it about that the soul is determined certainly, but not of necessity: for no contradiction would be implied if the soul were to be determined differently, it being possible for the will to be inclined, but not possible for it to be compelled by necessity. I will not venture upon a discussion of the difference existing between the Jansenists and the Reformed on this matter. They are not perhaps always fully in accord with [348]themselves as regards things, or as regards expressions, on a matter where one often loses one's way in bewildering subtleties. Father Theophile Raynaud, in his book entitled *Calvinismus Religio Bestiarum*, wished to strike at the Dominicans, without naming them. On the other hand, those who professed to be followers of St. Augustine reproached the Molinists with Pelagianism or at the least semi-Pelagianism. Things were carried to excess at times by both sides, whether in their defence of a vague indifference and the granting of too much to man, or in their teaching *determinationem ad unum secundum qualitatem actus licet non quoad ejus substantiam*, that is to say, a determination to evil in the non-regenerate, as if they did nothing but sin. After all, I think one must not reproach any but the adherents of Hobbes and Spinoza with destroying freedom and contingency; for they think that that which happens is alone possible, and must happen by a brute geometrical necessity. Hobbes made everything material and subjected it to mathematical laws alone; Spinoza also divested God of intelligence and choice, leaving him a blind power, whence all emanates of necessity. The theologians of the two Protestant parties are equally zealous in refuting an unendurable necessity. Although those who follow the Synod of Dordrecht teach sometimes that it suffices for freedom to be exempt from constraint, it seems that the necessity they leave in it is only hypothetical, or rather that which is more appropriately termed certainty and infallibility. Thus it results that very often the difficulties only lie in the terms. I say as much with regard to the Jansenists, although I do not wish to make excuse for those people in everything.

372. With the Hebrew Cabalists, *Malcuth* or the Kingdom, the last of the Sephiroth, signified that God controls everything irresistibly, but gently and without violence, so that man thinks he is following his own will while he carries out God's. They said that Adam's sin had been *truncatio Malcuth a caeteris plantis*, that is to say, that Adam had cut back the last of the Sephiroth, by making a dominion for himself within God's dominion, and by

assuming for himself a freedom independent of God, but that his fall had taught him that he could not subsist of himself, and that men must needs be redeemed by the Messiah. This doctrine may receive a good interpretation. But Spinoza, who was versed in the Cabala of the writers of his race, and who says (*Tractatus Politicus*, c. 2, n. 6) that men, conceiving of freedom as they do, establish a [349]dominion within God's dominion, has gone too far. The dominion of God is with Spinoza nothing but the dominion of necessity, and of a blind necessity (as with Strato), whereby everything emanates from the divine nature, while no choice is left to God, and man's choice does not exempt him from necessity. He adds that men, in order to establish what is termed *Imperium in Imperio*, supposed that their soul was a direct creation of God, something which could not be produced by natural causes, furthermore that it had an absolute power of determination, a state of things contrary to experience. Spinoza is right in opposing an absolute power of determination, that is, one without any grounds; it does not belong even to God. But he is wrong in thinking that a soul, that a simple substance, can be produced naturally. It seems, indeed, that the soul to him was only a transient modification; and when he pretends to make it lasting, and even perpetual, he substitutes for it the idea of the body, which is purely a notion and not a real and actual thing.

373. The story M. Bayle relates of Johan Bredenburg, a citizen of Rotterdam (*Dictionary*, art. 'Spinoza', lit. H, p. 2774) is curious. He published a book against Spinoza, entitled: *Enervatio Tractatus Theologico-politici, una cum demonstratione geometrico ordine disposita, Naturam non esse Deum, cujus effati contrario praedictus Tractatus unice innititur*. One was surprised to see that a man who did not follow the profession of letters, and who had but slight education (having written his book in Flemish, and had it translated into Latin), had been able to penetrate with such subtlety all the principles of Spinoza, and succeed in overthrowing them, after having reduced them by a candid analysis to a state wherein they could appear in their full force. I have been told (adds M. Bayle) that this writer after copious reflexion upon his answer, and upon the principle of his opponent, finally found that this principle could be reduced to the form of a demonstration. He undertook therefore to prove that there is no cause of all things other than a nature which exists necessarily, and which acts according to an immutable, inevitable and irrevocable necessity. He examined the whole system of the geometricians, and after having constructed his demonstration he scrutinized it from every imaginable angle, he endeavoured to find its weak spot and was never able to discover any means of destroying it, or even of weakening it. That caused him real distress: he groaned over it and begged [350]the most talented of his friends to help him in searching out the defects of this demonstration. For all that, he was not well pleased that copies of the book were made. Franz Cuper, a Socinian (who had written *Arcana Atheismi Revelata* against Spinoza, Rotterdam, 1676, in 4to.), having obtained a copy, published it just as it was, that is, in Flemish, with some reflexions, and accused the author of being an atheist. The accused made his defence in the same tongue. Orobio, a very able Jewish physician (that one who was refuted by M. Limbourg, and who replied, so I have heard say, in a work posthumously circulated, but unpublished), brought out a book opposing Bredenburg's demonstration, entitled: *Certamen Philosophicum Propugnatae Veritatis Divinae ac Naturalis, adversus J.B. principia, Amsterdam, 1684*. M. Aubert de Versé also wrote in opposition to him the same year under the name of Latinus Serbattus Sartensis. Bredenburg protested that he was convinced of free will and of religion, and that he wished he might be shown a possibility of refuting his own demonstration.

374. I would desire to see this alleged demonstration, and to know whether it tended to prove that primitive Nature, which produces all, acts without choice and without knowledge. In this case, I admit that his proof was Spinozistic and dangerous. But if he meant perhaps that the divine nature is determined toward that which it produces, by its choice and through the motive of the best, there was no need for him to grieve about this so-called immutable, inevitable, irrevocable necessity. It is only moral, it is a happy necessity; and instead of destroying religion it shows divine perfection to the best advantage.

375. I take this opportunity to add that M. Bayle quotes (p. 2773) the opinion of those who believe that the book entitled *Lucii Antistii Constantis de Jure Ecclesiasticorum Liber Singularis*, published in 1665, is by Spinoza. But I have reason for doubting this, despite that M. Colerus, who has passed on to me an account he wrote of the life of that famous Jew, is also of that opinion. The initial letters L.A.C. lead me to believe that the author of this book was M. de la Cour or Van den Hoof, famous for works on the *Interest of Holland, Political Equipoise*, and numerous other books that he published (some of them under the signature V.D.H.) attacking the power of the Governor of Holland, which was at that time considered a danger to the Republic; for the memory of Prince William the Second's attempt upon the city of Amsterdam [351]was still quite fresh. Most of the ecclesiastics of Holland were on the side of this prince's son, who was then a minor, and they suspected M. de Witt and what was called the Lowenstein faction of favouring the Arminians, the Cartesians, and other sects that were feared still more, endeavouring to rouse the populace against them, and not without success, as the event proved. It was thus very natural that M. de la Cour should publish this book. It is true that people seldom keep to the happy mean in works published to further party interests. I will say in passing that a French version of the *Interest of Holland* by M. de la Cour has just been published, under the deceptive title of *Mémoires de M. le Grand-Pensionnaire de Witt*; as if the thoughts of a private individual, who was, to be sure, of de Witt's party, and a man

of talent, but who had not enough acquaintance with public affairs or enough ability to write as that great Minister of State might have written, could pass for the production of one of the first men of his time.

376. I saw M. de la Cour as well as Spinoza on my return from France by way of England and Holland, and I learnt from them a few good anecdotes on the affairs of that time. M. Bayle says, p. 2770, that Spinoza studied Latin under a physician named Franz van den Ende. He tells at the same time, on the authority of Sebastian Kortholt (who refers to it in the preface to the second edition of the book by his late father, *De Tribus Impostoribus*, *Herberto L. B. de Cherbury, Hobbio et Spinoza*) that a girl instructed Spinoza in Latin, and that she afterwards married M. Kerkering, who was her pupil at the same time as Spinoza. In connexion with that I note that this young lady was a daughter of M. van den Ende, and that she assisted her father in the work of teaching. Van den Ende, who was also called A. Finibus, later went to Paris, and there kept a boarding-school in the Faubourg St. Antoine. He was considered excellent as an instructor, and he told me, when I called upon him there, that he would wager that his audiences would always pay attention to his words. He had with him as well at that time a young girl who also spoke Latin, and worked upon geometrical demonstrations. He had insinuated himself into M. Arnauld's good graces, and the Jesuits began to be jealous of his reputation. But he disappeared shortly afterwards, having been mixed up in the Chevalier de Rohan's conspiracy.

377. I think I have sufficiently proved that neither the foreknowledge nor the providence of God can impair either his justice [352] or his goodness, or our freedom. There remains only the difficulty arising from God's co-operation with the actions of the creature, which seems to concern more closely both his goodness, in relation to our evil actions, and our freedom, in relation to good actions as well as to others. M. Bayle has brought out this also with his usual acuteness. I will endeavour to throw light upon the difficulties he puts forward, and then I shall be in a position to conclude this work. I have already proved that the co-operation of God consists in giving us continually all that is real in us and in our actions, in so far as it involves perfection; but that all that is limited and imperfect therein is a consequence of the previous limitations which are originally in the creature. Since, moreover, every action of the creature is a change of its modifications, it is obvious that action arises in the creature in relation to the limitations or negations which it has within itself, and which are diversified by this change.

378. I have already pointed out more than once in this work that evil is a consequence of privation, and I think that I have explained that intelligibly enough. St. Augustine has already put forward this idea, and St. Basil said something of the same kind in his *Hexaëmeron*, Homil. 2, 'that vice is not a living and animate substance, but an affection of the soul contrary to virtue, which arises from one's abandoning the good; and there is therefore no need to look for an original evil'. M. Bayle, quoting this passage in his *Dictionary* (art. 'Paulicians', lit. D, p. 2325) commends a remark by Herr Pfanner (whom he calls a German theologian, but he is a jurist by profession, Counsellor to the Dukes of Saxony), who censures St. Basil for not being willing to admit that God is the author of physical evil. Doubtless God is its author, when the moral evil is assumed to be already in existence; but speaking generally, one might assert that God permitted physical evil by implication, in permitting moral evil which is its source. It appears that the Stoics knew also how slender is the entity of evil. These words of Epictetus are an indication: 'Sicut aberrandi causa meta non ponitur, sic nec natura mali in mundo existit.'

379. There was therefore no need to have recourse to a principle of evil, as St. Basil aptly observes. Nor is it necessary either to seek the origin of evil in matter. Those who believed that there was a chaos before God laid his hand upon it sought therein the source of disorder. It was an opinion which Plato introduced into his *Timaeus*. Aristotle found fault with him for that (in his third book [353] on Heaven, ch. 2) because, according to this doctrine, disorder would be original and natural, and order would have been introduced against nature. This Anaxagoras avoided by making matter remain at rest until it was stirred by God; and Aristotle in the same passage commends him for it. According to Plutarch (*De Iside et Osiride*, and *Tr. de Animae Procreatione ex Timaeo*) Plato recognized in matter a certain maleficent soul or force, rebellious against God: it was an actual blemish, an obstacle to God's plans. The Stoics also believed that matter was the source of defects, as Justus Lipsius showed in the first book of the *Physiology of the Stoics*.

380. Aristotle was right in rejecting chaos: but it is not always easy to disentangle the conceptions of Plato, and such a task would be still less easy in respect of some ancient authors whose works are lost. Kepler, one of the most excellent of modern mathematicians, recognized a species of imperfection in matter, even when there is no irregular motion: he calls it its 'natural inertia', which gives it a resistance to motion, whereby a greater mass receives less speed from one and the same force. There is soundness in this observation, and I have used it to advantage in this work, in order to have a comparison such as should illustrate how the original imperfection of the creatures sets bounds to the action of the Creator, which tends towards good. But as matter is itself of God's creation, it only furnishes a comparison and an example, and cannot be the very source of evil and of imperfection. I have already shown that this source lies in the forms or ideas of the possibles, for it must be eternal, and matter is not so. Now since God made all positive reality that is not eternal, he would have made the

source of evil, if that did not rather lie in the possibility of things or forms, that which alone God did not make, since he is not the author of his own understanding.

381. Yet even though the source of evil lies in the possible forms, anterior to the acts of God's will, it is nevertheless true that God co-operates in evil in the actual performance of introducing these forms into matter: and this is what causes the difficulty in question here. Durand de Saint-Pourçain, Cardinal Aureolus, Nicolas Taurel, Father Louis de Dole, M. Bernier and some others, speaking of this co-operation, would have it only general, for fear of impairing the freedom of man and the holiness of God. They seem to maintain that God, having given to creatures the power [354]to act, contents himself with conserving this power. On the other hand, M. Bayle, according to some modern writers, carries the cooperation of God too far: he seems to fear lest the creature be not sufficiently dependent upon God. He goes so far as to deny action to creatures; he does not even acknowledge any real distinction between accident and substance.

382. He places great reliance especially on that doctrine accepted of the Schoolmen, that conservation is a continued creation. The conclusion to be drawn from this doctrine would seem to be that the creature never exists, that it is ever newborn and ever dying, like time, movement and other transient beings. Plato believed this of material and tangible things, saying that they are in a perpetual flux, *semper fluunt, nunquam sunt*. But of immaterial substances he judged quite differently, regarding them alone as real: nor was he in that altogether mistaken. Yet continued creation applies to all creatures without distinction. Sundry good philosophers have been opposed to this dogma, and M. Bayle tells that David de Rodon, a philosopher renowned among those of the French who have adhered to Geneva, deliberately refuted it. The Arminians also do not approve of it; they are not much in favour of these metaphysical subtleties. I will say nothing of the Socinians, who relish them even less.

383. For a proper enquiry as to *whether conservation is a continued creation*, it would be necessary to consider the reasons whereon this dogma is founded. The Cartesians, after the example of their master, employ in order to prove it a principle which is not conclusive enough. They say that 'the moments of time having no necessary connexion with one another, it does not follow that because I am at this moment I shall exist at the moment which shall follow, if the same cause which gives me being for this moment does not also give it to me for the instant following.' The author of the *Reflexion on the Picture of Socinianism* has made use of this argument, and M. Bayle (perhaps the author of this same *Reflexion*) quotes it (*Reply to the Questions of a Provincial*, vol. III, ch. 141, p. 771). One may answer that in fact it does not follow *of necessity* that, because I am, I shall be; but this follows *naturally*, nevertheless, that is, of itself, *per se*, if nothing prevents it. It is the distinction that can be drawn between the essential and the natural. For the same movement endures naturally unless some new cause prevents it or changes it, because the reason which makes it cease [355]at this instant, if it is no new reason, would have already made it cease sooner.

384. The late Herr Erhard Weigel, a celebrated mathematician and philosopher at Jena, well known for his *Analysis Euclidea*, his mathematical philosophy, some neat mechanical inventions, and finally the trouble he took to induce the Protestant princes of the Empire to undertake the last reform of the Almanac, whose success, notwithstanding, he did not witness; Herr Weigel, I say, communicated to his friends a certain demonstration of the existence of God, which indeed amounted to this idea of continued creation. As he was wont to draw parallels between reckoning and reasoning—witness his *Arithmetical Ethics* (*rechenchaftliche Sittenlehre*)—he said that the foundation of the demonstration was this beginning of the Pythagorean Table, *once one is one*. These repeated unities were the moments of the existence of things, each one of them depending upon God, who resuscitates, as it were, all things outside himself at each moment: falling away as they do at each moment, they must ever have one who shall resuscitate them, and that cannot be any other than God. But there would be need of a more exact proof if that is to be called a demonstration. It would be necessary to prove that the creature always emerges from nothingness and relapses thither forthwith. In particular it must be shown that the privilege of enduring more than a moment by its nature belongs to the necessary being alone. The difficulties on the composition of the *continuum* enter also into this matter. This dogma appears to resolve time into moments, whereas others regard moments and points as mere modalities of the *continuum*, that is, as extremities of the parts that can be assigned to it, and not as constituent parts. But this is not the place for entering into that labyrinth.

385. What can be said for certain on the present subject is that the creature depends continually upon divine operation, and that it depends upon that no less after the time of its beginning than when it first begins. This dependence implies that it would not continue to exist if God did not continue to act; in short, that this action of God is free. For if it were a necessary emanation, like that of the properties of the circle, which issue from its essence, it must then be said that God in the beginning produced the creature by necessity; or else it must be shown how, in creating it once, he imposed upon himself the necessity of conserving it. Now there is [356]no reason why this conserving action should not be called production, and even creation, if one will: for the

dependence being as great afterwards as at the beginning, the extrinsic designation of being new or not does not change the nature of that action.

386. Let us then admit in such a sense that conservation is a continued creation, and let us see what M. Bayle seems to infer thence (p. 771) after the author of the *Reflexion on the Picture of Socinianism*, in opposition to M. Jurieu. 'It seems to me', this writer says, 'that one must conclude that God does all, and that in all creation there are no first or second or even occasional causes, as can be easily proved. At this moment when I speak, I am such as I am, with all my circumstances, with such thought, such action, whether I sit or stand, that if God creates me in this moment such as I am, as one must of necessity say in this system, he creates me with such thought, such action, such movement and such determination. One cannot say that God creates me in the first place, and that once I am created he produces with me my movements and my determinations. That is indefensible for two reasons. The first is, that when God creates me or conserves me at this instant, he does not conserve me as a being without form, like a species, or another of the Universals of Logic. I am an individual; he creates me and conserves me as such, and as being all that I am in this instant, with all my attendant circumstances. The second reason is that if God creates me in this instant, and one says that afterwards he produces with me my actions, it will be necessary to imagine another instant for action: for before acting one must exist. Now that would be two instants where we only assume one. It is therefore certain in this hypothesis that creatures have neither more connexion nor more relation with their actions than they had with their production at the first moment of the first creation.' The author of this *Reflexion* draws thence very harsh conclusions which one can picture to oneself; and he testifies at the end that one would be deeply indebted to any man that should teach those who approve this system how to extricate themselves from these frightful absurdities.

387. M. Bayle carries this still further. 'You know', he says (p. 775), 'that it is demonstrated in the Scholastic writings' (he cites Arriaga, *Disp.* 9, Phys., sect. 6 et praesertim, sub-sect. 3) 'that the creature cannot be either the total cause or the partial cause of its conservation: for if it were, it would exist before existing, [357]which is contradictory. You know that the argument proceeds like this: that which conserves itself acts; now that which acts exists, and nothing can act before it has attained complete existence; therefore, if a creature conserved itself, it would act before being. This argument is not founded upon probabilities, but upon the first principles of Metaphysics, *non entis nulla sunt accidentia, operari sequitur esse*, axioms as clear as daylight. Let us go further. If creatures co-operated with God (here is meant an active cooperation, and not co-operation by a passive instrument) to conserve themselves they would act before being: that has been demonstrated. Now if they co-operated with God for the production of any other thing, they would also act before being; it is therefore as impossible for them to co-operate with God for the production of any other thing (such as local movement, an affirmation, volition, entities actually distinct from their substance, so it is asserted) as for their own conservation. Since their conservation is a continued creation, and since all human creatures in the world must confess that they cannot co-operate with God at the first moment of their existence, either to produce themselves or to give themselves any modality, since that would be to act before being (observe that Thomas Aquinas and sundry other Schoolmen teach that if the angels had sinned at the first moment of their creation God would be the author of the sin: see the Feuillant Pierre de St. Joseph, p. 318, *et seqq.*, of the *Suavis Concordia Humanae Libertatis*; it is a sign that they acknowledge that at the first instant the creature cannot act in anything whatsoever), it follows manifestly that they cannot co-operate with God in any one of the subsequent moments, either to produce themselves or to produce any other thing. If they could co-operate therein at the second moment of their existence, nothing would prevent their being able to cooperate at the first moment.'

388. This is the way it will be necessary to answer these arguments. Let us assume that the creature is produced anew at each instant; let us grant also that the instant excludes all priority of time, being indivisible; but let us point out that it does not exclude priority of nature, or what is called anteriority *in signo rationis*, and that this is sufficient. The production, or action whereby God produces, is anterior by nature to the existence of the creature that is produced; the creature taken in itself, with its nature and its necessary properties, is anterior to its accidental affections and [358]to its actions; and yet all these things are in being in the same moment. God produces the creature in conformity with the exigency of the preceding instants, according to the laws of his wisdom; and the creature operates in conformity with that nature which God conveys to it in creating it always. The limitations and imperfections arise therein through the nature of the subject, which sets bounds to God's production; this is the consequence of the original imperfection of creatures. Vice and crime, on the other hand, arise there through the free inward operation of the creature, in so far as this can occur within the instant, repetition afterwards rendering it discernible.

389. This anteriority of nature is a commonplace in philosophy: thus one says that the decrees of God have an order among themselves. When one ascribes to God (and rightly so) understanding of the arguments and conclusions of creatures, in such sort that all their demonstrations and syllogisms are known to him, and are

found in him in a transcendent way, one sees that there is in the propositions or truths a natural order; but there is no order of time or interval, to cause him to advance in knowledge and pass from the premisses to the conclusion.

390. I find in the arguments that have just been quoted nothing which these reflexions fail to satisfy. When God produces the thing he produces it as an individual and not as a universal of logic (I admit); but he produces its essence before its accidents, its nature before its operations, following the priority of their nature, and *in signo anteriore rationis*. Thus one sees how the creature can be the true cause of the sin, while conservation by God does not prevent the sin; God disposes in accordance with the preceding state of the same creature, in order to follow the laws of his wisdom notwithstanding the sin, which in the first place will be produced by the creature. But it is true that God would not in the beginning have created the soul in a state wherein it would have sinned from the first moment, as the Schoolmen have justly observed: for there is nothing in the laws of his wisdom that could have induced him so to do.

391. This law of wisdom brings it about also that God reproduces the same substance, the same soul. Such was the answer that could have been given by the Abbé whom M. Bayle introduces in his *Dictionary* (art. 'Pyrrhon.' lit. B, p. 2432). This wisdom effects the connexion of things. I concede therefore that the creature [359] does not co-operate with God to conserve himself (in the sense in which I have just explained conservation). But I see nothing to prevent the creature's co-operation with God for the production of any other thing: and especially might this concern its inward operation, as in the case of a thought or a volition, things really distinct from the substance.

392. But there I am once more at grips with M. Bayle. He maintains that there are no such accidents distinct from the substance. 'The reasons', he says, 'which our modern philosophers have employed to demonstrate that the accidents are not beings in reality distinct from the substance are not mere difficulties; they are arguments which overwhelm one, and which cannot be refuted. Take the trouble', he adds, 'to look for them in the writings of Father Maignan, or Father Malebranche or M. Calli' (Professor of Philosophy at Caen) 'or in the *Accidentia profligata* of Father Saguens, disciple of Father Maignan, the extract from which is to be found in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, June 1702. Or if you wish one author only to suffice you, choose Dom François Lami, a Benedictine monk, and one of the strongest Cartesians to be found in France. You will find among his *Philosophical Letters*, printed at Trévoux in 1703, that one wherein by the geometers' method he demonstrates "that God is the sole true cause of all that which is real." I would wish to see all these books; and as for this last proposition, it may be true in a very good sense: God is the one principal cause of pure and absolute realities, or of perfections. *Causae secundae agunt in virtute primae*. But when one comprises limitations and privations under the term realities one may say that the second causes co-operate in the production of that which is limited; otherwise God would be the cause of sin, and even the sole cause.

393. It is well to beware, moreover, lest in confusing substances with accidents, in depriving created substances of action, one fall into Spinozism, which is an exaggerated Cartesianism. That which does not act does not merit the name of substance. If the accidents are not distinct from the substances; if the created substance is a successive being, like movement; if it does not endure beyond a moment, and does not remain the same (during some stated portion of time) any more than its accidents; if it does not operate any more than a mathematical figure or a number: why shall one not say, with Spinoza, that God is the [360] only substance, and that creatures are only accidents or modifications? Hitherto it has been supposed that the substance remains, and that the accidents change; and I think one ought still to abide by this ancient doctrine, for the arguments I remember having read do not prove the contrary, and prove more than is needed.

394. 'One of the absurdities', says M. Bayle (p. 779), 'that arise from the so-called distinction which is alleged to exist between substances and their accidents is that creatures, if they produce the accidents, would possess a power of creation and annihilation. Accordingly one could not perform the slightest action without creating an innumerable number of real beings, and without reducing to nothingness an endless multitude of them. Merely by moving the tongue to cry out or to eat, one creates as many accidents as there are movements of the parts of the tongue, and one destroys as many accidents as there are parts of that which one eats, which lose their form, which become chyle, blood, etc.' This argument is only a kind of bugbear. What harm would be done, supposing that an infinity of movements, an infinity of figures spring up and disappear at every moment in the universe, and even in each part of the universe? It can be demonstrated, moreover, that that must be so.

395. As for the so-called creation of the accidents, who does not see that one needs no creative power in order to change place or shape, to form a square or a column, or some other parade-ground figure, by the movement of the soldiers who are drilling; or again to fashion a statue by removing a few pieces from a block of marble; or to make some figure in relief, by changing, decreasing or increasing a piece of wax? The production of modifications has never been called *creation*, and it is an abuse of terms to scare the world thus. God produces substances from nothing, and the substances produce accidents by the changes of their limits.

396. As for the souls or substantial forms, M. Bayle is right in adding: 'that there is nothing more inconvenient for those who admit substantial forms than the objection which is made that they could not be produced save by an actual creation, and that the Schoolmen are pitiable in their endeavours to answer this.' But there is nothing more convenient for me and for my system than this same objection. For I maintain that all the Souls, Entelechies or primitive forces, substantial forms, simple substances, or Monads, whatever name one may apply to them, can neither [361]spring up naturally nor perish. And the qualities or derivative forces, or what are called accidental forms, I take to be modifications of the primitive Entelechy, even as shapes are modifications of matter. That is why these modifications are perpetually changing, while the simple substance remains.

397. I have shown already (part I, § 86 *seqq.*) that souls cannot spring up naturally, or be derived from one another, and that it is necessary that ours either be created or be pre-existent. I have even pointed out a certain middle way between a creation and an entire pre-existence. I find it appropriate to say that the soul preexisting in the seeds from the beginning of things was only sentient, but that it was elevated to the superior degree, which is that of reason, when the man to whom this soul should belong was conceived, and when the organic body, always accompanying this soul from the beginning, but under many changes, was determined for forming the human body. I considered also that one might attribute this elevation of the sentient soul (which makes it reach a more sublime degree of being, namely reason) to the extraordinary operation of God. Nevertheless it will be well to add that I would dispense with miracles in the generating of man, as in that of the other animals. It will be possible to explain that, if one imagines that in this great number of souls and of animals, or at least of living organic bodies which are in the seeds, those souls alone which are destined to attain one day to human nature contain the reason that shall appear therein one day, and the organic bodies of these souls alone are preformed and predisposed to assume one day the human shape, while the other small animals or seminal living beings, in which no such thing is pre-established, are essentially different from them and possessed only of an inferior nature. This production is a kind of *traduction*, but more manageable than that kind which is commonly taught: it does not derive the soul from a soul, but only the animate from an animate, and it avoids the repeated miracles of a new creation, which would cause a new and pure soul to enter a body that must corrupt it.

398. I am, however, of the same opinion as Father Malebranche, that, in general, creation properly understood is not so difficult to admit as might be supposed, and that it is in a sense involved in the notion of the dependence of creatures. 'How stupid and ridiculous are the Philosophers!' (he exclaims, in his *Christian Meditations*, 9, No. 3). 'They assume that Creation is [362]impossible, because they cannot conceive how God's power is great enough to make something from nothing. But can they any better conceive how the power of God is capable of stirring a straw?' He adds, again with great truth (No. 5), 'If matter were uncreate, God could not move it or form anything from it. For God cannot move matter, or arrange it wisely, if he does not know it. Now God cannot know it, if he does not give it being: he can derive his knowledge only from himself. Nothing can act on him or enlighten him.'

399. M. Bayle, not content with saying that we are created continually, insists also on this other doctrine which he would fain derive thence: that our soul cannot act. This is the way he speaks on that matter (ch. 141, p. 765): 'He has too much acquaintance with Cartesianism' (it is of an able opponent he is speaking) 'not to know with what force it has been maintained in our day that there is no creature capable of producing motion, and that our soul is a purely passive subject in relation to sensations and ideas, and feelings of pain and of pleasure, etc. If this has not been carried as far as the volitions, that is on account of the existence of revealed truths; otherwise the acts of the will would have been found as passive as those of the understanding. The same reasons which prove that our soul does not form our ideas, and does not stir our organs, would prove also that it cannot form our acts of love and our volitions, etc' He might add: our vicious actions, our crimes.

400. The force of these proofs, which he praises, must not be so great as he thinks, for if it were they would prove too much. They would make God the author of sin. I admit that the soul cannot stir the organs by a physical influence; for I think that the body must have been so formed beforehand that it would do in time and place that which responds to the volitions of the soul, although it be true nevertheless that the soul is the principle of the operation. But if it be said that the soul does not produce its thoughts, its sensations, its feelings of pain and of pleasure, that is something for which I see no reason. In my system every simple substance (that is, every true substance) must be the true immediate cause of all its actions and inward passions; and, speaking strictly in a metaphysical sense, it has none other than those which it produces. Those who hold a different opinion, and who make God the sole agent, are needlessly becoming involved in expressions whence they will only with difficulty extricate themselves without offence [363]against religion; moreover, they unquestionably offend against reason.

401. Here is, however, the foundation of M. Bayle's argument. He says that we do not do that of which we know not the way it is done. But it is a principle which I do not concede to him. Let us listen to his dissertation (p. 767 *seqq.*): 'It is an astonishing thing that almost all philosophers (with the exception of those who expounded Aristotle, and who admitted a universal intelligence distinct from our soul, and cause of our perceptions: see in the

*Historical and Critical Dictionary*, Note E of the article “Averroes”) have shared the popular belief that we form our ideas actively. Yet where is the man who knows not on the one hand that he is in absolute ignorance as to how ideas are made, and on the other hand, that he could not sew two stitches if he were ignorant of how to sew? Is the sewing of two stitches in itself a work more difficult than the painting in one’s mind of a rose, the very first time one’s eyes rest upon it, and although one has never learnt this kind of painting? Does it not appear on the contrary that this mental portrait is in itself a work more difficult than tracing on canvas the shape of a flower, a thing we cannot do without having learnt it? We are all convinced that a key would be of no use to us for opening a chest if we were ignorant as to how to use the key, and yet we imagine that our soul is the efficient cause of the movement of our arms, despite that it knows neither where the nerves are which must be used for this movement, nor whence to obtain the animal spirits that are to flow into these nerves. We have the experience every day that the ideas we would fain recall do not come, and that they appear of themselves when we are no longer thinking of them. If that does not prevent us from thinking that we are their efficient cause, what reliance shall one place on the proof of feeling, which to M. Jacquelot appears so conclusive? Does our authority over our ideas more often fall short than our authority over our volitions? If we were to count up carefully, we should find in the course of our life more velleities than volitions, that is, more evidences of the servitude of our will than of its dominion. How many times does one and the same man not experience an inability to do a certain act of will (for example, an act of love for a man who had just injured him; an act of scorn for a fine sonnet that he had composed; an act of hatred for a mistress; an act of approval of an absurd epigram. Take note that I speak [364]only of inward acts, expressed by an “I will”, such as “I will scorn”, “approve”, etc.) even if there were a hundred pistoles to be gained forthwith, and he ardently desired to gain these hundred pistoles, and he were fired with the ambition to convince himself by an experimental proof that he is master in his own domain?

402. ‘To put together in few words the whole force of what I have just said to you, I will observe that it is evident to all those who go deeply into things, that the true efficient cause of an effect must know the effect, and be aware also of the way in which it must be produced. That is not necessary when one is only the instrument of the cause, or only the passive subject of its action; but one cannot conceive of it as not necessary to a true agent. Now if we examine ourselves well we shall be strongly convinced, (1) that, independently of experience, our soul is just as little aware of what a volition is as of what an idea is; (2) that after a long experience it is no more fully aware of how volitions are formed than it was before having willed anything. What is one to conclude from that, save that the soul cannot be the efficient cause of its volitions, any more than of its ideas, and of the motion of the spirits which cause our arms to move? (Take note that no pretence is made of deciding the point here absolutely, it is only being considered in relation to the principles of the objection.)’

403. That is indeed a strange way of reasoning! What necessity is there for one always to be aware how that which is done is done? Are salts, metals, plants, animals and a thousand other animate or inanimate bodies aware how that which they do is done, and need they be aware? Must a drop of oil or of fat understand geometry in order to become round on the surface of water? Sewing stitches is another matter: one acts for an end, one must be aware of the means. But we do not form our ideas because we will to do so, they form themselves within us, they form themselves through us, not in consequence of our will, but in accordance with our nature and that of things. The foetus forms itself in the animal, and a thousand other wonders of nature are produced by a certain *instinct* that God has placed there, that is by virtue of *divine preformation*, which has made these admirable automata, adapted to produce mechanically such beautiful effects. Even so it is easy to believe that the soul is a spiritual automaton still more admirable, and that it is through divine preformation that it produces these [365]beautiful ideas, wherein our will has no part and to which our art cannot attain. The operation of spiritual automata, that is of souls, is not mechanical, but it contains in the highest degree all that is beautiful in mechanism. The movements which are developed in bodies are concentrated in the soul by representation as in an ideal world, which expresses the laws of the actual world and their consequences, but with this difference from the perfect ideal world which is in God, that most of the perceptions in the other substances are only confused. For it is plain that every simple substance embraces the whole universe in its confused perceptions or sensations, and that the succession of these perceptions is regulated by the particular nature of this substance, but in a manner which always expresses all the nature in the universe; and every present perception leads to a new perception, just as every movement that it represents leads to another movement. But it is impossible that the soul can know clearly its whole nature, and perceive how this innumerable number of small perceptions, piled up or rather concentrated together, shapes itself there: to that end it must needs know completely the whole universe which is embraced by them, that is, it must needs be a God.

404. As regards *velleities*, they are only a very imperfect kind of conditional will. I would, if I could: *liberet si liceret*, and in the case of a velleity, we do not will, properly speaking, to will, but to be able. That explains why there are none in God; and they must not be confused with antecedent will. I have explained sufficiently elsewhere that our control over volitions can be exercised only indirectly, and that one would be unhappy if one were sufficiently

master in one's own domain to be able to will without cause, without rhyme or reason. To complain of not having such a control would be to argue like Pliny, who carps at the power of God because God cannot destroy himself.

405. I intended to finish here after having met (as it seems to me) all the objections of M. Bayle on this matter that I could find in his works. But remembering Laurentius Valla's *Dialogue on Free Will*, in opposition to Boethius, which I have already mentioned, I thought it would be opportune to quote it in abstract, retaining the dialogue form, and then to continue from where it ends, keeping up the fiction it initiated; and that less with the purpose of enlivening the subject, than in order to explain myself towards the end of my dissertation as clearly as I can, and in a way most [366]likely to be generally understood. This Dialogue of Valla and his books on Pleasure and the True Good make it plain that he was no less a philosopher than a humanist. These four books were opposed to the four books on the *Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius, and the Dialogue to the fifth book. A certain Spaniard named Antonio Glarea requests of him elucidation on the difficulty of free will, whereof little is known as it is worthy to be known, for upon it depend justice and injustice, punishment and reward in this life and in the life to come. Laurentius Valla answers him that we must console ourselves for an ignorance which we share with the whole world, just as one consoles oneself for not having the wings of birds.

406. antonio—I know that you can give me those wings, like another Daedalus, so that I may emerge from the prison of ignorance, and rise to the very region of truth, which is the homeland of souls. The books that I have seen have not satisfied me, not even the famous Boethius, who meets with general approval. I know not whether he fully understood himself what he says of God's understanding, and of eternity superior to time; and I ask for your opinion on his way of reconciling foreknowledge with freedom. laur.—I am fearful of giving offence to many people, if I confute this great man; yet I will give preference over this fear to the consideration I have for the entreaties of a friend, provided that you make me a promise. ant.—What? laur.—It is, that when you have dined with me you do not ask me to give you supper, that is to say, I desire that you be content with the answer to the question you have put to me, and do not put a further question.

407. ant.—I promise you. Here is the heart of the difficulty. If God foresaw the treason of Judas, it was necessary that he should betray, it was impossible for him not to betray. There is no obligation to do the impossible. He therefore did not sin, he did not deserve to be punished. That destroys justice and religion, and the fear of God. laur.—God foresaw sin; but he did not compel man to commit it; sin is voluntary. ant.—That will was necessary, since it was foreseen. laur.—If my knowledge does not cause things past or present to exist, neither will my foreknowledge cause future things to exist.

408. ant.—That comparison is deceptive: neither the present nor the past can be changed, they are already necessary; but the future, movable in itself, becomes fixed and necessary through [367]foreknowledge. Let us pretend that a god of the heathen boasts of knowing the future: I will ask him if he knows which foot I shall put foremost, then I will do the opposite of that which he shall have foretold. laur.—This God knows what you are about to do. ant.—How does he know it, since I will do the opposite of what he shall have said, and I suppose that he will say what he thinks? laur.—Your supposition is false: God will not answer you; or again, if he were to answer you, the veneration you would have for him would make you hasten to do what he had said; his prediction would be to you an order. But we have changed the question. We are not concerned with what God will foretell but with what he foresees. Let us therefore return to foreknowledge, and distinguish between the necessary and the certain. It is not impossible for what is foreseen not to happen; but it is infallibly sure that it will happen. I can become a Soldier or Priest, but I shall not become one.

409. ant.—Here I have you firmly held. The philosophers' rule maintains that all that which is possible can be considered as existing. But if that which you affirm to be possible, namely an event different from what has been foreseen, actually happened, God would have been mistaken. laur.—The rules of the philosophers are not oracles for me. This one in particular is not correct. Two contradictories are often both possible. Can they also both exist? But, for your further enlightenment, let us pretend that Sextus Tarquinius, coming to Delphi to consult the Oracle of Apollo, receives the answer:

*Exul inopsque cades irata pulsus ab urbe.*

A beggared outcast of the city's rage,

Beside a foreign shore cut short thy age.

The young man will complain: I have brought you a royal gift, O Apollo, and you proclaim for me a lot so unhappy? Apollo will say to him: Your gift is pleasing to me, and I will do that which you ask of me, I will tell you what will happen. I know the future, but I do not bring it about. Go make your complaint to Jupiter and the Parcae.

Sextus would be ridiculous if he continued thereafter to complain about Apollo. Is not that true? ant.—He will say: I thank you, O holy Apollo, for not having repaid me with silence, for having revealed to me the Truth. But whence comes it that Jupiter is so cruel towards me, that he prepares so hard a fate [368]for an innocent man, for a devout worshipper of the Gods? laur.—You innocent? Apollo will say. Know that you will be proud, that you will commit adulteries, that you will be a traitor to your country. Could Sextus reply: It is you who are the cause, O Apollo; you compel me to do it, by foreseeing it? ant.—I admit that he would have taken leave of his senses if he were to make this reply. laur.—Therefore neither can the traitor Judas complain of God's foreknowledge. And there is the answer to your question.

410. ant.—You have satisfied me beyond my hopes, you have done what Boethius was not able to do: I shall be beholden to you all my life long. laur.—Yet let us carry our tale a little further. Sextus will say: No, Apollo, I will not do what you say. ant.—What! the God will say, do you mean then that I am a liar? I repeat to you once more, you will do all that I have just said. laur.—Sextus, mayhap, would pray the Gods to alter fate, to give him a better heart. ant.—He would receive the answer:

*Desine fata Deum flecti sperare precando.*

He cannot cause divine foreknowledge to lie. But what then will Sextus say? Will he not break forth into complaints against the Gods? Will he not say? What? I am then not free? It is not in my power to follow virtue? laur.—Apollo will say to him perhaps: Know, my poor Sextus, that the Gods make each one as he is. Jupiter made the wolf ravening, the hare timid, the ass stupid, and the lion courageous. He gave you a soul that is wicked and irreclaimable; you will act in conformity with your natural disposition, and Jupiter will treat you as your actions shall deserve; he has sworn it by the Styx.

411. ant.—I confess to you, it seems to me that Apollo in excusing himself accuses Jupiter more than he accuses Sextus, and Sextus would answer him: Jupiter therefore condemns in me his own crime; it is he who is the only guilty one. He could have made me altogether different: but, made as I am, I must act as he has willed. Why then does he punish me? Could I have resisted his will? laur.—I confess that I am brought to a pause here as you are. I have made the Gods appear on the scene, Apollo and Jupiter, to make you distinguish between divine foreknowledge and providence. I have shown that Apollo and foreknowledge do not impair freedom; but I cannot satisfy you on the decrees of Jupiter's will, that is to say, on the orders of providence. ant.—You have [369]dragged me out of one abyss, and you plunge me back into another and greater abyss. laur.—Remember our contract: I have given you dinner, and you ask me to give you supper also.

412. ant.—Now I discover your cunning: You have caught me, this is not an honest contract. laur.—What would you have me do? I have given you wine and meats from my home produce, such as my small estate can provide; as for nectar and ambrosia, you will ask the Gods for them: that divine nurture is not found among men. Let us hearken to St. Paul, that chosen vessel who was carried even to the third heaven, who heard there unutterable words: he will answer you with the comparison of the potter, with the incomprehensibility of the ways of God, and wonder at the depth of his wisdom. Nevertheless it is well to observe that one does not ask why God foresees the thing, for that is understood, it is because it will be: but one asks why he ordains thus, why he hardens such an one, why he has compassion on another. We do not know the reasons which he may have for this; but *since he is very good and very wise that is enough to make us deem that his reasons are good*. As he is just also, it follows that his decrees and his operation do not destroy our freedom. Some men have sought some reason therein. They have said that we are made from a corrupt and impure mass, indeed of mud. But Adam and the Angels were made of silver and gold, and they sinned notwithstanding. One sometimes becomes hardened again after regeneration. We must therefore seek another cause for evil, and I doubt whether even the Angels are aware of it; yet they cease not to be happy and to praise God. Boethius hearkened more to the answer of philosophy than to that of St. Paul; that was the cause of his failure. Let us believe in Jesus Christ, he is the virtue and the wisdom of God: he teaches us that God willeth the salvation of all, that he willeth not the death of the sinner. Let us therefore put our trust in the divine mercy, and let us not by our vanity and our malice disqualify ourselves to receive it.

413. This dialogue of Valla's is excellent, even though one must take exception to some points in it: but its chief defect is that it cuts the knot and that it seems to condemn providence under the name of Jupiter, making him almost the author of sin. Let us therefore carry the little fable still further. Sextus, quitting Apollo and Delphi, seeks out Jupiter at Dodona. He makes sacrifices and then he exhibits his complaints. Why have you condemned me, O [370]great God, to be wicked and unhappy? Change my lot and my heart, or acknowledge your error. Jupiter answers him: If you will renounce Rome, the Parcae shall spin for you different fates, you shall become wise, you shall be happy. sextus—Why must I renounce the hope of a crown? Can I not come to be a good king? jupiter—No, Sextus; I know better what is needful for you. If you go to Rome, you are lost. Sextus, not being able to resolve upon so great a sacrifice, went forth from the temple, and abandoned himself to his fate. Theodorus,

the High Priest, who had been present at the dialogue between God and Sextus, addressed these words to Jupiter: Your wisdom is to be revered, O great Ruler of the Gods. You have convinced this man of his error; he must henceforth impute his unhappiness to his evil will; he has not a word to say. But your faithful worshippers are astonished; they would fain wonder at your goodness as well as at your greatness: it rested with you to give him a different will. jupiter—Go to my daughter Pallas, she will inform you what I was bound to do.

414. Theodorus journeyed to Athens: he was bidden to lie down to sleep in the temple of the Goddess. Dreaming, he found himself transported into an unknown country. There stood a palace of unimaginable splendour and prodigious size. The Goddess Pallas appeared at the gate, surrounded by rays of dazzling majesty.

*Qualisque videri*

*Coelicolis et quanta solet.*

She touched the face of Theodorus with an olive-branch, which she was holding in her hand. And lo! he had become able to confront the divine radiancy of the daughter of Jupiter, and of all that she should show him. Jupiter who loves you (she said to him) has commended you to me to be instructed. You see here the palace of the fates, where I keep watch and ward. Here are representations not only of that which happens but also of all that which is possible. Jupiter, having surveyed them before the beginning of the existing world, classified the possibilities into worlds, and chose the best of all. He comes sometimes to visit these places, to enjoy the pleasure of recapitulating things and of renewing his own choice, which cannot fail to please him. I have only to speak, and we shall see a whole world that my father might have produced, wherein will be represented anything that can be asked of him; and in this way one may know also what would happen if any [371]particular possibility should attain unto existence. And whenever the conditions are not determinate enough, there will be as many such worlds differing from one another as one shall wish, which will answer differently the same question, in as many ways as possible. You learnt geometry in your youth, like all well-instructed Greeks. You know therefore that when the conditions of a required point do not sufficiently determine it, and there is an infinite number of them, they all fall into what the geometricians call a locus, and this locus at least (which is often a line) will be determinate. Thus you can picture to yourself an ordered succession of worlds, which shall contain each and every one the case that is in question, and shall vary its circumstances and its consequences. But if you put a case that differs from the actual world only in one single definite thing and in its results, a certain one of those determinate worlds will answer you. These worlds are all here, that is, in ideas. I will show you some, wherein shall be found, not absolutely the same Sextus as you have seen (that is not possible, he carries with him always that which he shall be) but several Sextuses resembling him, possessing all that you know already of the true Sextus, but not all that is already in him imperceptibly, nor in consequence all that shall yet happen to him. You will find in one world a very happy and noble Sextus, in another a Sextus content with a mediocre state, a Sextus, indeed, of every kind and endless diversity of forms.

415. Thereupon the Goddess led Theodorus into one of the halls of the palace: when he was within, it was no longer a hall, it was a world,

*Solemque suum, sua sidera norat.*

At the command of Pallas there came within view Dodona with the temple of Jupiter, and Sextus issuing thence; he could be heard saying that he would obey the God. And lo! he goes to a city lying between two seas, resembling Corinth. He buys there a small garden; cultivating it, he finds a treasure; he becomes a rich man, enjoying affection and esteem; he dies at a great age, beloved of the whole city. Theodorus saw the whole life of Sextus as at one glance, and as in a stage presentation. There was a great volume of writings in this hall: Theodorus could not refrain from asking what that meant. It is the history of this world which we are now visiting, the Goddess told him; it is the book of its fates. You have [372]seen a number on the forehead of Sextus. Look in this book for the place which it indicates. Theodorus looked for it, and found there the history of Sextus in a form more ample than the outline he had seen. Put your finger on any line you please, Pallas said to him, and you will see represented actually in all its detail that which the line broadly indicates. He obeyed, and he saw coming into view all the characteristics of a portion of the life of that Sextus. They passed into another hall, and lo! another world, another Sextus. who, issuing from the temple, and having resolved to obey Jupiter, goes to Thrace. There he marries the daughter of the king, who had no other children; he succeeds him, and he is adored by his subjects. They went into other rooms, and always they saw new scenes.

416. The halls rose in a pyramid, becoming even more beautiful as one mounted towards the apex, and representing more beautiful worlds. Finally they reached the highest one which completed the pyramid, and which was the most beautiful of all: for the pyramid had a beginning, but one could not see its end; it had an apex, but

no base; it went on increasing to infinity. That is (as the Goddess explained) because amongst an endless number of possible worlds there is the best of all, else would God not have determined to create any; but there is not any one which has not also less perfect worlds below it: that is why the pyramid goes on descending to infinity. Theodorus, entering this highest hall, became entranced in ecstasy; he had to receive succour from the Goddess, a drop of a divine liquid placed on his tongue restored him; he was beside himself for joy. We are in the real true world (said the Goddess) and you are at the source of happiness. Behold what Jupiter makes ready for you, if you continue to serve him faithfully. Here is Sextus as he is, and as he will be in reality. He issues from the temple in a rage, he scorns the counsel of the Gods. You see him going to Rome, bringing confusion everywhere, violating the wife of his friend. There he is driven out with his father, beaten, unhappy. If Jupiter had placed here a Sextus happy at Corinth or King in Thrace, it would be no longer this world. And nevertheless he could not have failed to choose this world, which surpasses in perfection all the others, and which forms the apex of the pyramid. Else would Jupiter have renounced his wisdom, he would have banished me, me his daughter. You see that my father did not make Sextus wicked; he was so from all [373]eternity, he was so always and freely. My father only granted him the existence which his wisdom could not refuse to the world where he is included: he made him pass from the region of the possible to that of the actual beings. The crime of Sextus serves for great things: it renders Rome free; thence will arise a great empire, which will show noble examples to mankind. But that is nothing in comparison with the worth of this whole world, at whose beauty you will marvel, when, after a happy passage from this mortal state to another and better one, the Gods shall have fitted you to know it.

417. At this moment Theodorus wakes up, he gives thanks to the Goddess, he owns the justice of Jupiter. His spirit pervaded by what he has seen and heard, he carries on the office of High Priest, with all the zeal of a true servant of his God, and with all the joy whereof a mortal is capable. It seems to me that this continuation of the tale may elucidate the difficulty which Valla did not wish to treat. If Apollo has represented aright God's knowledge of vision (that which concerns beings in existence), I hope that Pallas will have not discredibly filled the role of what is called knowledge of simple intelligence (that which embraces all that is possible), wherein at last the source of things must be sought.

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## APPENDICES

### SUMMARY OF THE CONTROVERSY REDUCED TO FORMAL ARGUMENTS

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Some persons of discernment have wished me to make this addition. I have the more readily deferred to their opinion, because of the opportunity thereby gained for meeting certain difficulties, and for making observations on certain matters which were not treated in sufficient detail in the work itself.

objection i

Whoever does not choose the best course is lacking either in power, or knowledge, or goodness.

God did not choose the best course in creating this world.

Therefore God was lacking in power, or knowledge, or goodness.

answer

I deny the minor, that is to say, the second premiss of this syllogism, and the opponent proves it by this

prosyllogism

Whoever makes things in which there is evil, and which could have been made without any evil, or need not have been made at all, does not choose the best course.

God made a world wherein there is evil; a world, I say, which could have been made without any evil or which need not have been made at all.

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Therefore God did not choose the best course.

answer

I admit the minor of this prosyllogism: for one must confess that there is evil in this world which God has made, and that it would have been possible to make a world without evil or even not to create any world, since its creation depended upon the free will of God. But I deny the major, that is, the first of the two premisses of the prosyllogism, and I might content myself with asking for its proof. In order, however, to give a clearer exposition of the matter, I would justify this denial by pointing out that the best course is not always that one which tends towards avoiding evil, since it is possible that the evil may be accompanied by a greater good. For example, the general of an army will prefer a great victory with a slight wound to a state of affairs without wound and without victory. I have proved this in further detail in this work by pointing out, through instances taken from mathematics and elsewhere, that an imperfection in the part may be required for a greater perfection in the whole. I have followed therein the opinion of St. Augustine, who said a hundred times that God permitted evil in order to derive from it a good, that is to say, a greater good; and Thomas Aquinas says (in libr. 2, *Sent. Dist.* 32, qu. 1, art. 1) that the permission of evil tends towards the good of the universe. I have shown that among older writers the fall of Adam was termed *felix culpa*, a fortunate sin, because it had been expiated with immense benefit by the incarnation of the Son of God: for he gave to the universe something more noble than anything there would otherwise have been amongst created beings. For the better understanding of the matter I added, following the example of many good authors, that it was consistent with order and the general good for God to grant to certain of his creatures the opportunity to exercise their freedom, even when he foresaw that they would turn to evil: for God could easily correct the evil, and it was not fitting that in order to prevent sin he should always act in an extraordinary way. It will therefore sufficiently refute the objection to show that a world with evil may be better than a world without evil. But I have gone still further in the work, and have even shown that this universe must be indeed better than every other possible universe.

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objection ii

If there is more evil than good in intelligent creatures, there is more evil than good in all God's work.

Now there is more evil than good in intelligent creatures.

Therefore there is more evil than good in all God's work.

answer

I deny the major and the minor of this conditional syllogism. As for the major, I do not admit it because this supposed inference from the part to the whole, from intelligent creatures to all creatures, assumes tacitly and without proof that creatures devoid of reason cannot be compared or taken into account with those that have reason. But why might not the surplus of good in the non-intelligent creatures that fill the world compensate for and even exceed incomparably the surplus of evil in rational creatures? It is true that the value of the latter is greater; but by way of compensation the others are incomparably greater in number; and it may be that the proportion of number and quantity surpasses that of value and quality.

The minor also I cannot admit, namely, that there is more evil than good in intelligent creatures. One need not even agree that there is more evil than good in the human kind. For it is possible, and even a very reasonable thing, that the glory and the perfection of the blessed may be incomparably greater than the misery and imperfection of the damned, and that here the excellence of the total good in the smaller number may exceed the total evil which is in the greater number. The blessed draw near to divinity through a divine Mediator, so far as can belong to these created beings, and make such progress in good as is impossible for the damned to make in evil, even though they should approach as nearly as may be the nature of demons. God is infinite, and the Devil is finite; good can and does go on *ad infinitum*, whereas evil has its bounds. It may be therefore, and it is probable, that there happens in the comparison between the blessed and the damned the opposite of what I said could happen in the comparison between the happy and the unhappy, namely that in the latter the proportion of degrees surpasses that of numbers, while in the comparison between intelligent and non-intelligent the proportion of

numbers is greater than that of values. One is justified in assuming that a thing may be so as long as one does not prove that it is [380]impossible, and indeed what is here put forward goes beyond assumption.

But secondly, even should one admit that there is more evil than good in the human kind, one still has every reason for not admitting that there is more evil than good in all intelligent creatures. For there is an inconceivable number of Spirits, and perhaps of other rational creatures besides: and an opponent cannot prove that in the whole City of God, composed as much of Spirits as of rational animals without number and of endless different kinds, the evil exceeds the good. Although one need not, in order to answer an objection, prove that a thing is, when its mere possibility suffices, I have nevertheless shown in this present work that it is a result of the supreme perfection of the Sovereign of the Universe that the kingdom of God should be the most perfect of all states or governments possible, and that in consequence what little evil there is should be required to provide the full measure of the vast good existing there.

objection iii

If it is always impossible not to sin, it is always unjust to punish.

Now it is always impossible not to sin, or rather all sin is necessary.

Therefore it is always unjust to punish.

The minor of this is proved as follows.

first prosyllogism

Everything predetermined is necessary.

Every event is predetermined.

Therefore every event (and consequently sin also) is necessary.

Again this second minor is proved thus.

second prosyllogism

That which is future, that which is foreseen, that which is involved in causes is predetermined.

Every event is of this kind.

Therefore every event is predetermined.

answer

I admit in a certain sense the conclusion of the second prosyllogism, which is the minor of the first; but I shall deny the [381]major of the first prosyllogism, namely that everything predetermined is necessary; taking 'necessity', say the necessity to sin, or the impossibility of not sinning, or of not doing some action, in the sense relevant to the argument, that is, as a necessity essential and absolute, which destroys the morality of action and the justice of punishment. If anyone meant a different necessity or impossibility (that is, a necessity only moral or hypothetical, which will be explained presently) it is plain that we would deny him the major stated in the objection. We might content ourselves with this answer, and demand the proof of the proposition denied: but I am well pleased to justify my manner of procedure in the present work, in order to make the matter clear and to throw more light on this whole subject, by explaining the necessity that must be rejected and the determination that must be allowed. The truth is that the necessity contrary to morality, which must be avoided and which would render punishment unjust, is an insuperable necessity, which would render all opposition unavailing, even though one should wish with all one's heart to avoid the necessary action, and though one should make all possible efforts to that end. Now it is plain that this is not applicable to voluntary actions, since one would not do them if one did not so desire. Thus their prevision and predetermination is not absolute, but it presupposes will: if it is certain that one will do them, it is no less certain that one will will to do them. These voluntary actions and their results will not happen whatever one may do and whether one will them or not; but they will happen because one will do, and because one will will to do, that which leads to them. That is involved in prevision and predetermination, and forms the reason thereof. The necessity of such events is called conditional or hypothetical, or again necessity of consequence, because it presupposes the will and the other requisites. But the necessity

which destroys morality, and renders punishment unjust and reward unavailing, is found in the things that will be whatever one may do and whatever one may will to do: in a word, it exists in that which is essential. This it is which is called an absolute necessity. Thus it avails nothing with regard to what is necessary absolutely to ordain interdicts or commandments, to propose penalties or prizes, to blame or to praise; it will come to pass no more and no less. In voluntary actions, on the contrary, and in what depends upon them, precepts, armed with power to [382]punish and to reward, very often serve, and are included in the order of causes that make action exist. Thus it comes about that not only pains and effort but also prayers are effective, God having had even these prayers in mind before he ordered things, and having made due allowance for them. That is why the precept *Ora et labora* (Pray and work) remains intact. Thus not only those who (under the empty pretext of the necessity of events) maintain that one can spare oneself the pains demanded by affairs, but also those who argue against prayers, fall into that which the ancients even in their time called 'the Lazy Sophism'. So the predetermination of events by their causes is precisely what contributes to morality instead of destroying it, and the causes incline the will without necessitating it. For this reason the determination we are concerned with is not a necessitation. It is certain (to him who knows all) that the effect will follow this inclination; but this effect does not follow thence by a consequence which is necessary, that is, whose contrary implies contradiction; and it is also by such an inward inclination that the will is determined, without the presence of necessity. Suppose that one has the greatest possible passion (for example, a great thirst), you will admit that the soul can find some reason for resisting it, even if it were only that of displaying its power. Thus though one may never have complete indifference of equipoise, and there is always a predominance of inclination for the course adopted, that predominance does not render absolutely necessary the resolution taken.

objection iv

Whoever can prevent the sin of others and does not so, but rather contributes to it, although he be fully apprised of it, is accessory thereto.

God can prevent the sin of intelligent creatures; but he does not so, and he rather contributes to it by his co-operation and by the opportunities he causes, although he is fully cognizant of it.

Therefore, etc.

answer

I deny the major of this syllogism. It may be that one can prevent the sin, but that one ought not to do so, because one could not do so without committing a sin oneself, or (when God is concerned) without acting unreasonably. I have given instances of [383]that, and have applied them to God himself. It may be also that one contributes to the evil, and that one even opens the way to it sometimes, in doing things one is bound to do. And when one does one's duty, or (speaking of God) when, after full consideration, one does that which reason demands, one is not responsible for events, even when one foresees them. One does not will these evils; but one is willing to permit them for a greater good, which one cannot in reason help preferring to other considerations. This is a *consequent* will, resulting from acts of *antecedent* will, in which one wills the good. I know that some persons, in speaking of the antecedent and consequent will of God, have meant by the antecedent that which wills that all men be saved, and by the consequent that which wills, in consequence of persistent sin, that there be some damned, damnation being a result of sin. But these are only examples of a more general notion, and one may say with the same reason, that God wills by his antecedent will that men sin not, and that by his consequent or final and decretory will (which is always followed by its effect) he wills to permit that they sin, this permission being a result of superior reasons. One has indeed justification for saying, in general, that the antecedent will of God tends towards the production of good and the prevention of evil, each taken in itself, and as it were detached (*particulariter et secundum quid*: Thom., I, qu. 19, art. 6) according to the measure of the degree of each good or of each evil. Likewise one may say that the consequent, or final and total, divine will tends towards the production of as many goods as can be put together, whose combination thereby becomes determined, and involves also the permission of some evils and the exclusion of some goods, as the best possible plan of the universe demands. Arminius, in his *Antiperkinsus*, explained very well that the will of God can be called consequent not only in relation to the action of the creature considered beforehand in the divine understanding, but also in relation to other anterior acts of divine will. But it is enough to consider the passage cited from Thomas Aquinas, and that from Scotus (I, dist. 46, qu. 11), to see that they make this distinction as I have made it here. Nevertheless if anyone will not suffer this use of the terms, let him put 'previous' in place of 'antecedent' will, and 'final' or 'decretory' in place of 'consequent' will. For I do not wish to wrangle about words.

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objection v

Whoever produces all that is real in a thing is its cause.

God produces all that is real in sin.

Therefore God is the cause of sin.

answer

I might content myself with denying the major or the minor, because the term 'real' admits of interpretations capable of rendering these propositions false. But in order to give a better explanation I will make a distinction. 'Real' either signifies that which is positive only, or else it includes also privative beings: in the first case, I deny the major and I admit the minor; in the second case, I do the opposite. I might have confined myself to that; but I was willing to go further, in order to account for this distinction. I have therefore been well pleased to point out that every purely positive or absolute reality is a perfection, and that every imperfection comes from limitation, that is, from the privative: for to limit is to withhold extension, or the more beyond. Now God is the cause of all perfections, and consequently of all realities, when they are regarded as purely positive. But limitations or privations result from the original imperfection of creatures which restricts their receptivity. It is as with a laden boat, which the river carries along more slowly or less slowly in proportion to the weight that it bears: thus the speed comes from the river, but the retardation which restricts this speed comes from the load. Also I have shown in the present work how the creature, in causing sin, is a deficient cause; how errors and evil inclinations spring from privation; and how privation is efficacious accidentally. And I have justified the opinion of St. Augustine (lib. I, *Ad. Simpl.*, qu. 2) who explains (for example) how God hardens the soul, not in giving it something evil, but because the effect of the good he imprints is restricted by the resistance of the soul, and by the circumstances contributing to this resistance, so that he does not give it all the good that would overcome its evil. '*Nec (inquit) ab illo erogatur aliquid quo homo fit deterior, sed tantum quo fit melior non erogatur.*' But if God had willed to do more here he must needs have produced either fresh natures in his creatures or fresh miracles to change their natures, and this the best plan did not allow. It is just as if the current of the river must needs be more rapid than its slope permits or the boats themselves [385] be less laden, if they had to be impelled at a greater speed. So the limitation or original imperfection of creatures brings it about that even the best plan of the universe cannot admit more good, and cannot be exempted from certain evils, these, however, being only of such a kind as may tend towards a greater good. There are some disorders in the parts which wonderfully enhance the beauty of the whole, just as certain dissonances, appropriately used, render harmony more beautiful. But that depends upon the answer which I have already given to the first objection.

objection vi

Whoever punishes those who have done as well as it was in their power to do is unjust.

God does so.

Therefore, etc.

answer

I deny the minor of this argument. And I believe that God always gives sufficient aid and grace to those who have good will, that is to say, who do not reject this grace by a fresh sin. Thus I do not admit the damnation of children dying unbaptized or outside the Church, or the damnation of adult persons who have acted according to the light that God has given them. And I believe that, *if anyone has followed the light he had*, he will undoubtedly receive thereof in greater measure as he has need, even as the late Herr Hulsemann, who was celebrated as a profound theologian at Leipzig, has somewhere observed; and if such a man had failed to receive light during his life, he would receive it at least in the hour of death.

objection vii

Whoever gives only to some, and not to all, the means of producing effectively in them good will and final saving faith has not enough goodness.

God does so.

Therefore, etc.

answer

I deny the major. It is true that God could overcome the greatest resistance of the human heart, and indeed he sometimes [386]does so, whether by an inward grace or by the outward circumstances that can greatly influence souls; but he does not always do so. Whence comes this distinction, someone will say, and wherefore does his goodness appear to be restricted? The truth is that it would not have been in order always to act in an extraordinary way and to derange the connexion of things, as I have observed already in answering the first objection. The reasons for this connexion, whereby the one is placed in more favourable circumstances than the other, are hidden in the depths of God's wisdom: they depend upon the universal harmony. The best plan of the universe, which God could not fail to choose, required this. One concludes thus from the event itself; since God made the universe, it was not possible to do better. Such management, far from being contrary to goodness, has rather been prompted by supreme goodness itself. This objection with its solution might have been inferred from what was said with regard to the first objection; but it seemed advisable to touch upon it separately.

objection viii

Whoever cannot fail to choose the best is not free.

God cannot fail to choose the best.

Therefore God is not free.

answer

I deny the major of this argument. Rather is it true freedom, and the most perfect, to be able to make the best use of one's free will, and always to exercise this power, without being turned aside either by outward force or by inward passions, whereof the one enslaves our bodies and the other our souls. There is nothing less servile and more befitting the highest degree of freedom than to be always led towards the good, and always by one's own inclination, without any constraint and without any displeasure. And to object that God therefore had need of external things is only a sophism. He creates them freely: but when he had set before him an end, that of exercising his goodness, his wisdom determined him to choose the means most appropriate for obtaining this end. To call that a *need* is to take the term in a sense not usual, which clears it of all imperfection, somewhat as one does when speaking of the wrath of God.

Seneca says somewhere, that God commanded only once, but [387]that he obeys always, because he obeys the laws that he willed to ordain for himself: *semel jussit, semper parat*. But he had better have said, that God always commands and that he is always obeyed: for in willing he always follows the tendency of his own nature, and all other things always follow his will. And as this will is always the same one cannot say that he obeys that will only which he formerly had. Nevertheless, although his will is always indefectible and always tends towards the best, the evil or the lesser good which he rejects will still be possible in itself. Otherwise the necessity of good would be geometrical (so to speak) or metaphysical, and altogether absolute; the contingency of things would be destroyed, and there would be no choice. But necessity of this kind, which does not destroy the possibility of the contrary, has the name by analogy only: it becomes effective not through the mere essence of things, but through that which is outside them and above them, that is, through the will of God. This necessity is called moral, because for the wise what is necessary and what is owing are equivalent things; and when it is always followed by its effect, as it indeed is in the perfectly wise, that is, in God, one can say that it is a happy necessity. The more nearly creatures approach this, the closer do they come to perfect felicity. Moreover, necessity of this kind is not the necessity one endeavours to avoid, and which destroys morality, reward and commendation. For that which it brings to pass does not happen whatever one may do and whatever one may will, but because one desires it. A will to which it is natural to choose well deserves most to be commended; and it carries with it its own reward, which is supreme happiness. And as this constitution of the divine nature gives an entire satisfaction to him who possesses it, it is also the best and the most desirable from the point of view of the creatures who are all dependent upon God. If the will of God had not as its rule the principle of the best, it would tend towards evil, which would be worst of all; or else it would be indifferent somehow to good and to evil, and guided by chance. But a will that would always drift along at random would scarcely be any better for the government of the universe than the fortuitous concurrence of corpuscles, without the existence of divinity. And even though God should abandon himself to chance only in some cases, and in a certain way (as he would if he did not always tend entirely towards the best, and if he were capable of preferring a lesser good to a greater good, that [388]is, an evil to a good, since that which prevents a greater good is an evil) he would be no less imperfect than the object of his choice. Then he would not deserve absolute trust; he would act without reason in such a case, and the government of the universe would be like certain games equally divided between reason and luck. This all proves

that this objection which is made against the choice of the best perverts the notions of free and necessary, and represents the best to us actually as evil: but that is either malicious or absurd.

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# CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

## PLATO: CRITO

PERSONS OF THE DIALOGUE:

*Socrates and Crito*

SCENE: *The Prison of Socrates.*

SOCRATES: Why have you come at this hour, Crito? it must be quite early?

CRITO: Yes, certainly.

SOCRATES: What is the exact time?

CRITO: The dawn is breaking.

SOCRATES: I wonder that the keeper of the prison would let you in.

CRITO: He knows me, because I often come, Socrates; moreover, I have done him a kindness.

SOCRATES: And are you only just arrived?

CRITO: No, I came some time ago.

SOCRATES: Then why did you sit and say nothing, instead of at once awakening me?

CRITO: I should not have liked myself, Socrates, to be in such great trouble and unrest as you are—indeed I should not: I have been watching with amazement your peaceful slumbers; and for that reason I did not awake you, because I wished to minimize the pain. I have always thought you to be of a happy disposition; but never did I see anything like the easy, tranquil manner in which you bear this calamity.

SOCRATES: Why, Crito, when a man has reached my age he ought not to be repining at the approach of death.

CRITO: And yet other old men find themselves in similar misfortunes, and age does not prevent them from repining.

SOCRATES: That is true. But you have not told me why you come at this early hour.

CRITO: I come to bring you a message which is sad and painful; not, as I believe, to yourself, but to all of us who are your friends, and saddest of all to me.

SOCRATES: What? Has the ship come from Delos, on the arrival of which I am to die?

CRITO: No, the ship has not actually arrived, but she will probably be here to-day, as persons who have come from Sunium tell me that they have left her there; and therefore to-morrow, Socrates, will be the last day of your life.

SOCRATES: Very well, Crito; if such is the will of God, I am willing; but my belief is that there will be a delay of a day.

CRITO: Why do you think so?

SOCRATES: I will tell you. I am to die on the day after the arrival of the ship?

CRITO: Yes; that is what the authorities say.

SOCRATES: But I do not think that the ship will be here until to-morrow; this I infer from a vision which I had last night, or rather only just now, when you fortunately allowed me to sleep.

CRITO: And what was the nature of the vision?

SOCRATES: There appeared to me the likeness of a woman, fair and comely, clothed in bright raiment, who called to me and said: O Socrates,

'The third day hence to fertile Phthia shalt thou go.'<sup>3</sup> CRITO: What a singular dream, Socrates!

SOCRATES: There can be no doubt about the meaning, Crito, I think.

CRITO: Yes; the meaning is only too clear. But, oh! my beloved Socrates, let me entreat you once more to take my advice and escape. For if you die I shall not only lose a friend who can never be replaced, but there is another evil: people who do not know you and me will believe that I might have saved you if I had been willing to give money, but that I did not care. Now, can there be a worse disgrace than this—that I should be thought to value money more than the life of a friend? For the many will not be persuaded that I wanted you to escape, and that you refused.

SOCRATES: But why, my dear Crito, should we care about the opinion of the many? Good men, and they are the only persons who are worth considering, will think of these things truly as they occurred.

CRITO: But you see, Socrates, that the opinion of the many must be regarded, for what is now happening shows that they can do the greatest evil to anyone who has lost their good opinion.

SOCRATES: I only wish it were so, Crito; and that the many could do the greatest evil; for then they would also be able to do the greatest good—and what a fine thing this would be! But in reality they can do neither; for they cannot make a man either wise or foolish; and whatever they do is the result of chance.

CRITO: Well, I will not dispute with you; but please to tell me, Socrates, whether you are not acting out of regard to me and your other friends: are you not afraid that if you escape from prison we may get into trouble with the informers for having stolen you away, and lose either the whole or a great part of our property; or that even a worse evil may happen to us? Now, if you fear on our account, be at ease; for in order to save you, we ought surely to run this, or even a greater risk; be persuaded, then, and do as I say.

SOCRATES: Yes, Crito, that is one fear which you mention, but by no means the only one.

CRITO: Fear not—there are persons who are willing to get you out of prison at no great cost; and as for the informers, they are far from being exorbitant in their demands—a little money will satisfy them. My means, which are certainly ample, are at your service, and if you have a scruple about spending all mine, here are strangers who will give you the use of theirs; and one of them, Simmias the Theban, has brought a large sum of money for this very purpose; and Cebes and many others are prepared to spend their money in helping you to escape. I say, therefore, do not hesitate on our account, and do not say, as you did in the court<sup>4</sup> that you will have a difficulty in knowing what to do with yourself anywhere else. For men will love you in other places to which you may go, and not in Athens only; there are friends of mine in Thessaly, if you like to go to them, who will value and protect you, and no Thessalian will give you any trouble. Nor can I think that you are at all justified, Socrates, in betraying your own life when you might be saved; in acting thus you are playing into the hands of your enemies, who are hurrying on your destruction. And further I should say that you are deserting your own children; for you might bring them up and educate them; instead of which you go away and leave them, and they will have to take their

chance; and if they do not meet with the usual fate of orphans, there will be small thanks to you. No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nurture and education. But you appear to be choosing the easier part, not the better and manlier, which would have been more becoming in one who professes to care for virtue in all his actions, like yourself. And indeed, I am ashamed not only of you, but of us who are your friends, when I reflect that the whole business will be attributed entirely to our want of courage. The trial need never have come on, or might have been managed differently; and this last act, or crowning folly, will seem to have occurred through our negligence and cowardice, who might have saved you, if we had been good for anything; and you might have saved yourself, for there was no difficulty at all. See now, Socrates, how sad and discreditable are the consequences, both to us and you. Make up your mind then, or rather have your mind already made up, for the time of deliberation is over, and there is only one thing to be done, which must be done this very night, and, if we delay at all, will be no longer practicable or possible; I beseech you therefore, Socrates, be persuaded by me, and do as I say.

SOCRATES: Dear Crito, your zeal is invaluable, if a right one; but if wrong, the greater the zeal the greater the danger; and therefore we ought to consider whether I shall or shall not do as you say. For I am and always have been one of those natures who must be guided by reason, whatever the reason may be which upon reflection appears to me to be the best; and now that this chance has befallen me, I cannot repudiate my own words: the principles which I have hitherto honoured and revered I still honour, and unless we can at once find other and better principles, I am certain not to agree with you; no, not even if the power of the multitude could inflict many more imprisonments, confiscations, deaths, frightening us like children with hobgoblin terrors.<sup>5</sup> What will be the fairest way of considering the question? Shall I return to your old argument about the opinions of men?—we were saying that some of them are to be regarded, and others not. Now were we right in maintaining this before I was condemned? And has the argument which was once good now proved to be talk for the sake of talking—mere childish nonsense? That is what I want to consider with your help, Crito:—whether, under my present circumstances, the argument appears to be in any way different or not; and is to be allowed by me or disallowed. That argument, which, as I believe, is maintained by many persons of authority, was to the effect, as I was saying, that the opinions of some men are to be regarded, and of other men not to be regarded. Now you, Crito, are not going to die to-morrow—at least, there is no human probability of this—and therefore you are disinterested and not liable to be deceived by the circumstances in which you are placed. Tell me then, whether I am right in saying that some opinions, and the opinions of some men only, are to be valued, and that other opinions, and the opinions of other men, are not to be valued. I ask you whether I was right in maintaining this?

CRITO: Certainly.

SOCRATES: The good are to be regarded, and not the bad?

CRITO: Yes.

SOCRATES: And the opinions of the wise are good, and the opinions of the unwise are evil?

CRITO: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And what was said about another matter? Is the pupil who devotes himself to the practice of gymnastics supposed to attend to the praise and blame and opinion of every man, or of one man only—his physician or trainer, whoever he may be?

CRITO: Of one man only.

SOCRATES: And he ought to fear the censure and welcome the praise of that one only, and not of the many?

CRITO: Clearly so.

SOCRATES: And he ought to act and train, and eat and drink in the way which seems good to his single master who has understanding, rather than according to the opinion of all other men put together?

CRITO: True.

SOCRATES: And if he disobeys and disregards the opinion and approval of the one, and regards the opinion of the many who have no understanding, will he not suffer evil?

CRITO: Certainly he will.

SOCRATES: And what will the evil be, whither tending and what affecting, in the disobedient person?

CRITO: Clearly, affecting the body; that is what is destroyed by the evil.

SOCRATES: Very good; and is not this true, Crito, of other things which we need not separately enumerate? In questions of just and unjust, fair and foul, good and evil, which are the subjects of our present consultation, ought we to follow the opinion of the many and to fear them; or the opinion of the one man who has understanding? ought we not to fear and reverence him more than all the rest of the world: and if we desert him shall we not destroy and injure that principle in us which may be assumed to be improved by justice and deteriorated by injustice—there is such a principle?

CRITO: Certainly there is, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Take a parallel instance:—if, acting under the advice of those who have no understanding, we destroy that which is improved by health and is deteriorated by disease, would life be worth having? And that which has been destroyed is—the body?

CRITO: Yes.

SOCRATES: Could we live, having an evil and corrupted body?

CRITO: Certainly not.

SOCRATES: And will life be worth having, if that higher part of man be destroyed, which is improved by justice and depraved by injustice? Do we suppose that principle, whatever it may be in man, which has to do with justice and injustice, to be inferior to the body?

CRITO: Certainly not.

SOCRATES: More honourable than the body?

CRITO: Far more.

SOCRATES: Then, my friend, we must not regard what the many say of us; but what he, the one man who has understanding of just and unjust, will say, and what the truth will say. And therefore you begin in error when you advise that we should regard the opinion of the many about just and unjust, good and evil, honourable and dishonourable.—‘Well,’ someone will say, ‘but the many can kill us.’

CRITO: Yes, Socrates; that will clearly be the answer.

SOCRATES: And it is true; but still I find with surprise that the old argument is unshaken as ever. And I should like to know whether I may say the same of another proposition—that not life, but a good life, is to be chiefly valued?

CRITO: Yes, that also remains unshaken.

SOCRATES: And a good life is equivalent to a just and honourable one—that holds also?

CRITO: Yes, it does.

SOCRATES: From these premises I proceed to argue the question whether I ought or ought not to try and escape without the consent of the Athenians: and if I am clearly right in escaping, then I will make the attempt; but if not, I will abstain. The other considerations which you mention, of money and loss of character and the duty of educating one’s children, are, I fear, only the doctrines of the multitude, who would be as ready to restore people to life, if they were able, as they are to put them to death—and with as little reason. But now, since the argument has thus far prevailed, the only question which remains to be considered is whether we shall do rightly either in escaping or in suffering others to aid in our escape and paying them in money and thanks, or whether in reality we shall not do rightly; and if the latter, then death or any other calamity which may ensue on my remaining here must not be allowed to enter into the calculation.

CRITO: I think that you are right, Socrates; how then shall we proceed?

SOCRATES: Let us consider the matter together, and do you either refute me if you can, and I will be convinced; or else cease, my dear friend, from repeating to me that I ought to escape against the wishes of the Athenians: for I highly value your attempts to persuade me to do so, but I may not be persuaded against my own better judgment. And now please to consider my first position, and try how you can best answer me.

CRITO: I will.

SOCRATES: Are we to say that we are never intentionally to do wrong, or that in one way we ought and in another way we ought not to do wrong, or is doing wrong always evil and dishonourable, as I was just now saying, and as has been already acknowledged by us? Are all our former admissions which were made within a few days to be thrown away? And have we, at our age, been earnestly discoursing with one another all our life long only to discover that we are no better than children? Or, in spite of the opinion of the many, and in spite of consequences whether better or worse, shall we insist on the truth of what was then said, that injustice is always an evil and dishonour to him who acts unjustly? Shall we say so or not?

CRITO: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then we must do no wrong?

CRITO: Certainly not.

SOCRATES: Nor, when injured, injure in return, as the many imagine; for we must injure no one at all? <sup>6</sup>

CRITO: Clearly not.

SOCRATES: Again, Crito, may we do evil?

CRITO: Surely not, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And what of doing evil in return for evil, which is the morality of the many—is that just or not?

CRITO: Not just.

SOCRATES: For doing evil to another is the same as injuring him?

CRITO: Very true.

SOCRATES: Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to anyone, whatever evil we may have suffered from him. But I would have you consider, Crito, whether you really mean what you are saying. For this opinion has never been held, and never will be held, by any considerable number of persons; and those who are agreed and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ. Tell me, then, whether you agree with and assent to my first principle, that neither injury nor retaliation nor warding off evil by evil is ever right. And shall that be the premise of our argument? Or do you decline and dissent from this? For so I have ever thought, and continue to think; but, if you are of another opinion, let me hear what you have to say. If, however, you remain of the same mind as formerly, I will proceed to the next step.

CRITO: You may proceed, for I have not changed my mind.

SOCRATES: Then I will go on to the next point, which may be put in the form of a question:—Ought a man to do what he admits to be right, or ought he to betray the right?

CRITO: He ought to do what he thinks right.

SOCRATES: But if this is true, what is the application? In leaving the prison against the will of the Athenians, do I wrong any? or rather do I not wrong those whom I ought least to wrong? Do I not desert the principles which were acknowledged by us to be just—what do you say?

CRITO: I cannot tell, Socrates; for I do not know.

SOCRATES: Then consider the matter in this way:—Imagine that I am about to play truant (you may call the proceeding by any name which you like), and the laws and the government come and interrogate me: 'Tell us,

Socrates,' they say; 'what are you about? are you not going by an act of yours to overturn us—the laws, and the whole state, as far as in you lies? Do you imagine that a state can subsist and not be overthrown, in which the decisions of law have no power, but are set aside and trampled upon by individuals?' What will be our answer, Crito, to these and the like words? Anyone, and especially a rhetorician, will have a good deal to say on behalf of the law which requires a sentence to be carried out. He will argue that this law should not be set aside; and shall we reply, 'Yes; but the state has injured us and given an unjust sentence.' Suppose I say that?

CRITO: Very good, Socrates.

SOCRATES: 'And was that our agreement with you?' the law would answer; 'or were you to abide by the sentence of the state?' And if I were to express my astonishment at their words, the law would probably add: 'Answer, Socrates, instead of opening your eyes—you are in the habit of asking and answering questions. Tell us,—What complaint have you to make against us which justifies you in attempting to destroy us and the state? In the first place did we not bring you into existence? Your father married your mother by our aid and begat you. Say whether you have any objection to urge against those of us who regulate marriage?' None, I should reply. 'Or against those of us who after birth regulate the nurture and education of children, in which you also were trained? Were not the laws, which have the charge of education, right in commanding your father to train you in music and gymnastic?' Right, I should reply. 'Well then, since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, can you deny in the first place that you are our child and slave, as your fathers were before you? And if this is true you are not on equal terms with us; nor can you think that you have a right to do to us what we are doing to you. Would you have any right to strike or revile or do any other evil to your father or your master, if you had one, because you have been struck or reviled by him, or received some other evil at his hands? You would not say this. And because we think right to destroy you, do you think that you have any right to destroy us in return, and your country as far as in you lies? Will you, O professor of true virtue, pretend that you are justified in this? Has a philosopher like you failed to discover that our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding? also to be soothed, and gently and reverently entreated when angry, even more than a father, and either to be persuaded, or if not persuaded, to be obeyed? And when we are punished by her, whether with imprisonment or stripes, the punishment is to be endured in silence; and if she lead us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right; neither may anyone yield or retreat or leave his rank, but whether in battle or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country order him; or he must change their view of what is just: and if he may do no violence to his father or mother, much less may he do violence to his country.' What answer shall we make to this, Crito? Do the laws speak truly, or do they not?

CRITO: I think that they do.

SOCRATES: Then the laws will say: 'Consider, Socrates, if we are speaking truly that in your present attempt you are going to do us an injury. For, having brought you into the world, and nurtured and educated you, and given you and every other citizen a share in every good which we had to give, we further proclaim to any Athenian by the liberty which we allow him, that if he does not like us when he has become of age and has seen the ways of the city, and made our acquaintance, he may go where he pleases and take his goods with him. None of us laws will forbid him or interfere with him. Anyone who does not like us and the city, and who wants to emigrate to a colony or to any other city, may go where he likes, retaining his property. But he who has experience of the manner in which we order justice and administer the state, and still remains, has entered into an implied contract that he will do as we command him. And he who disobeys us is, as we maintain, thrice wrong; first, because in disobeying us he is disobeying his parents; secondly, because we are the authors of his education; thirdly, because he has made an agreement with us that he will duly obey our commands; and he neither obeys them nor convinces us that our commands are unjust; and we do not rudely impose them, but give him the alternative of obeying or convincing us;—that is what we offer, and he does neither. These are the sort of accusations to which, as we were saying, you, Socrates, will be exposed if you accomplish your intentions; you, above all other Athenians.'

Suppose now I ask, why I rather than anybody else? they will justly retort upon me that I above all other men have acknowledged the agreement. 'There is clear proof,' they will say, 'Socrates, that we and the city were not displeasing to you. Of all Athenians you have been the most constant resident in the city, which, as you never leave, you may be supposed to love.<sup>7</sup> For you never went out of the city either to see the games, except once when you went to the Isthmus, or to any other place unless when you were on military service; nor did you travel as other men do. Nor had you any curiosity to know other states or their laws: your affections did not go beyond us and our state; we were your especial favourites, and you acquiesced in our government of you; and here in this city you begat your children, which is a proof of your satisfaction. Moreover, you might in the course of the trial, if you had liked, have fixed the penalty at banishment; the state which refuses to let you go now would have

let you go then. But you pretended that you preferred death to exile,<sup>8</sup> and that you were not unwilling to die. And now you have forgotten these fine sentiments, and pay no respect to us the laws, of whom you are the destroyer; and are doing what only a miserable slave would do, running away and turning your back upon the compacts and agreements which you made as a citizen. And first of all answer this very question: Are we right in saying that you agreed to be governed according to us in deed, and not in word only? Is that true or not?' How shall we answer, Crito? Must we not assent?

CRITO: We cannot help it, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then will they not say: 'You, Socrates, are breaking the covenants and agreements which you made with us at your leisure, not in any haste or under any compulsion or deception, but after you have had seventy years to think of them, during which time you were at liberty to leave the city, if we were not to your mind, or if our covenants appeared to you to be unfair. You had your choice, and might have gone either to Lacedaemon or Crete, both which states are often praised by you for their good government, or to some other Hellenic or foreign state. Whereas you, above all other Athenians, seemed to be so fond of the state, or, in other words, of us, her laws (and who would care about a state which has no laws?), that you never stirred out of her; the halt, the blind, the maimed were not more stationary in her than you were. And now you run away and forsake your agreements. Not so, Socrates, if you will take our advice; do not make yourself ridiculous by escaping out of the city.

'For just consider, if you transgress and err in this sort of way, what good will you do either to yourself or to your friends? That your friends will be driven into exile and deprived of citizenship, or will lose their property, is tolerably certain; and you yourself, if you fly to one of the neighbouring cities, as, for example, Thebes or Megara, both of which are well governed, will come to them as an enemy, Socrates, and their government will be against you, and all patriotic citizens will cast an evil eye upon you as a subverter of the laws, and you will confirm in the minds of the judges the justice of their own condemnation of you. For he who is a corrupter of the laws is more than likely to be a corrupter of the young and foolish portion of mankind. Will you then flee from well-ordered cities and virtuous men? and is existence worth having on these terms? Or will you go to them without shame, and talk to them, Socrates? And what will you say to them? What you say here about virtue and justice and institutions and laws being the best things among men? Would that be decent of you? Surely not. But if you go away from well-governed states to Crito's friends in Thessaly, where there is great disorder and licence, they will be charmed to hear the tale of your escape from prison, set off with ludicrous particulars of the manner in which you were wrapped in a goatskin or some other disguise, and metamorphosed as the manner is of runaways; but will there be no one to remind you that in your old age you were not ashamed to violate the most sacred laws from a miserable desire of a little more life? Perhaps not, if you keep them in a good temper; but if they are out of temper you will hear many degrading things; you will live, but how?—as the flatterer of all men, and the servant of all men; and doing what?—eating and drinking in Thessaly, having gone abroad in order that you may get a dinner. And where will be your fine sentiments about justice and virtue? Say that you wish to live for the sake of your children—you want to bring them up and educate them—will you take them into Thessaly and deprive them of Athenian citizenship? Is this the benefit which you will confer upon them? Or are you under the impression that they will be better cared for and educated here if you are still alive, although absent from them; for your friends will take care of them? Do you fancy that if you are an inhabitant of Thessaly they will take care of them, and if you are an inhabitant of the other world that they will not take care of them? Nay; but if they who call themselves friends are good for anything, they will—to be sure they will.

'Listen, then, Socrates, to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterwards, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or juster in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil; a victim, not of the laws, but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least of all to wrong, that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us, we shall be angry with you while you live, and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. Listen, then, to us and not to Crito.'

This, dear Crito, is the voice which I seem to hear murmuring in my ears, like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic; that voice, I say, is humming in my ears, and prevents me from hearing any other. And I know that anything more which you may say will be vain. Yet speak, if you have anything to say.

CRITO: I have nothing to say, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Leave me then, Crito, to fulfil the will of God, and to follow whither he leads.

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1. See *Phaedrus*
  2. See *Prose Works*
  3. Homer, *Iliad*, IX
  4. Cp. *Apology*
  5. Cp. *Apology*
  6. Cp. *Republic*
  7. Cp. *Phaedrus*
  8. Cp. *Apology*

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## COMMENTARY ON ARISTOTLE'S POLITICS

The Politics of Aristotle is the second part of a treatise of which the Ethics is the first part. It looks back to the Ethics as the Ethics looks forward to the Politics. For Aristotle did not separate, as we are inclined to do, the spheres of the statesman and the moralist. In the Ethics he has described the character necessary for the good life, but that life is for him essentially to be lived in society, and when in the last chapters of the Ethics he comes to the practical application of his inquiries, that finds expression not in moral exhortations addressed to the individual but in a description of the legislative opportunities of the statesman. It is the legislator's task to frame a society which shall make the good life possible. Politics for Aristotle is not a struggle between individuals or classes for power, nor a device for getting done such elementary tasks as the maintenance of order and security without too great encroachments on individual liberty. The state is "a community of well-being in families and aggregations of families for the sake of a perfect and self-sufficing life." The legislator is a craftsman whose material is society and whose aim is the good life.

In an early dialogue of Plato's, the Protagoras, Socrates asks Protagoras why it is not as easy to find teachers of virtue as it is to find teachers of swordsmanship, riding, or any other art. Protagoras' answer is that there are no special teachers of virtue, because virtue is taught by the whole community. Plato and Aristotle both accept the view of moral education implied in this answer. In a passage of the Republic (492 b) Plato repudiates the notion that the sophists have a corrupting moral influence upon young men. The public themselves, he says, are the real sophists and the most complete and thorough educators. No private education can hold out against the irresistible force of public opinion and the ordinary moral standards of society. But that makes it all the more essential that public opinion and social environment should not be left to grow up at haphazard as they ordinarily do, but should be made by the wise legislator the expression of the good and be informed in all their details by his knowledge. The legislator is the only possible teacher of virtue.

Such a programme for a treatise on government might lead us to expect in the Politics mainly a description of a Utopia or ideal state which might inspire poets or philosophers but have little direct effect upon political institutions. Plato's Republic is obviously impracticable, for its author had turned away in despair from existing politics. He has no proposals, in that dialogue at least, for making the best of things as they are. The first lesson his philosopher has to learn is to turn away from this world of becoming and decay, and to look upon the unchanging eternal world of ideas. Thus his ideal city is, as he says, a pattern laid up in heaven by which the just man may rule his life, a pattern therefore in the meantime for the individual and not for the statesman. It is a city, he admits in the Laws, for gods or the children of gods, not for men as they are.

Aristotle has none of the high enthusiasm or poetic imagination of Plato. He is even unduly impatient of Plato's idealism, as is shown by the criticisms in the second book. But he has a power to see the possibilities of good in things that are imperfect, and the patience of the true politician who has learned that if he would make men what they ought to be, he must take them as he finds them. His ideal is constructed not of pure reason or poetry, but from careful and sympathetic study of a wide range of facts. His criticism of Plato in the light of history, in Book II. chap. v., though as a criticism it is curiously inept, reveals his own attitude admirably: "Let us remember that we should not disregard the experience of ages; in the multitude of years, these things, if they were good, would certainly not have been unknown; for almost everything has been found out, although sometimes they are not put

together; in other cases men do not use the knowledge which they have." Aristotle in his *Constitutions* had made a study of one hundred and fifty-eight constitutions of the states of his day, and the fruits of that study are seen in the continual reference to concrete political experience, which makes the *Politics* in some respects a critical history of the workings of the institutions of the Greek city state. In Books IV., V., and VI. the ideal state seems far away, and we find a dispassionate survey of imperfect states, the best ways of preserving them, and an analysis of the causes of their instability. It is as though Aristotle were saying: "I have shown you the proper and normal type of constitution, but if you will not have it and insist on living under a perverted form, you may as well know how to make the best of it." In this way the *Politics*, though it defines the state in the light of its ideal, discusses states and institutions as they are. Ostensibly it is merely a continuation of the *Ethics*, but it comes to treat political questions from a purely political standpoint.

This combination of idealism and respect for the teachings of experience constitutes in some ways the strength and value of the *Politics*, but it also makes it harder to follow. The large nation states to which we are accustomed make it difficult for us to think that the state could be constructed and modelled to express the good life. We can appreciate Aristotle's critical analysis of constitutions, but find it hard to take seriously his advice to the legislator. Moreover, the idealism and the empiricism of the *Politics* are never really reconciled by Aristotle himself.

It may help to an understanding of the *Politics* if something is said on those two points.

We are accustomed since the growth of the historical method to the belief that states are "not made but grow," and are apt to be impatient with the belief which Aristotle and Plato show in the powers of the lawgiver. But however true the maxim may be of the modern nation state, it was not true of the much smaller and more self-conscious Greek city. When Aristotle talks of the legislator, he is not talking in the air. Students of the Academy had been actually called on to give new constitutions to Greek states. For the Greeks the constitution was not merely as it is so often with us, a matter of political machinery. It was regarded as a way of life. Further, the constitution within the framework of which the ordinary process of administration and passing of decrees went on, was always regarded as the work of a special man or body of men, the lawgivers. If we study Greek history, we find that the position of the legislator corresponds to that assigned to him by Plato and Aristotle. All Greek states, except those perversions which Aristotle criticises as being "above law," worked under rigid constitutions, and the constitution was only changed when the whole people gave a commission to a lawgiver to draw up a new one. Such was the position of the *Aesumnetes*, whom Aristotle describes in Book III. chap. xiv., in earlier times, and of the pupils of the Academy in the fourth century. The lawgiver was not an ordinary politician. He was a state doctor, called in to prescribe for an ailing constitution. So Herodotus recounts that when the people of Cyrene asked the oracle of Delphi to help them in their dissensions, the oracle told them to go to Mantinea, and the Mantineans lent them Demonax, who acted as a "setter straight" and drew up a new constitution for Cyrene. So again the Milesians, Herodotus tells us, were long troubled by civil discord, till they asked help from Paros, and the Parians sent ten commissioners who gave Miletus a new constitution. So the Athenians, when they were founding their model new colony at Thuri, employed Hippodamus of Miletus, whom Aristotle mentions in Book II, as the best expert in town-planning, to plan the streets of the city, and Protagoras as the best expert in law-making, to give the city its laws. In the *Laws* Plato represents one of the persons of the dialogue as having been asked by the people of Gortyna to draw up laws for a colony which they were founding. The situation described must have occurred frequently in actual life. The Greeks thought administration should be democratic and law-making the work of experts. We think more naturally of law-making as the special right of the people and administration as necessarily confined to experts.

Aristotle's *Politics*, then, is a handbook for the legislator, the expert who is to be called in when a state wants help. We have called him a state doctor. It is one of the most marked characteristics of Greek political theory that Plato and Aristotle think of the statesman as one who has knowledge of what ought to be done, and can help those who call him in to prescribe for them, rather than one who has power to control the forces of society. The desire of society for the statesman's advice is taken for granted, Plato in the *Republic* says that a good constitution is only possible when the ruler does not want to rule; where men contend for power, where they have not learnt to distinguish between the art of getting hold of the helm of state and the art of steering, which alone is statesmanship, true politics is impossible.

With this position much that Aristotle has to say about government is in agreement. He assumes the characteristic Platonic view that all men seek the good, and go wrong through ignorance, not through evil will, and so he naturally regards the state as a community which exists for the sake of the good life. It is in the state that that common seeking after the good which is the profoundest truth about men and nature becomes explicit and knows itself. The state is for Aristotle prior to the family and the village, although it succeeds them in time, for only when the state with its conscious organisation is reached can man understand the secret of his past struggles after something he knew not what. If primitive society is understood in the light of the state, the state is understood in

the light of its most perfect form, when the good after which all societies are seeking is realised in its perfection. Hence for Aristotle as for Plato, the natural state or the state as such is the ideal state, and the ideal state is the starting-point of political inquiry.

In accordance with the same line of thought, imperfect states, although called perversions, are regarded by Aristotle as the result rather of misconception and ignorance than of perverse will. They all represent, he says, some kind of justice. Oligarchs and democrats go wrong in their conception of the good. They have come short of the perfect state through misunderstanding of the end or through ignorance of the proper means to the end. But if they are states at all, they embody some common conception of the good, some common aspirations of all their members.

The Greek doctrine that the essence of the state consists in community of purpose is the counterpart of the notion often held in modern times that the essence of the state is force. The existence of force is for Plato and Aristotle a sign not of the state but of the state's failure. It comes from the struggle between conflicting misconceptions of the good. In so far as men conceive the good rightly they are united. The state represents their common agreement, force their failure to make that agreement complete. The cure, therefore, of political ills is knowledge of the good life, and the statesman is he who has such knowledge, for that alone can give men what they are always seeking.

If the state is the organisation of men seeking a common good, power and political position must be given to those who can forward this end. This is the principle expressed in Aristotle's account of political justice, the principle of "tools to those who can use them." As the aim of the state is differently conceived, the qualifications for government will vary. In the ideal state power will be given to the man with most knowledge of the good; in other states to the men who are most truly capable of achieving that end which the citizens have set themselves to pursue. The justest distribution of political power is that in which there is least waste of political ability.

Further, the belief that the constitution of a state is only the outward expression of the common aspirations and beliefs of its members, explains the paramount political importance which Aristotle assigns to education. It is the great instrument by which the legislator can ensure that the future citizens of his state will share those common beliefs which make the state possible. The Greeks with their small states had a far clearer apprehension than we can have of the dependence of a constitution upon the people who have to work it.

Such is in brief the attitude in which Aristotle approaches political problems, but in working out its application to men and institutions as they are, Aristotle admits certain compromises which are not really consistent with it.

1. Aristotle thinks of membership of a state as community in pursuit of the good. He wishes to confine membership in it to those who are capable of that pursuit in the highest and most explicit manner. His citizens, therefore, must be men of leisure, capable of rational thought upon the end of life. He does not recognise the significance of that less conscious but deep-seated membership of the state which finds its expression in loyalty and patriotism. His definition of citizen includes only a small part of the population of any Greek city. He is forced to admit that the state is not possible without the co-operation of men whom he will not admit to membership in it, either because they are not capable of sufficient rational appreciation of political ends, like the barbarians whom he thought were natural slaves, or because the leisure necessary for citizenship can only be gained by the work of the artisans who by that very work make themselves incapable of the life which they make possible for others. "The artisan only attains excellence in proportion as he becomes a slave," and the slave is only a living instrument of the good life. He exists for the state, but the state does not exist for him.

2. Aristotle in his account of the ideal state seems to waver between two ideals. There is the ideal of an aristocracy and the ideal of what he calls constitutional government, a mixed constitution. The principle of "tools to those who can use them" ought to lead him, as it does Plato, to an aristocracy. Those who have complete knowledge of the good must be few, and therefore Plato gave entire power in his state into the hands of the small minority of philosopher guardians. It is in accordance with this principle that Aristotle holds that kingship is the proper form of government when there is in the state one man of transcendent virtue. At the same time, Aristotle always holds that absolute government is not properly political, that government is not like the rule of a shepherd over his sheep, but the rule of equals over equals. He admits that the democrats are right in insisting that equality is a necessary element in the state, though he thinks they do not admit the importance of other equally necessary elements. Hence he comes to say that ruling and being ruled over by turns is an essential feature of constitutional government, which he admits as an alternative to aristocracy. The end of the state, which is to be the standard of the distribution of political power, is conceived sometimes as a good for the apprehension and attainment of which "virtue" is necessary and sufficient (this is the principle of aristocracy), and sometimes as a more complex good, which needs for its attainment not only "virtue" but wealth and equality. This latter conception is the principle on which the mixed constitution is based. This in its distribution of political power gives some weight to "virtue," some

to wealth, and some to mere number. But the principle of “ruling and being ruled by turns” is not really compatible with an unmodified principle of “tools to those who can use them.” Aristotle is right in seeing that political government demands equality, not in the sense that all members of the state should be equal in ability or should have equal power, but in the sense that none of them can properly be regarded simply as tools with which the legislator works, that each has a right to say what will be made of his own life. The analogy between the legislator and the craftsman on which Plato insists, breaks down because the legislator is dealing with men like himself, men who can to some extent conceive their own end in life and cannot be treated merely as means to the end of the legislator. The sense of the value of “ruling and being ruled in turn” is derived from the experience that the ruler may use his power to subordinate the lives of the citizens of the state not to the common good but to his own private purposes. In modern terms, it is a simple, rough-and-ready attempt to solve that constant problem of politics, how efficient government is to be combined with popular control. This problem arises from the imperfection of human nature, apparent in rulers as well as in ruled, and if the principle which attempts to solve it be admitted as a principle of importance in the formation of the best constitution, then the starting-point of politics will be man’s actual imperfection, not his ideal nature. Instead, then, of beginning with a state which would express man’s ideal nature, and adapting it as well as may be to man’s actual shortcomings from that ideal, we must recognise that the state and all political machinery are as much the expression of man’s weakness as of his ideal possibilities. The state is possible only because men have common aspirations, but government, and political power, the existence of officials who are given authority to act in the name of the whole state, are necessary because men’s community is imperfect, because man’s social nature expresses itself in conflicting ways, in the clash of interests, the rivalry of parties, and the struggle of classes, instead of in the united seeking after a common good. Plato and Aristotle were familiar with the legislator who was called in by the whole people, and they tended therefore to take the general will or common consent of the people for granted. Most political questions are concerned with the construction and expression of the general will, and with attempts to ensure that the political machinery made to express the general will shall not be exploited for private or sectional ends.

Aristotle’s mixed constitution springs from a recognition of sectional interests in the state. For the proper relation between the claims of “virtue,” wealth, and numbers is to be based not upon their relative importance in the good life, but upon the strength of the parties which they represent. The mixed constitution is practicable in a state where the middle class is strong, as only the middle class can mediate between the rich and the poor. The mixed constitution will be stable if it represents the actual balance of power between different classes in the state. When we come to Aristotle’s analysis of existing constitutions, we find that while he regards them as imperfect approximations to the ideal, he also thinks of them as the result of the struggle between classes. Democracy, he explains, is the government not of the many but of the poor; oligarchy a government not of the few but of the rich. And each class is thought of, not as trying to express an ideal, but as struggling to acquire power or maintain its position. If ever the class existed in unredeemed nakedness, it was in the Greek cities of the fourth century, and its existence is abundantly recognised by Aristotle. His account of the causes of revolutions in Book V. shows how far were the existing states of Greece from the ideal with which he starts. His analysis of the facts forces him to look upon them as the scene of struggling factions. The causes of revolutions are not described as primarily changes in the conception of the common good, but changes in the military or economic power of the several classes in the state. The aim which he sets before oligarchs or democracies is not the good life, but simple stability or permanence of the existing constitution.

With this spirit of realism which pervades Books IV., V., and VI. the idealism of Books I., II., VII., and VIII. is never reconciled. Aristotle is content to call existing constitutions perversions of the true form. But we cannot read the *Politics* without recognising and profiting from the insight into the nature of the state which is revealed throughout. Aristotle’s failure does not lie in this, that he is both idealist and realist, but that he keeps these two tendencies too far apart. He thinks too much of his ideal state, as something to be reached once for all by knowledge, as a fixed type to which actual states approximate or from which they are perversions. But if we are to think of actual politics as intelligible in the light of the ideal, we must think of that ideal as progressively revealed in history, not as something to be discovered by turning our back on experience and having recourse to abstract reasoning. If we stretch forward from what exists to an ideal, it is to a better which may be in its turn transcended, not to a single immutable best. Aristotle found in the society of his time men who were not capable of political reflection, and who, as he thought, did their best work under superintendence. He therefore called them natural slaves. For, according to Aristotle, that is a man’s natural condition in which he does his best work. But Aristotle also thinks of nature as something fixed and immutable; and therefore sanctions the institution of slavery, which assumes that what men are that they will always be, and sets up an artificial barrier to their ever becoming anything else. We see in Aristotle’s defence of slavery how the conception of nature as the ideal can have a debasing influence upon views of practical politics. His high ideal of citizenship offers to those who can satisfy its claims the prospect of a fair life; those who fall short are deemed to be different in nature and shut out entirely from approach to the ideal.

# ARISTOTLE: POLITICS (BOOK 1)

## CHAPTER I

As we see that every city is a society, and every society is established for some good purpose; for an apparent [Bekker 1252a] good is the spring of all human actions; it is evident that this is the principle upon which they are every one founded, and this is more especially true of that which has for its object the best possible, and is itself the most excellent, and comprehends all the rest. Now this is called a city, and the society thereof a political society; for those who think that the principles of a political, a regal, a family, and a herile government are the same are mistaken, while they suppose that each of these differ in the numbers to whom their power extends, but not in their constitution: so that with them a herile government is one composed of a very few, a domestic of more, a civil and a regal of still more, as if there was no difference between a large family and a small city, or that a regal government and a political one are the same, only that in the one a single person is continually at the head of public affairs; in the other, that each member of the state has in his turn a share in the government, and is at one time a magistrate, at another a private person, according to the rules of political science. But now this is not true, as will be evident to any one who will consider this question in the most approved method. As, in an inquiry into every other subject, it is necessary to separate the different parts of which it is compounded, till we arrive at their first elements, which are the most minute parts thereof; so by the same proceeding we shall acquire a knowledge of the primary parts of a city and see wherein they differ from each other, and whether the rules of art will give us any assistance in examining into each of these things which are mentioned.

## CHAPTER II

Now if in this particular science any one would attend to its original seeds, and their first shoot, he would then as in others have the subject perfectly before him; and perceive, in the first place, that it is requisite that those should be joined together whose species cannot exist without each other, as the male and the female, for the business of propagation; and this not through choice, but by that natural impulse which acts both upon plants and animals also, for the purpose of their leaving behind them others like themselves. It is also from natural causes that some beings command and others obey, that each may obtain their mutual safety; for a being who is endowed with a mind capable of reflection and forethought is by nature the superior and governor, whereas he whose excellence is merely corporeal is fittest to be a slave; whence it follows that the different state of master [1252b] and slave is equally advantageous to both. But there is a natural difference between a female and a slave: for nature is not like the artists who make the Delphic swords for the use of the poor, but for every particular purpose she has her separate instruments, and thus her ends are most complete, for whatsoever is employed on one subject only, brings that one to much greater perfection than when employed on many; and yet among the barbarians, a female and a slave are upon a level in the community, the reason for which is, that amongst them there are none qualified by nature to govern, therefore their society can be nothing but between slaves of different sexes. For which reason the poets say, it is proper for the Greeks to govern the barbarians, as if a barbarian and a slave were by nature one. Now of these two societies the domestic is the first, and Hesiod is right when he says, "First a house, then a wife, then an ox for the plough," for the poor man has always an ox before a household slave. That society then which nature has established for daily support is the domestic, and those who compose it are called by Charondas *homosipuoï*, and by Epimenides the Cretan *homokapnoi*; but the society of many families, which was first instituted for their lasting, mutual advantage, is called a village, and a village is most naturally composed of the descendants of one family, whom some persons call *homogalaktes*, the children and the children's children thereof: for which reason cities were originally governed by kings, as the barbarian states now are, which are composed of those who had before submitted to kingly government; for every family is governed by the elder, as are the branches thereof, on account of their relationship thereunto, which is what Homer says, "Each one ruled his wife and child;" and in this scattered manner they formerly lived. And the opinion which universally prevails, that the gods themselves are subject to kingly government, arises from hence, that all men formerly were, and

many are so now; and as they imagined themselves to be made in the likeness of the gods, so they supposed their manner of life must needs be the same. And when many villages so entirely join themselves together as in every respect to form but one society, that society is a city, and contains in itself, if I may so speak, the end and perfection of government: first founded that we might live, but continued that we may live happily. For which reason every city must be allowed to be the work of nature, if we admit that the original society between male and female is; for to this as their end all subordinate societies tend, and the end of everything is the nature of it. For what every being is in its most perfect state, that certainly is the nature of that being, whether it be a man, a horse, or a house: besides, whatsoever produces the final cause and the end which we [1253a] desire, must be best; but a government complete in itself is that final cause and what is best. Hence it is evident that a city is a natural production, and that man is naturally a political animal, and that whosoever is naturally and not accidentally unfit for society, must be either inferior or superior to man: thus the man in Homer, who is reviled for being "without society, without law, without family." Such a one must naturally be of a quarrelsome disposition, and as solitary as the birds. The gift of speech also evidently proves that man is a more social animal than the bees, or any of the herding cattle: for nature, as we say, does nothing in vain, and man is the only animal who enjoys it. Voice indeed, as being the token of pleasure and pain, is imparted to others also, and thus much their nature is capable of, to perceive pleasure and pain, and to impart these sensations to others; but it is by speech that we are enabled to express what is useful for us, and what is hurtful, and of course what is just and what is unjust: for in this particular man differs from other animals, that he alone has a perception of good and evil, of just and unjust, and it is a participation of these common sentiments which forms a family and a city. Besides, the notion of a city naturally precedes that of a family or an individual, for the whole must necessarily be prior to the parts, for if you take away the whole man, you cannot say a foot or a hand remains, unless by equivocation, as supposing a hand of stone to be made, but that would only be a dead one; but everything is understood to be this or that by its energetic qualities and powers, so that when these no longer remain, neither can that be said to be the same, but something of the same name. That a city then precedes an individual is plain, for if an individual is not in himself sufficient to compose a perfect government, he is to a city as other parts are to a whole; but he that is incapable of society, or so complete in himself as not to want it, makes no part of a city, as a beast or a god. There is then in all persons a natural impetus to associate with each other in this manner, and he who first founded civil society was the cause of the greatest good; for as by the completion of it man is the most excellent of all living beings, so without law and justice he would be the worst of all, for nothing is so difficult to subdue as injustice in arms: but these arms man is born with, namely, prudence and valour, which he may apply to the most opposite purposes, for he who abuses them will be the most wicked, the most cruel, the most lustful, and most gluttonous being imaginable; for justice is a political virtue, by the rules of it the state is regulated, and these rules are the criterion of what is right.

## CHAPTER III

SINCE it is now evident of what parts a city is composed, it will be necessary to treat first of family government, for every city is made up of families, and every family [1253b] has again its separate parts of which it is composed. When a family is complete, it consists of freemen and slaves; but as in every subject we should begin with examining into the smallest parts of which it consists, and as the first and smallest parts of a family are the master and slave, the husband and wife, the father and child, let us first inquire into these three, what each of them may be, and what they ought to be; that is to say, the herile, the nuptial, and the paternal. Let these then be considered as the three distinct parts of a family: some think that the providing what is necessary for the family is something different from the government of it, others that this is the greatest part of it; it shall be considered separately; but we will first speak of a master and a slave, that we may both understand the nature of those things which are absolutely necessary, and also try if we can learn anything better on this subject than what is already known. Some persons have thought that the power of the master over his slave originates from his superior knowledge, and that this knowledge is the same in the master, the magistrate, and the king, as we have already said; but others think that herile government is contrary to nature, and that it is the law which makes one man a slave and another free, but that in nature there is no difference; for which reason that power cannot be founded in justice, but in force.

## CHAPTER IV

Since then a subsistence is necessary in every family, the means of procuring it certainly makes up part of the management of a family, for without necessaries it is impossible to live, and to live well. As in all arts which are brought to perfection it is necessary that they should have their proper instruments if they would complete their works, so is it in the art of managing a family: now of instruments some of them are alive, others inanimate; thus

with respect to the pilot of the ship, the tiller is without life, the sailor is alive; for a servant is as an instrument in many arts. Thus property is as an instrument to living; an estate is a multitude of instruments; so a slave is an animated instrument, but every one that can minister of himself is more valuable than any other instrument; for if every instrument, at command, or from a preconception of its master's will, could accomplish its work (as the story goes of the statues of Daedalus; or what the poet tells us of the tripods of Vulcan, "that they moved of their own accord into the assembly of the gods"), the shuttle would then weave, and the lyre play of itself; nor would the architect want servants, or the [1254a] master slaves. Now what are generally called instruments are the efficient of something else, but possessions are what we simply use: thus with a shuttle we make something else for our use; but we only use a coat, or a bed: since then making and using differ from each other in species, and they both require their instruments, it is necessary that these should be different from each other. Now life is itself what we use, and not what we employ as the efficient of something else; for which reason the services of a slave are for use. A possession may be considered in the same nature as a part of anything; now a part is not only a part of something, but also is nothing else; so is a possession; therefore a master is only the master of the slave, but no part of him; but the slave is not only the slave of the master, but nothing else but that. This fully explains what is the nature of a slave, and what are his capacities; for that being who by nature is nothing of himself, but totally another's, and is a man, is a slave by nature; and that man who is the property of another, is his mere chattel, though he continues a man; but a chattel is an instrument for use, separate from the body.

## CHAPTER V

But whether any person is such by nature, and whether it is advantageous and just for any one to be a slave or no, or whether all slavery is contrary to nature, shall be considered hereafter; not that it is difficult to determine it upon general principles, or to understand it from matters of fact; for that some should govern, and others be governed, is not only necessary but useful, and from the hour of their birth some are marked out for those purposes, and others for the other, and there are many species of both sorts. And the better those are who are governed the better also is the government, as for instance of man, rather than the brute creation: for the more excellent the materials are with which the work is finished, the more excellent certainly is the work; and wherever there is a governor and a governed, there certainly is some work produced; for whatsoever is composed of many parts, which jointly become one, whether conjunct or separate, evidently show the marks of governing and governed; and this is true of every living thing in all nature; nay, even in some things which partake not of life, as in music; but this probably would be a disquisition too foreign to our present purpose. Every living thing in the first place is composed of soul and body, of these the one is by nature the governor, the other the governed; now if we would know what is natural, we ought to search for it in those subjects in which nature appears most perfect, and not in those which are corrupted; we should therefore examine into a man who is most perfectly formed both in soul and body, in whom this is evident, for in the depraved and vicious the body seems [1254b] to rule rather than the soul, on account of their being corrupt and contrary to nature. We may then, as we affirm, perceive in an animal the first principles of herile and political government; for the soul governs the body as the master governs his slave; the mind governs the appetite with a political or a kingly power, which shows that it is both natural and advantageous that the body should be governed by the soul, and the pathetic part by the mind, and that part which is possessed of reason; but to have no ruling power, or an improper one, is hurtful to all; and this holds true not only of man, but of other animals also, for tame animals are naturally better than wild ones, and it is advantageous that both should be under subjection to man; for this is productive of their common safety: so is it naturally with the male and the female; the one is superior, the other inferior; the one governs, the other is governed; and the same rule must necessarily hold good with respect to all mankind. Those men therefore who are as much inferior to others as the body is to the soul, are to be thus disposed of, as the proper use of them is their bodies, in which their excellence consists; and if what I have said be true, they are slaves by nature, and it is advantageous to them to be always under government. He then is by nature formed a slave who is qualified to become the chattel of another person, and on that account is so, and who has just reason enough to know that there is such a faculty, without being indued with the use of it; for other animals have no perception of reason, but are entirely guided by appetite, and indeed they vary very little in their use from each other; for the advantage which we receive, both from slaves and tame animals, arises from their bodily strength administering to our necessities; for it is the intention of nature to make the bodies of slaves and freemen different from each other, that the one should be robust for their necessary purposes, the others erect, useless indeed for what slaves are employed in, but fit for civil life, which is divided into the duties of war and peace; though these rules do not always take place, for slaves have sometimes the bodies of freemen, sometimes the souls; if then it is evident that if some bodies are as much more excellent than others as the statues of the gods excel the human form, every one will allow that the inferior ought to be slaves to the superior; and if this is true with respect to the body, it is still juster to determine in the same manner, when we consider the soul; though it is not so easy to perceive the

beauty of [1255a] the soul as it is of the body. Since then some men are slaves by nature, and others are freemen, it is clear that where slavery is advantageous to any one, then it is just to make him a slave.

## CHAPTER VI

But it is not difficult to perceive that those who maintain the contrary opinion have some reason on their side; for a man may become a slave two different ways; for he may be so by law also, and this law is a certain compact, by which whatsoever is taken in battle is adjudged to be the property of the conquerors: but many persons who are conversant in law call in question this pretended right, and say that it would be hard that a man should be compelled by violence to be the slave and subject of another who had the power to compel him, and was his superior in strength; and upon this subject, even of those who are wise, some think one way and some another; but the cause of this doubt and variety of opinions arises from hence, that great abilities, when accompanied with proper means, are generally able to succeed by force: for victory is always owing to a superiority in some advantageous circumstances; so that it seems that force never prevails but in consequence of great abilities. But still the dispute concerning the justice of it remains; for some persons think, that justice consists in benevolence, others think it just that the powerful should govern: in the midst of these contrary opinions, there are no reasons sufficient to convince us, that the right of being master and governor ought not to be placed with those who have the greatest abilities. Some persons, entirely resting upon the right which the law gives (for that which is legal is in some respects just), insist upon it that slavery occasioned by war is just, not that they say it is wholly so, for it may happen that the principle upon which the wars were commenced is unjust; moreover no one will say that a man who is unworthily in slavery is therefore a slave; for if so, men of the noblest families might happen to be slaves, and the descendants of slaves, if they should chance to be taken prisoners in war and sold: to avoid this difficulty they say that such persons should not be called slaves, but barbarians only should; but when they say this, they do nothing more than inquire who is a slave by nature, which was what we at first said; for we must acknowledge that there are some persons who, wherever they are, must necessarily be slaves, but others in no situation; thus also it is with those of noble descent: it is not only in their own country that they are Esteemed as such, but everywhere, but the barbarians are respected on this account at home only; as if nobility and freedom were of two sorts, the one universal, the other not so. Thus says the Helen of Theodectes:

"Who dares reproach me with the name of slave? When from the immortal gods, on either side, I draw my lineage."

Those who express sentiments like these, shew only that they distinguish the slave and the freeman, the noble and the ignoble from each other by their virtues and their [1255b] vices; for they think it reasonable, that as a man begets a man, and a beast a beast, so from a good man, a good man should be descended; and this is what nature desires to do, but frequently cannot accomplish it. It is evident then that this doubt has some reason in it, and that these persons are not slaves, and those freemen, by the appointment of nature; and also that in some instances it is sufficiently clear, that it is advantageous to both parties for this man to be a slave, and that to be a master, and that it is right and just, that some should be governed, and others govern, in the manner that nature intended; of which sort of government is that which a master exercises over a slave. But to govern ill is disadvantageous to both; for the same thing is useful to the part and to the whole, to the body and to the soul; but the slave is as it were a part of the master, as if he were an animated part of his body, though separate. For which reason a mutual utility and friendship may subsist between the master and the slave, I mean when they are placed by nature in that relation to each other, for the contrary takes place amongst those who are reduced to slavery by the law, or by conquest.

## CHAPTER VII

It is evident from what has been said, that a herile and a political government are not the same, or that all governments are alike to each other, as some affirm; for one is adapted to the nature of freemen, the other to that of slaves. Domestic government is a monarchy, for that is what prevails in every house; but a political state is the government of free men and equals. The master is not so called from his knowing how to manage his slave, but because he is so; for the same reason a slave and a freeman have their respective appellations. There is also one sort of knowledge proper for a master, another for a slave; the slave's is of the nature of that which was taught by a slave at Syracuse; for he for a stipulated sum instructed the boys in all the business of a household slave, of which there are various sorts to be learnt, as the art of cookery, and other such-like services, of which some are allotted to some, and others to others; some employments being more honourable, others more necessary; according to the proverb, "One slave excels another, one master excels another:" in such-like things

the knowledge of a slave consists. The knowledge of the master is to be able properly to employ his slaves, for the mastership of slaves is the employment, not the mere possession of them; not that this knowledge contains anything great or respectable; for what a slave ought to know how to do, that a master ought to know how to order; for which reason, those who have it in their power to be free from these low attentions, employ a steward for this business, and apply themselves either to public affairs or philosophy: the knowledge of procuring what is necessary for a family is different from that which belongs either to the master or the slave: and to do this justly must be either by war or hunting. And thus much of the difference between a master and a slave.

## CHAPTER VIII

[1256a] As a slave is a particular species of property, let us by all means inquire into the nature of property in general, and the acquisition of money, according to the manner we have proposed. In the first place then, some one may doubt whether the getting of money is the same thing as economy, or whether it is a part of it, or something subservient to it; and if so, whether it is as the art of making shuttles is to the art of weaving, or the art of making brass to that of statue founding, for they are not of the same service; for the one supplies the tools, the other the matter: by the matter I mean the subject out of which the work is finished, as wool for the cloth and brass for the statue. It is evident then that the getting of money is not the same thing as economy, for the business of the one is to furnish the means of the other to use them; and what art is there employed in the management of a family but economy, but whether this is a part of it, or something of a different species, is a doubt; for if it is the business of him who is to get money to find out how riches and possessions may be procured, and both these arise from various causes, we must first inquire whether the art of husbandry is part of money-getting or something different, and in general, whether the same is not true of every acquisition and every attention which relates to provision. But as there are many sorts of provision, so are the methods of living both of man and the brute creation very various; and as it is impossible to live without food, the difference in that particular makes the lives of animals so different from each other. Of beasts, some live in herds, others separate, as is most convenient for procuring themselves food; as some of them live upon flesh, others on fruit, and others on whatsoever they light on, nature having so distinguished their course of life, that they can very easily procure themselves subsistence; and as the same things are not agreeable to all, but one animal likes one thing and another another, it follows that the lives of those beasts who live upon flesh must be different from the lives of those who live on fruits; so is it with men, their lives differ greatly from each other; and of all these the shepherd's is the idlest, for they live upon the flesh of tame animals, without any trouble, while they are obliged to change their habitations on account of their flocks, which they are compelled to follow, cultivating, as it were, a living farm. Others live exercising violence over living creatures, one pursuing this thing, another that, these preying upon men; those who live near lakes and marshes and rivers, or the sea itself, on fishing, while others are fowlers, or hunters of wild beasts; but the greater part of mankind live upon the produce of the earth and its cultivated fruits; and the manner in which all those live who follow the direction of nature, and labour for their own subsistence, is nearly the same, without ever thinking to procure any provision by way of exchange or merchandise, such are shepherds, husband-men, [1256b] robbers, fishermen, and hunters: some join different employments together, and thus live very agreeably; supplying those deficiencies which were wanting to make their subsistence depend upon themselves only: thus, for instance, the same person shall be a shepherd and a robber, or a husbandman and a hunter; and so with respect to the rest, they pursue that mode of life which necessity points out. This provision then nature herself seems to have furnished all animals with, as well immediately upon their first origin as also when they are arrived at a state of maturity; for at the first of these periods some of them are provided in the womb with proper nourishment, which continues till that which is born can get food for itself, as is the case with worms and birds; and as to those which bring forth their young alive, they have the means for their subsistence for a certain time within themselves, namely milk. It is evident then that we may conclude of those things that are, that plants are created for the sake of animals, and animals for the sake of men; the tame for our use and provision; the wild, at least the greater part, for our provision also, or for some other advantageous purpose, as furnishing us with clothes, and the like. As nature therefore makes nothing either imperfect or in vain, it necessarily follows that she has made all these things for men: for which reason what we gain in war is in a certain degree a natural acquisition; for hunting is a part of it, which it is necessary for us to employ against wild beasts; and those men who being intended by nature for slavery are unwilling to submit to it, on which occasion such a war is by nature just: that species of acquisition then only which is according to nature is part of economy; and this ought to be at hand, or if not, immediately procured, namely, what is necessary to be kept in store to live upon, and which are useful as well for the state as the family. And true riches seem to consist in these; and the acquisition of those possessions which are necessary for a happy life is not infinite; though Solon says otherwise in this verse:

"No bounds to riches can be fixed for man;"

for they may be fixed as in other arts; for the instruments of no art whatsoever are infinite, either in their number or their magnitude; but riches are a number of instruments in domestic and civil economy; it is therefore evident that the acquisition of certain things according to nature is a part both of domestic and civil economy, and for what reason.

## CHAPTER IX

There is also another species of acquisition which they [1257a] particularly call pecuniary, and with great propriety; and by this indeed it seems that there are no bounds to riches and wealth. Now many persons suppose, from their near relation to each other, that this is one and the same with that we have just mentioned, but it is not the same as that, though not very different; one of these is natural, the other is not, but rather owing to some art and skill; we will enter into a particular examination of this subject. The uses of every possession are two, both dependent upon the thing itself, but not in the same manner, the one supposing an inseparable connection with it, the other not; as a shoe, for instance, which may be either worn, or exchanged for something else, both these are the uses of the shoe; for he who exchanges a shoe with some man who wants one, for money or provisions, uses the shoe as a shoe, but not according to the original intention, for shoes were not at first made to be exchanged. The same thing holds true of all other possessions; for barter, in general, had its original beginning in nature, some men having a surplus, others too little of what was necessary for them: hence it is evident, that the selling provisions for money is not according to the natural use of things; for they were obliged to use barter for those things which they wanted; but it is plain that barter could have no place in the first, that is to say, in family society; but must have begun when the number of those who composed the community was enlarged: for the first of these had all things in common; but when they came to be separated they were obliged to exchange with each other many different things which both parties wanted. Which custom of barter is still preserved amongst many barbarous nations, who procure one necessary with another, but never sell anything; as giving and receiving wine for corn and the like. This sort of barter is not contradictory to nature, nor is it any species of money-getting; but is necessary in procuring that subsistence which is so consonant thereunto. But this barter introduced the use of money, as might be expected; for a convenient place from whence to import what you wanted, or to export what you had a surplus of, being often at a great distance, money necessarily made its way into commerce; for it is not everything which is naturally most useful that is easiest of carriage; for which reason they invented something to exchange with each other which they should mutually give and take, that being really valuable itself, should have the additional advantage of being of easy conveyance, for the purposes of life, as iron and silver, or anything else of the same nature: and this at first passed in value simply according to its weight or size; but in process of time it had a certain stamp, to save the trouble of weighing, which stamp expressed its value. [1257b]

Money then being established as the necessary medium of exchange, another species of money-getting soon took place, namely, by buying and selling, at probably first in a simple manner, afterwards with more skill and experience, where and how the greatest profits might be made. For which reason the art of money-getting seems to be chiefly conversant about trade, and the business of it to be able to tell where the greatest profits can be made, being the means of procuring abundance of wealth and possessions: and thus wealth is very often supposed to consist in the quantity of money which any one possesses, as this is the medium by which all trade is conducted and a fortune made, others again regard it as of no value, as being of none by nature, but arbitrarily made so by compact; so that if those who use it should alter their sentiments, it would be worth nothing, as being of no service for any necessary purpose. Besides, he who abounds in money often wants necessary food; and it is impossible to say that any person is in good circumstances when with all his possessions he may perish with hunger.

Like Midas in the fable, who from his insatiable wish had everything he touched turned into gold. For which reason others endeavour to procure other riches and other property, and rightly, for there are other riches and property in nature; and these are the proper objects of economy: while trade only procures money, not by all means, but by the exchange of it, and for that purpose it is this which it is chiefly employed about, for money is the first principle and the end of trade; nor are there any bounds to be set to what is thereby acquired. Thus also there are no limits to the art of medicine, with respect to the health which it attempts to procure; the same also is true of all other arts; no line can be drawn to terminate their bounds, the several professors of them being desirous to extend them as far as possible. (But still the means to be employed for that purpose are limited; and these are the limits beyond which the art cannot proceed.) Thus in the art of acquiring riches there are no limits, for the object of that is money and possessions; but economy has a boundary, though this has not: for acquiring riches is not the business of that, for which reason it should seem that some boundary should be set to riches, though we see the contrary to this is what is practised; for all those who get riches add to their money without end; the cause of which is the near connection of these two arts with each other, which sometimes occasions the one to change

employments with the other, as getting of money is their common object: for economy requires the possession of wealth, but not on its own account but with another view, to purchase things necessary therewith; but the other procures it merely to increase it: so that some persons are confirmed in their belief, that this is the proper object of economy, and think that for this purpose money should be saved and hoarded up without end; the reason for which disposition is, that they are intent upon living, but not upon living well; and this desire being boundless in its extent, the means which they aim at for that purpose are boundless also; and those who propose to live well, often confine that to the enjoyment of the pleasures of sense; so that as this also seems to depend upon what a man has, all their care is to get money, and hence arises the other cause for this art; for as this enjoyment is excessive in its degree, they endeavour to procure means proportionate to supply it; and if they cannot do this merely by the art of dealing in money, they will endeavour to do it by other ways, and apply all their powers to a purpose they were not by nature intended for. Thus, for instance, courage was intended to inspire fortitude, not to get money by; neither is this the end of the soldier's or the physician's art, but victory and health. But such persons make everything subservient to money-getting, as if this was the only end; and to the end everything ought to refer.

We have now considered that art of money-getting which is not necessary, and have seen in what manner we became in want of it; and also that which is necessary, which is different from it; for that economy which is natural, and whose object is to provide food, is not like this unlimited in its extent, but has its bounds.

## CHAPTER X

We have now determined what was before doubtful, whether or no the art of getting money is his business who is at the head of a family or a state, and though not strictly so, it is however very necessary; for as a politician does not make men, but receiving them from the hand of nature employs them to proper purposes; thus the earth, or the sea, or something else ought to supply them with provisions, and this it is the business of the master of the family to manage properly; for it is not the weaver's business to make yarn, but to use it, and to distinguish what is good and useful from what is bad and of no service; and indeed some one may inquire why getting money should be a part of economy when the art of healing is not, as it is as requisite that the family should be in health as that they should eat, or have anything else which is necessary; and as it is indeed in some particulars the business both of the master of the family, and he to whom the government of the state is entrusted, to see after the health of those under their care, but in others not, but the physician's; so also as to money; in some respects it is the business of the master of the family, in others not, but of the servant; but as we have already said, it is chiefly nature's, for it is her part to supply her offspring with food; for everything finds nourishment left for it in what produced it; for which reason the natural riches of all men arise from fruits and animals. Now money-making, as we say, being twofold, it may be applied to two purposes, the service of the house or retail trade; of which the first is necessary and commendable, the other justly censurable; for it has not its origin in [1258b] nature, but by it men gain from each other; for usury is most reasonably detested, as it is increasing our fortune by money itself, and not employing it for the purpose it was originally intended, namely exchange.

And this is the explanation of the name (TOKOS), which means the breeding of money. For as offspring resemble their parents, so usury is money bred of money. Whence of all forms of money-making it is most against nature.

## CHAPTER XI

Having already sufficiently considered the general principles of this subject, let us now go into the practical part thereof; the one is a liberal employment for the mind, the other necessary. These things are useful in the management of one's affairs; to be skilful in the nature of cattle, which are most profitable, and where, and how; as for instance, what advantage will arise from keeping horses, or oxen, or sheep, or any other live stock; it is also necessary to be acquainted with the comparative value of these things, and which of them in particular places are worth most; for some do better in one place, some in another. Agriculture also should be understood, and the management of arable grounds and orchards; and also the care of bees, and fish, and birds, from whence any profit may arise; these are the first and most proper parts of domestic management.

With respect to gaining money by exchange, the principal method of doing this is by merchandise, which is carried on in three different ways, either by sending the commodity for sale by sea or by land, or else selling it on the place where it grows; and these differ from each other in this, that the one is more profitable, the other safer. The second method is by usury. The third by receiving wages for work done, and this either by being employed in some mean art, or else in mere bodily labour. There is also a third species of improving a fortune, that is

something between this and the first; for it partly depends upon nature, partly upon exchange; the subject of which is, things that are immediately from the earth, or their produce, which, though they bear no fruit, are yet useful, such as selling of timber and the whole art of metallurgy, which includes many different species, for there are various sorts of things dug out of the earth.

These we have now mentioned in general, but to enter into particulars concerning each of them, though it might be useful to the artist, would be tiresome to dwell on. Now of all the works of art, those are the most excellent wherein chance has the least to do, and those are the meanest which deprave the body, those the most servile in which bodily strength alone is chiefly wanted, those most illiberal which require least skill; but as there are books written on these subjects by some persons, as by Chares the Panian, and Apollodorus the Lemnian, upon husbandry and planting; and by others on other matters, [1259b] let those who have occasion consult them thereon; besides, every person should collect together whatsoever he hears occasionally mentioned, by means of which many of those who aimed at making a fortune have succeeded in their intentions; for all these are useful to those who make a point of getting money, as in the contrivance of Thales the Milesian (which was certainly a gainful one, but as it was his it was attributed to his wisdom, though the method he used was a general one, and would universally succeed), when they reviled him for his poverty, as if the study of philosophy was useless: for they say that he, perceiving by his skill in astrology that there would be great plenty of olives that year, while it was yet winter, having got a little money, he gave earnest for all the oil works that were in Miletus and Chios, which he hired at a low price, there being no one to bid against him; but when the season came for making oil, many persons wanting them, he all at once let them upon what terms he pleased; and raising a large sum of money by that means, convinced them that it was easy for philosophers to be rich if they chose it, but that that was not what they aimed at; in this manner is Thales said to have shown his wisdom. It indeed is, as we have said, generally gainful for a person to contrive to make a monopoly of anything; for which reason some cities also take this method when they want money, and monopolise their commodities. There was a certain person in Sicily who laid out a sum of money which was deposited in his hand in buying up all the iron from the iron merchants; so that when the dealers came from the markets to purchase, there was no one had any to sell but himself; and though he put no great advance upon it, yet by laying out fifty talents he made an hundred. When Dionysius heard this he permitted him to take his money with him, but forbid him to continue any longer in Sicily, as being one who contrived means for getting money inconsistent with his affairs. This man's view and Thales's was exactly the same; both of them contrived to procure a monopoly for themselves: it is useful also for politicians to understand these things, for many states want to raise money and by such means, as well as private families, nay more so; for which reason some persons who are employed in the management of public affairs confine themselves to this province only.

## CHAPTER XII

There are then three parts of domestic government, the masters, of which we have already treated, the fathers, and the husbands; now the government of the wife and children should both be that of free persons, but not the [1259b] same; for the wife should be treated as a citizen of a free state, the children should be under kingly power; for the male is by nature superior to the female, except when something happens contrary to the usual course of nature, as is the elder and perfect to the younger and imperfect. Now in the generality of free states, the governors and the governed alternately change place; for an equality without any preference is what nature chooses; however, when one governs and another is governed, she endeavours that there should be a distinction between them in forms, expressions, and honours; according to what Amasis said of his laver. This then should be the established rule between the man and the woman. The government of children should be kingly; for the power of the father over the child is founded in affection and seniority, which is a species of kingly government; for which reason Homer very properly calls Jupiter "the father of gods and men," who was king of both these; for nature requires that a king should be of the same species with those whom he governs, though superior in some particulars, as is the case between the elder and the younger, the father and the son.

## CHAPTER XIII

It is evident then that in the due government of a family, greater attention should be paid to the several members of it and their virtues than to the possessions or riches of it; and greater to the freemen than the slaves: but here some one may doubt whether there is any other virtue in a slave than his organic services, and of higher estimation than these, as temperance, fortitude, justice, and such-like habits, or whether they possess only bodily qualities: each side of the question has its difficulties; for if they possess these virtues, wherein do they differ from freemen? and that they do not, since they are men, and partakers of reason, is absurd. Nearly the same inquiry

may be made concerning a woman and a child, whether these also have their proper virtues; whether a woman ought to be temperate, brave, and just, and whether a child is temperate or no; and indeed this inquiry ought to be general, whether the virtues of those who, by nature, either govern or are governed, are the same or different; for if it is necessary that both of them should partake of the fair and good, why is it also necessary that, without exception, the one should govern, the other always be governed? for this cannot arise from their possessing these qualities in different degrees; for to govern, and to be governed, are things different in species, but more or less are not. And yet it is wonderful that one party ought to have them, and the other not; for if he who is to govern should not be temperate and just, how can he govern well? or if he is to be governed, how can he be governed well? for he who is intemperate [1260a] and a coward will never do what he ought: it is evident then that both parties ought to be virtuous; but there is a difference between them, as there is between those who by nature command and who by nature obey, and this originates in the soul; for in this nature has planted the governing and submitting principle, the virtues of which we say are different, as are those of a rational and an irrational being. It is plain then that the same principle may be extended farther, and that there are in nature a variety of things which govern and are governed; for a freeman is governed in a different manner from a slave, a male from a female, and a man from a child: and all these have parts of mind within them, but in a different manner. Thus a slave can have no power of determination, a woman but a weak one, a child an imperfect one. Thus also must it necessarily be with respect to moral virtues; all must be supposed to possess them, but not in the same manner, but as is best suited to every one's employment; on which account he who is to govern ought to be perfect in moral virtue, for his business is entirely that of an architect, and reason is the architect; while others want only that portion of it which may be sufficient for their station; from whence it is evident, that although moral virtue is common to all those we have spoken of, yet the temperance of a man and a woman are not the same, nor their courage, nor their justice, though Socrates thought otherwise; for the courage of the man consists in commanding, the woman's in obeying; and the same is true in other particulars: and this will be evident to those who will examine different virtues separately; for those who use general terms deceive themselves when they say, that virtue consists in a good disposition of mind, or doing what is right, or something of this sort. They do much better who enumerate the different virtues as Georgias did, than those who thus define them; and as Sophocles speaks of a woman, we think of all persons, that their 'virtues should be applicable to their characters, for says he,

"Silence is a woman's ornament,"

but it is not a man's; and as a child is incomplete, it is evident that his virtue is not to be referred to himself in his present situation, but to that in which he will be complete, and his preceptor. In like manner the virtue of a slave is to be referred to his master; for we laid it down as a maxim, that the use of a slave was to employ him in what you wanted; so that it is clear enough that few virtues are wanted in his station, only that he may not neglect his work through idleness or fear: some person may question if what I have said is true, whether virtue is not necessary for artificers in their calling, for they often through idleness neglect their work, but the difference between them is very great; for a slave is connected with you for life, but the artificer not so nearly: as near therefore as the artificer approaches to the situation of a slave, just so much ought he to have of the virtues of one; for a mean artificer is to a certain point a slave; but then a slave is one of those things which are by nature what they are, but this is not true [1260b] of a shoemaker, or any other artist. It is evident then that a slave ought to be trained to those virtues which are proper for his situation by his master; and not by him who has the power of a master, to teach him any particular art. Those therefore are in the wrong who would deprive slaves of reason, and say that they have only to follow their orders; for slaves want more instruction than children, and thus we determine this matter. It is necessary, I am sensible, for every one who treats upon government, to enter particularly into the relations of husband and wife, and of parent and child, and to show what are the virtues of each and their respective connections with each other; what is right and what is wrong; and how the one ought to be followed, and the other avoided. Since then every family is part of a city, and each of those individuals is part of a family, and the virtue of the parts ought to correspond to the virtue of the whole; it is necessary, that both the wives and children of the community should be instructed correspondent to the nature thereof, if it is of consequence to the virtue of the state, that the wives and children therein should be virtuous, and of consequence it certainly is, for the wives are one half of the free persons; and of the children the succeeding citizens are to be formed. As then we have determined these points, we will leave the rest to be spoken to in another place, as if the subject was now finished; and beginning again anew, first consider the sentiments of those who have treated of the most perfect forms of government.

# ARISTOTLE: POLITICS (BOOK 2)

## CHAPTER I

Since then we propose to inquire what civil society is of all others best for those who have it in their power to live entirely as they wish, it is necessary to examine into the polity of those states which are allowed to be well governed; and if there should be any others which some persons have described, and which appear properly regulated, to note what is right and useful in them; and when we point out wherein they have failed, let not this be imputed to an affectation of wisdom, for it is because there are great defects in all those which are already established, that I have been induced to undertake this work. We will begin with that part of the subject which naturally presents itself first to our consideration. The members of every state must of necessity have all things in common, or some things common, and not others, or nothing at all common. To have nothing in common is evidently impossible, for society itself is one species of [1261a] community; and the first thing necessary thereunto is a common place of habitation, namely the city, which must be one, and this every citizen must have a share in. But in a government which is to be well founded, will it be best to admit of a community in everything which is capable thereof, or only in some particulars, but in others not? for it is possible that the citizens may have their wives, and children, and goods in common, as in Plato's Commonwealth; for in that Socrates affirms that all these particulars ought to be so. Which then shall we prefer? the custom which is already established, or the laws which are proposed in that treatise.

## CHAPTER II

Now as a community of wives is attended with many other difficulties, so neither does the cause for which he would frame his government in this manner seem agreeable to reason, nor is it capable of producing that end which he has proposed, and for which he says it ought to take place; nor has he given any particular directions for putting it in practice. Now I also am willing to agree with Socrates in the principle which he proceeds upon, and admit that the city ought to be one as much as possible; and yet it is evident that if it is contracted too much, it will be no longer a city, for that necessarily supposes a multitude; so that if we proceed in this manner, we shall reduce a city to a family, and a family to a single person: for we admit that a family is one in a greater degree than a city, and a single person than a family; so that if this end could be obtained, it should never be put in practice, as it would annihilate the city; for a city does not only consist of a large number of inhabitants, but there must also be different sorts; for were they all alike, there could be no city; for a confederacy and a city are two different things; for a confederacy is valuable from its numbers, although all those who compose it are men of the same calling; for this is entered into for the sake of mutual defence, as we add an additional weight to make the scale go down. The same distinction prevails between a city and a nation when the people are not collected into separate villages, but live as the Arcadians. Now those things in which a city should be one are of different sorts, and in preserving an alternate reciprocation of power between these, the safety thereof consists (as I have already mentioned in my treatise on Morals), for amongst freemen and equals this is absolutely necessary; for all cannot govern at the same time, but either by the year, or according to some other regulation or time, by which means every one in his turn will be in office; as if the shoemakers and carpenters should exchange occupations, and not always be employed in the same calling. But as it is evidently better, that these should continue to exercise their respective trades; so also in civil society, where it is possible, it would be better that the government should continue in the same hands; but where it [1261b] is not (as nature has made all men equal, and therefore it is just, be the administration good or bad, that all should partake of it), there it is best to observe a rotation, and let those who are their equals by turns submit to those who are at that time magistrates, as they will, in their turns, alternately be governors and governed, as if they were different men: by the same method different persons will execute different offices. From hence it is evident, that a city cannot be one in the manner that some persons propose; and that what has been said to be the greatest good which it could enjoy, is absolutely its destruction, which cannot be: for the good of anything is that which preserves it. For another reason also it is clear, that it is not for the best to endeavour to make a city too much one, because a family is more sufficient in itself than a single person, a city than a family; and indeed Plato supposes that a city owes its existence to that sufficiency in themselves which the members of it enjoy. If then this sufficiency is so desirable, the less the city is one the better.

## CHAPTER III

But admitting that it is most advantageous for a city to be one as much as possible, it does not seem to follow that this will take place by permitting all at once to say this is mine, and this is not mine (though this is what Socrates regards as a proof that a city is entirely one), for the word All is used in two senses; if it means each individual, what Socrates proposes will nearly take place; for each person will say, this is his own son, and his own wife, and his own property, and of everything else that may happen to belong to him, that it is his own. But those who have their wives and children in common will not say so, but all will say so, though not as individuals; therefore, to use the word all is evidently a fallacious mode of speech; for this word is sometimes used distributively, and sometimes collectively, on account of its double meaning, and is the cause of inconclusive syllogisms in reasoning. Therefore for all persons to say the same thing was their own, using the word all in its distributive sense, would be well, but is impossible: in its collective sense it would by no means contribute to the concord of the state. Besides, there would be another inconvenience attending this proposal, for what is common to many is taken least care of; for all men regard more what is their own than what others share with them in, to which they pay less attention than is incumbent on every one: let me add also, that every one is more negligent of what another is to see to, as well as himself, than of his own private business; as in a family one is often worse served by many servants than by a few. Let each citizen then in the state have a thousand children, but let none of them be considered as the children of that individual, but let the relation of father and child be common to them all, and they will all be neglected. Besides, in consequence of this, [1262a] whenever any citizen behaved well or ill, every person, be the number what it would, might say, this is my son, or this man's or that; and in this manner would they speak, and thus would they doubt of the whole thousand, or of whatever number the city consisted; and it would be uncertain to whom each child belonged, and when it was born, who was to take care of it: and which do you think is better, for every one to say this is mine, while they may apply it equally to two thousand or ten thousand; or as we say, this is mine in our present forms of government, where one man calls another his son, another calls that same person his brother, another nephew, or some other relation, either by blood or marriage, and first extends his care to him and his, while another regards him as one of the same parish and the same tribe; and it is better for any one to be a nephew in his private capacity than a son after that manner. Besides, it will be impossible to prevent some persons from suspecting that they are brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers to each other; for, from the mutual likeness there is between the sire and the offspring, they will necessarily conclude in what relation they stand to each other, which circumstance, we are informed by those writers who describe different parts of the world, does sometimes happen; for in Upper Africa there are wives in common who yet deliver their children to their respective fathers, being guided by their likeness to them. There are also some mares and cows which naturally bring forth their young so like the male, that we can easily distinguish by which of them they were impregnated: such was the mare called Just, in Pharsalia.

## CHAPTER IV

Besides, those who contrive this plan of community cannot easily avoid the following evils; namely, blows, murders involuntary or voluntary, quarrels, and reproaches, all which it would be impious indeed to be guilty of towards our fathers and mothers, or those who are nearly related to us; though not to those who are not connected to us by any tie of affinity: and certainly these mischiefs must necessarily happen oftener amongst those who do not know how they are connected to each other than those who do; and when they do happen, if it is among the first of these, they admit of a legal expiation, but amongst the latter that cannot be done. It is also absurd for those who promote a community of children to forbid those who love each other from indulging themselves in the last excesses of that passion, while they do not restrain them from the passion itself, or those intercourses which are of all things most improper, between a Father and a son, a brother and a brother, and indeed the thing itself is most absurd. It is also ridiculous to prevent this intercourse between the nearest relations, for no other reason than the violence of the pleasure, while they think that the relation of father and daughter, the brother and sister, is of no consequence at all. It seems also more advantageous for the state, that the husbandmen should have their wives and children in common than the military, for there will be less affection [1262b] among them in that case than when otherwise; for such persons ought to be under subjection, that they may obey the laws, and not seek after innovations. Upon the whole, the consequences of such a law as this would be directly contrary to those things which good laws ought to establish, and which Socrates endeavoured to establish by his regulations concerning women and children: for we think that friendship is the greatest good which can happen to any city, as nothing so much prevents seditions: and amity in a city is what Socrates commends above all things, which appears to be, as indeed he says, the effect of friendship; as we learn from Aristophanes in the *Erotics*, who says, that those who love one another from the excess of that passion, desire to breathe the same soul, and from being two to be blended into one: from whence it would necessarily follow, that

both or one of them must be destroyed. But now in a city which admits of this community, the tie of friendship must, from that very cause, be extremely weak, when no father can say, this is my son; or son, this is my father; for as a very little of what is sweet, being mixed with a great deal of water is imperceptible after the mixture, so must all family connections, and the names they go by, be necessarily disregarded in such a community, it being then by no means necessary that the father should have any regard for him he called a son, or the brothers for those they call brothers. There are two things which principally inspire mankind with care and love of their offspring, knowing it is their own, and what ought to be the object of their affection, neither of which can take place in this sort of community. As for exchanging the children of the artificers and husbandmen with those of the military, and theirs reciprocally with these, it will occasion great confusion in whatever manner it shall be done; for of necessity, those who carry the children must know from whom they took and to whom they gave them; and by this means those evils which I have already mentioned will necessarily be the more likely to happen, as blows, incestuous love, murders, and the like; for those who are given from their own parents to other citizens, the military, for instance, will not call them brothers, sons, fathers, or mothers. The same thing would happen to those of the military who were placed among the other citizens; so that by this means every one would be in fear how to act in consequence of consanguinity. And thus let us determine concerning a community of wives and children.

## CHAPTER V

We proceed next to consider in what manner property should be regulated in a state which is formed after the most perfect mode of government, whether it should be common or not; for this may be considered as a separate question from what had been determined concerning [1263a] wives and children; I mean, whether it is better that these should be held separate, as they now everywhere are, or that not only possessions but also the usufruct of them should be in common; or that the soil should have a particular owner, but that the produce should be brought together and used as one common stock, as some nations at present do; or on the contrary, should the soil be common, and should it also be cultivated in common, while the produce is divided amongst the individuals for their particular use, which is said to be practised by some barbarians; or shall both the soil and the fruit be common? When the business of the husbandman devolves not on the citizen, the matter is much easier settled; but when those labour together who have a common right of possession, this may occasion several difficulties; for there may not be an equal proportion between their labour and what they consume; and those who labour hard and have but a small proportion of the produce, will certainly complain of those who take a large share of it and do but little for that. Upon the whole, as a community between man and man so entire as to include everything possible, and thus to have all things that man can possess in common, is very difficult, so is it particularly so with respect to property; and this is evident from that community which takes place between those who go out to settle a colony; for they frequently have disputes with each other upon the most common occasions, and come to blows upon trifles: we find, too, that we oftenest correct those slaves who are generally employed in the common offices of the family: a community of property then has these and other inconveniences attending it.

But the manner of life which is now established, more particularly when embellished with good morals and a system of equal laws, is far superior to it, for it will have the advantage of both; by both I mean properties being common, and divided also; for in some respects it ought to be in a manner common, but upon the whole private: for every man's attention being employed on his own particular concerns, will prevent mutual complaints against each other; nay, by this means industry will be increased, as each person will labour to improve his own private property; and it will then be, that from a principle of virtue they will mutually perform good offices to each other, according to the proverb, "All things are common amongst friends;" and in some cities there are traces of this custom to be seen, so that it is not impracticable, and particularly in those which are best governed; some things are by this means in a manner common, and others might be so; for there, every person enjoying his own private property, some things he assists his friend with, others are considered as in common; as in Lacedaemon, where they use each other's slaves, as if they were, so to speak, their own, as they do their horses and dogs, or even any provision they may want in a journey.

It is evident then that it is best to have property private, but to make the use of it common; but how the citizens are to be brought to it is the particular [1263b] business of the legislator. And also with respect to pleasure, it is unspeakable how advantageous it is, that a man should think he has something which he may call his own; for it is by no means to no purpose, that each person should have an affection for himself, for that is natural, and yet to be a self-lover is justly censured; for we mean by that, not one that simply loves himself, but one that loves himself more than he ought; in like manner we blame a money-lover, and yet both money and self is what all men love. Besides, it is very pleasing to us to oblige and assist our friends and companions, as well as those whom we are connected with by the rights of hospitality; and this cannot be done without the establishment of private property, which cannot take place with those who make a city too much one; besides, they prevent every

opportunity of exercising two principal virtues, modesty and liberality. Modesty with respect to the female sex, for this virtue requires you to abstain from her who is another's; liberality, which depends upon private property, for without that no one can appear liberal, or do any generous action; for liberality consists in imparting to others what is our own.

This system of polity does indeed recommend itself by its good appearance and specious pretences to humanity; and when first proposed to any one, must give him great pleasure, as he will conclude it to be a wonderful bond of friendship, connecting all to all; particularly when any one censures the evils which are now to be found in society, as arising from properties not being common, I mean the disputes which happen between man and man, upon their different contracts with each other; those judgments which are passed in court in consequence of fraud, and perjury, and flattering the rich, none of which arise from properties being private, but from the vices of mankind. Besides, those who live in one general community, and have all things in common, oftener dispute with each other than those who have their property separate; from the very small number indeed of those who have their property in common, compared with those where it is appropriated, the instances of their quarrels are but few. It is also but right to mention, not only the inconveniences they are preserved from who live in a communion of goods, but also the advantages they are deprived of; for when the whole comes to be considered, this manner of life will be found impracticable.

We must suppose, then, that Socrates's mistake arose from the principle he set out with being false; we admit, indeed, that both a family and a city ought to be one in some particulars, but not entirely; for there is a point beyond which if a city proceeds in reducing itself to one, it will be no longer a city.

There is also another point at which it will still continue to be a city, but it will approach so near to not being one, that it will be worse than none; as if any one should reduce the voices of those who sing in concert to one, or a verse to a foot. But the people ought to be made one, and a community, as I have already said, by education; as property at Lacedaemon, and their public tables at Crete, were made common by their legislators. But yet, whosoever shall introduce any education, and think thereby to make his city excellent and respectable, will be absurd, while he expects to form it by such regulations, and not by manners, philosophy, and laws. And whoever [1264a] would establish a government upon a community of goods, ought to know that he should consult the experience of many years, which would plainly enough inform him whether such a scheme is useful; for almost all things have already been found out, but some have been neglected, and others which have been known have not been put in practice. But this would be most evident, if any one could see such a government really established: for it would be impossible to frame such a city without dividing and separating it into its distinct parts, as public tables, wards, and tribes; so that here the laws will do nothing more than forbid the military to engage in agriculture, which is what the Lacedaemonians are at present endeavouring to do.

Nor has Socrates told us (nor is it easy to say) what plan of government should be pursued with respect to the individuals in the state where there is a community of goods established; for though the majority of his citizens will in general consist of a multitude of persons of different occupations, of those he has determined nothing; whether the property of the husbandman ought to be in common, or whether each person should have his share to himself; and also, whether their wives and children ought to be in common: for if all things are to be alike common to all, where will be the difference between them and the military, or what would they get by submitting to their government? and upon what principles would they do it, unless they should establish the wise practice of the Cretans? for they, allowing everything else to their slaves, forbid them only gymnastic exercises and the use of arms. And if they are not, but these should be in the same situation with respect to their property which they are in other cities, what sort of a community will there be? in one city there must of necessity be two, and those contrary to each other; for he makes the military the guardians of the state, and the husbandman, artisans, and others, citizens; and all those quarrels, accusations, and things of the like sort, which he says are the bane of other cities, will be found in his also: notwithstanding Socrates says they will not want many laws in consequence of their education, but such only as may be necessary for regulating the streets, the markets, and the like, while at the same time it is the education of the military only that he has taken any care of. Besides, he makes the husbandmen masters of property upon paying a tribute; but this would be likely to make them far more troublesome and high-spirited than the Helots, the Penestise, or the slaves which others employ; nor has he ever determined whether it is necessary to give any attention to them in these particulars, nor thought of what is connected therewith, their polity, their education, their laws; besides, it is of no little consequence, nor is it easy to determine, how these should be framed so as to preserve the community of the military.

Besides, if he makes the wives common, while the property [1264b] continues separate, who shall manage the domestic concerns with the same care which the man bestows upon his fields? nor will the inconvenience be remedied by making property as well as wives common; and it is absurd to draw a comparison from the brute

creation, and say, that the same principle should regulate the connection of a man and a woman which regulates theirs amongst whom there is no family association.

It is also very hazardous to settle the magistracy as Socrates has done; for he would have persons of the same rank always in office, which becomes the cause of sedition even amongst those who are of no account, but more particularly amongst those who are of a courageous and warlike disposition; it is indeed evidently necessary that he should frame his community in this manner; for that golden particle which God has mixed up in the soul of man flies not from one to the other, but always continues with the same; for he says, that some of our species have gold, and others silver, blended in their composition from the moment of their birth: but those who are to be husbandmen and artists, brass and iron; besides, though he deprives the military of happiness, he says, that the legislator ought to make all the citizens happy; but it is impossible that the whole city can be happy, without all, or the greater, or some part of it be happy. For happiness is not like that numerical equality which arises from certain numbers when added together, although neither of them may separately contain it; for happiness cannot be thus added together, but must exist in every individual, as some properties belong to every integral; and if the military are not happy, who else are so? for the artisans are not, nor the multitude of those who are employed in inferior offices. The state which Socrates has described has all these defects, and others which are not of less consequence.

## CHAPTER VI

It is also nearly the same in the treatise upon Laws which was writ afterwards, for which reason it will be proper in this place to consider briefly what he has there said upon government, for Socrates has thoroughly settled but very few parts of it; as for instance, in what manner the community of wives and children ought to be regulated, how property should be established, and government conducted.

Now he divides the inhabitants into two parts, husbandmen and soldiers, and from these he select a third part who are to be senators and govern the city; but he has not said whether or no the husbandman and artificer shall have any or what share in the government, or whether they shall have arms, and join with the others in war, or not. He thinks also that the women ought to go to war, and have the same education as the soldiers; as to other particulars, he has filled his treatise with matter foreign to the purpose; and with respect to education, he has only said what that of the guards ought to be.

[1265a] As to his book of Laws, laws are the principal thing which that contains, for he has there said but little concerning government; and this government, which he was so desirous of framing in such a manner as to impart to its members a more entire community of goods than is to be found in other cities, he almost brings round again to be the same as that other government which he had first proposed; for except the community of wives and goods, he has framed both his governments alike, for the education of the citizens is to be the same in both; they are in both to live without any servile employ, and their common tables are to be the same, excepting that in that he says the women should have common tables, and that there should be a thousand men-at-arms, in this, that there should be five thousand.

All the discourses of Socrates are masterly, noble, new, and inquisitive; but that they are all true it may probably be too much to say. For now with respect to the number just spoken of, it must be acknowledged that he would want the country of Babylonia for them, or some one like it, of an immeasurable extent, to support five thousand idle persons, besides a much greater number of women and servants. Every one, it is true, may frame an hypothesis as he pleases, but yet it ought to be possible. It has been said, that a legislator should have two things in view when he frames his laws, the country and the people. He will also do well, if he has some regard to the neighbouring states, if he intends that his community should maintain any political intercourse with them, for it is not only necessary that they should understand that practice of war which is adapted to their own country, but to others also; for admitting that any one chooses not this life either in public or private, yet there is not the less occasion for their being formidable to their enemies, not only when they invade their country, but also when they retire out of it.

It may also be considered whether the quantity of each person's property may not be settled in a different manner from what he has done it in, by making it more determinate; for he says, that every one ought to have enough whereon to live moderately, as if any one had said to live well, which is the most comprehensive expression. Besides, a man may live moderately and miserably at the same time; he had therefore better have proposed, that they should live both moderately and liberally; for unless these two conspire, luxury will come in on the one hand, or wretchedness on the other, since these two modes of living are the only ones applicable to the employment of

our substance; for we cannot say with respect to a man's fortune, that he is mild or courageous, but we may say that he is prudent and liberal, which are the only qualities connected therewith.

It is also absurd to render property equal, and not to provide for the increasing number of the citizens; but to leave that circumstance uncertain, as if it would regulate itself according to the number of women who [1265b] should happen to be childless, let that be what it would because this seems to take place in other cities; but the case would not be the same in such a state which he proposes and those which now actually unite; for in these no one actually wants, as the property is divided amongst the whole community, be their numbers what they will; but as it could not then be divided, the supernumeraries, whether they were many or few, would have nothing at all. But it is more necessary than even to regulate property, to take care that the increase of the people should not exceed a certain number; and in determining that, to take into consideration those children who will die, and also those women who will be barren; and to neglect this, as is done in several cities, is to bring certain poverty on the citizens; and poverty is the cause of sedition and evil. Now Phidon the Corinthian, one of the oldest legislators, thought the families and the number of the citizens should continue the same; although it should happen that all should have allotments at the first, disproportionate to their numbers.

In Plato's Laws it is however different; we shall mention hereafter what we think would be best in these particulars. He has also neglected in that treatise to point out how the governors are to be distinguished from the governed; for he says, that as of one sort of wool the warp ought to be made, and of another the woof, so ought some to govern, and others to be governed. But since he admits, that all their property may be increased fivefold, why should he not allow the same increase to the country? he ought also to consider whether his allotment of the houses will be useful to the community, for he appoints two houses to each person, separate from each other; but it is inconvenient for a person to inhabit two houses. Now he is desirous to have his whole plan of government neither a democracy nor an oligarchy, but something between both, which he calls a polity, for it is to be composed of men-at-arms. If Plato intended to frame a state in which more than in any other everything should be common, he has certainly given it a right name; but if he intended it to be the next in perfection to that which he had already framed, it is not so; for perhaps some persons will give the preference to the Lacedaemonian form of government, or some other which may more completely have attained to the aristocratic form.

Some persons say, that the most perfect government should be composed of all others blended together, for which reason they commend that of Lacedaemon; for they say, that this is composed of an oligarchy, a monarchy, and a democracy, their kings representing the monarchical part, the senate the oligarchical; and, that in the ephori may be found the democratical, as these are taken from the people. But some say, that in the ephori is absolute power, and that it is their common meal and daily course of life, in which the democratical form is represented. It is also said in this treatise of [1266a] Laws, that the best form of government must, be one composed of a democracy and a tyranny; though such a mixture no one else would ever allow to be any government at all, or if it is, the worst possible; those propose what is much better who blend many governments together; for the most perfect is that which is formed of many parts. But now in this government of Plato's there are no traces of a monarchy, only of an oligarchy and democracy; though he seems to choose that it should rather incline to an oligarchy, as is evident from the appointment of the magistrates; for to choose them by lot is common to both; but that a man of fortune must necessarily be a member of the assembly, or to elect the magistrates, or take part in the management of public affairs, while others are passed over, makes the state incline to an oligarchy; as does the endeavouring that the greater part of the rich may be in office, and that the rank of their appointments may correspond with their fortunes.

The same principle prevails also in the choice of their senate; the manner of electing which is favourable also to an oligarchy; for all are obliged to vote for those who are senators of the first class, afterwards they vote for the same number out of the second, and then out of the third; but this compulsion to vote at the election of senators does not extend to the third and fourth classes and the first and second class only are obliged to vote for the fourth. By this means he says he shall necessarily have an equal number of each rank, but he is mistaken—for the majority will always consist of those of the first rank, and the most considerable people; and for this reason, that many of the commonalty not being obliged to it, will not attend the elections. From hence it is evident, that such a state will not consist of a democracy and a monarchy, and this will be further proved by what we shall say when we come particularly to consider this form of government.

There will also great danger arise from the manner of electing the senate, when those who are elected themselves are afterwards to elect others; for by this means, if a certain number choose to combine together, though not very considerable, the election will always fall according to their pleasure. Such are the things which Plato proposes concerning government in his book of Laws.

## CHAPTER VII

There are also some other forms of government, which have been proposed either by private persons, or philosophers, or politicians, all of which come much nearer to those which have been really established, or now exist, than these two of Plato's; for neither have they introduced the innovation of a community of wives and children, and public tables for the women, but have been contented to set out with establishing such rules as are absolutely necessary.

There are some persons who think, that the first object of government should be to regulate well everything relating to private property; for they say, that a neglect herein is the source of all seditions whatsoever. For this reason, Phaleas the Chalcedonian first proposed, that the fortunes of the citizens should be equal, which he thought was not difficult to accomplish when a community was first settled, but that it was a work of greater difficulty in one that had been long established; but yet that it might be effected, and an equality of circumstances introduced by these means, that the rich should give marriage portions, but never receive any, while the poor should always receive, but never give.

But Plato, in his treatise of Laws, thinks that a difference in circumstances should be permitted to a certain degree; but that no citizen should be allowed to possess more than five times as much as the lowest census, as we have already mentioned. But legislators who would establish this principle are apt to overlook what they ought to consider; that while they regulate the quantity of provisions which each individual shall possess, they ought also to regulate the number of his children; for if these exceed the allotted quantity of provision, the law must necessarily be repealed; and yet, in spite of the repeal, it will have the bad effect of reducing many from wealth to poverty, so difficult is it for innovators not to fall into such mistakes. That an equality of goods was in some degree serviceable to strengthen the bands of society, seems to have been known to some of the ancients; for Solon made a law, as did some others also, to restrain persons from possessing as much land as they pleased. And upon the same principle there are laws which forbid men to sell their property, as among the Locrians, unless they can prove that some notorious misfortune has befallen them. They were also to preserve their ancient patrimony, which custom being broken through by the Leucadians, made their government too democratic; for by that means it was no longer necessary to be possessed of a certain fortune to be qualified to be a magistrate. But if an equality of goods is established, this may be either too much, when it enables the people to live luxuriously, or too little, when it obliges them to live hard. Hence it is evident, that it is not proper for the legislator to establish an equality of circumstances, but to fix a proper medium. Besides, if any one should regulate the division of property in such a manner that there should be a moderate sufficiency for all, it would be of no use; for it is of more consequence that the citizen should entertain a similarity of sentiments than an equality of circumstances; but this can never be attained unless they are properly educated under the direction of the law. But probably Phaleas may say, that this is what he himself mentions; for he both proposes a equality of property and one plan of education in his city. But he should have said particularly what education he intended, nor is it of any service to have this to much one; for this education may be one, and yet such as will make the citizens over-greedy, to grasp after honours, or riches, or both. Besides, not only an inequality of possessions, but also of honours, will occasion [1267a] seditions, but this upon contrary grounds; for the vulgar will be seditious if there be an inequality of goods, by those of more elevated sentiments, if there is an equality of honours.

"When good and bad do equal honours share."

For men are not guilty of crimes for necessities only (for which he thinks an equality of goods would be a sufficient remedy, as they would then have no occasion to steal cold or hunger), but that they may enjoy what they desire, and not wish for it in vain; for if their desire extend beyond the common necessities of life, they were be wicked to gratify them; and not only so, but if their wishes point that way, they will do the same to enjoy those pleasures which are free from the alloy of pain. What remedy then shall we find for these three disorders. And first, to prevent stealing from necessity, let every one be supplied with a moderate subsistence, which may make the addition of his own industry necessary; second to prevent stealing to procure the luxuries of life, temperance be enjoined; and thirdly, let those who wish for pleasure in itself seek for it only in philosophy, all others want the assistance of men.

Since then men are guilty of the greatest crimes from ambition, and not from necessity, no one, for instance aims at being a tyrant to keep him from the cold, hence great honour is due to him who kills not a thief, but tyrant; so that polity which Phaleas establishes would only be salutary to prevent little crimes. He has also been very desirous to establish such rules as will conduce to perfect the internal policy of his state, and he ought also to have done the same with respect to its neighbours and all foreign nations; for the considerations of the military establishment should take place in planning every government, that it may not be unprovided in case of a war, of

which he has said nothing; so also with respect to property, it ought not only to be adapted to the exigencies of the state, but also to such dangers as may arise from without.

Thus it should not be so much as to tempt those who are near, and more powerful to invade it, while those who possess it are not able to drive out the invaders, nor so little as that the state should not be able to go to war with those who are quite equal to itself, and of this he has determined nothing; it must indeed be allowed that it is advantageous to a community to be rather rich than poor; probably the proper boundary is this, not to possess enough to make it worth while for a more powerful neighbour to attack you, any more than he would those who had not so much as yourself; thus when Autophradatus proposed to besiege Atarneus, Eubulus advised him to consider what time it would require to take the city, and then would have him determine whether it would answer, for that he should choose, if it would even take less than he proposed, to quit the place; his saying this made Autophradatus reflect upon the business and give over the siege. There is, indeed, some advantage in an equality of goods amongst the citizens to prevent seditions; and yet, to say truth, no very great one; for men of great abilities will stomach their being put upon a level with the rest of the community. For which reason they will very often appear ready for every commotion and sedition; for the wickedness of mankind is insatiable. For though at first two oboli might be sufficient, yet when once it is become customary, they continually want something more, until they set no limits to their expectations; for it is the nature of our desires to be boundless, and many live only to gratify them. But for this purpose the first object is, not so much to establish an equality of fortune, as to prevent those who are of a good disposition from desiring more than their own, and those who are of a bad one from being able to acquire it; and this may be done if they are kept in an inferior station, and not exposed to injustice. Nor has he treated well the equality of goods, for he has extended his regulation only to land; whereas a man's substance consists not only in this, but also in slaves, cattle, money, and all that variety of things which fall under the name of chattels; now there must be either an equality established in all these, or some certain rule, or they must be left entirely at large. It appears too by his laws, that he intends to establish only a small state, as all the artificers are to belong to the public, and add nothing to the complement of citizens; but if all those who are to be employed in public works are to be the slaves of the public, it should be done in the same manner as it is at Epidamnus, and as Diophantus formerly regulated it at Athens. From these particulars any one may nearly judge whether Phaleas's community is well or ill established.

## CHAPTER VIII

Hippodamus, the son of Euruphon a Milesian, contrived the art of laying out towns, and separated the Pireus. This man was in other respects too eager after notice, and seemed to many to live in a very affected manner, with his flowing locks and his expensive ornaments, and a coarse warm vest which he wore, not only in the winter, but also in the hot weather. As he was very desirous of the character of a universal scholar, he was the first who, not being actually engaged in the management of public affairs, sat himself to inquire what sort of government was best; and he planned a state, consisting of ten thousand persons, divided into three parts, one consisting of artisans, another of husbandmen, and the third of soldiers; he also divided the lands into three parts, and allotted one to sacred purposes, another to the public, and the third to individuals. The first of these was to supply what was necessary for the established worship of the gods; the second was to be allotted to the support of the soldiery; and the third was to be the property of the husbandman. He thought also that there need only be three sorts of laws, corresponding to the three sorts of actions which can be brought, namely, for assault, trespasses, or death. He ordered also that there should be a particular court of appeal, into which all causes might be removed which were supposed to have been unjustly determined elsewhere; which court should be composed of old men chosen for that purpose. He thought also [1268a] that they should not pass sentence by votes; but that every one should bring with him a tablet, on which he should write, that he found the party guilty, if it was so, but if not, he should bring a plain tablet; but if he acquitted him of one part of the indictment but not of the other, he should express that also on the tablet; for he disapproved of that general custom already established, as it obliges the judges to be guilty of perjury if they determined positively either on the one side or the other. He also made a law, that those should be rewarded who found out anything for the good of the city, and that the children of those who fell in battle should be educated at the public expense; which law had never been proposed by any other legislator, though it is at present in use at Athens as well as in other cities, he would have the magistrates chosen out of the people in general, by whom he meant the three parts before spoken of; and that those who were so elected should be the particular guardians of what belonged to the public, to strangers, and to orphans.

These are the principal parts and most worthy of notice in Hippodamus's plan. But some persons might doubt the propriety of his division of the citizens into three parts; for the artisans, the husbandmen, and the soldiers are to compose one community, where the husbandmen are to have no arms, and the artisans neither arms nor land, which would in a manner render them slaves to the soldiery. It is also impossible that the whole community should

partake of all the honourable employments in it—for the generals and the guardians of the state must necessarily be appointed out of the soldiery, and indeed the most honourable magistrates; but as the two other parts will not have their share in the government, how can they be expected to have any affection for it? But it is necessary that the soldiery should be superior to the other two parts, and this superiority will not be easily gained without they are very numerous; and if they are so, why should the community consist of any other members? why should any others have a right to elect the magistrates? Besides, of what use are the husbandmen to this community? Artisans, 'tis true, are necessary, for these every city wants, and they can live upon their business. If the husbandmen indeed furnished the soldiers with provisions, they would be properly part of the community; but these are supposed to have their private property, and to cultivate it for their own use. Moreover, if the soldiers themselves are to cultivate that common land which is appropriated for their support, there will be no distinction between the soldier and the husbandman, which the legislator intended there should be; and if there should be any others who are to cultivate the private property of the husbandman and the common lands of the military, there will be a fourth order in the state which will have no share in it, and always entertain hostile sentiments towards it. If any one should propose that the same persons should cultivate their own lands and the public ones also, then there would be a deficiency [1268b] of provisions to supply two families, as the lands would not immediately yield enough for themselves and the soldiers also; and all these things would occasion great confusion.

Nor do I approve of his method of determining causes, when he would have the judge split the case which comes simply before him; and thus, instead of being a judge, become an arbitrator. Now when any matter is brought to arbitration, it is customary for many persons to confer together upon the business that is before them; but when a cause is brought before judges it is not so; and many legislators take care that the judges shall not have it in their power to communicate their sentiments to each other. Besides, what can prevent confusion on the bench when one judge thinks a fine should be different from what another has set it at; one proposing twenty minae, another ten, or be it more or less, another four, and another five; and it is evident, that in this manner they will differ from each other, while some will give the whole damages sued for, and others nothing; in this situation, how shall their determinations be settled? Besides, a judge cannot be obliged to perjure himself who simply acquits or condemns, if the action is fairly and justly brought; for he who acquits the party does not say that he ought not to pay any fine at all, but that he ought not to pay a fine of twenty minae. But he that condemns him is guilty of perjury if he sentences him to pay twenty minae while he believes the damages ought not to be so much.

Now with respect to these honours which he proposes to bestow on those who can give any information useful to the community, this, though very pleasing in speculation, is what the legislator should not settle, for it would encourage informers, and probably occasion commotions in the state. And this proposal of his gives rise also to further conjectures and inquiries; for some persons have doubted whether it is useful or hurtful to alter the established law of any country, if even for the better; for which reason one cannot immediately determine upon what he here says, whether it is advantageous to alter the law or not. We know, indeed, that it is possible to propose to new model both the laws and government as a common good; and since we have mentioned this subject, it may be very proper to enter into a few particulars concerning it, for it contains some difficulties, as I have already said, and it may appear better to alter them, since it has been found useful in other sciences.

Thus the science of physic is extended beyond its ancient bounds; so is the gymnastic, and indeed all other arts and powers; so that one may lay it down for certain that the same thing will necessarily hold good in the art of government. And it may also be affirmed, that experience itself gives a proof of this; for the ancient laws are too simple and barbarous; which allowed the Greeks to wear swords in the city, and to buy their wives of each [1269a]. other. And indeed all the remains of old laws which we have are very simple; for instance, a law in Cuma relative to murder. If any person who prosecutes another for murder can produce a certain number of witnesses to it of his own relations, the accused person shall be held guilty. Upon the whole, all persons ought to endeavour to follow what is right, and not what is established; and it is probable that the first men, whether they sprung out of the earth, or were saved from some general calamity, had very little understanding or knowledge, as is affirmed of these aborigines; so that it would be absurd to continue in the practice of their rules. Nor is it, moreover, right to permit written laws always to remain without alteration; for as in all other sciences, so in politics, it is impossible to express everything in writing with perfect exactness; for when we commit anything to writing we must use general terms, but in every action there is something particular to itself, which these may not comprehend; from whence it is evident, that certain laws will at certain times admit of alterations. But if we consider this matter in another point of view, it will appear to require great caution; for when the advantage proposed is trifling, as the accustoming the people easily to abolish their laws is of bad consequence, it is evidently better to pass over some faults which either the legislator or the magistrates may have committed; for the alterations will not be of so much service as a habit of disobeying the magistrates will be of disservice. Besides, the instance brought from the arts is fallacious; for it is not the same thing to alter the one as the other. For a law derives all its strength from custom, and this requires long time to establish; so that, to make it an easy matter to pass from the established laws to other new

ones, is to weaken the power of laws. Besides, here is another question; if the laws are to be altered, are they all to be altered, and in every government or not, and whether at the pleasure of one person or many? all which particulars will make a great difference; for which reason we will at present drop the inquiry, to pursue it at some other time.

## CHAPTER IX

There are two considerations which offer themselves with respect to the government established at Lacedaemon and Crete, and indeed in almost all other states whatsoever; one is whether their laws do or do not promote the best establishment possible? the other is whether there is anything, if we consider either the principles upon which it is founded or the executive part of it, which prevents the form of government that they had proposed to follow from being observed; now it is allowed that in every well-regulated state the members of it should be free from servile labour; but in what manner this shall be effected is not so easy to determine; for the Penestse have very often attacked the Thessalians, and the Helots the Lacedaemonians, for they in a manner continually watch an opportunity for some misfortune befalling them. But no such thing has ever happened to the Cretans; the [1269b] reason for which probably is, that although they are engaged in frequent wars with the neighbouring cities, yet none of these would enter into an alliance with the revolters, as it would be disadvantageous for them, who themselves also have their villains. But now there is perpetual enmity between the Lacedaemonians and all their neighbours, the Argives, the Messenians, and the Arcadians. Their slaves also first revolted from the Thessalians while they were engaged in wars with their neighbours the Acheans, the Perrabeans, and the Magnesians. It seems to me indeed, if nothing else, yet something very troublesome to keep upon proper terms with them; for if you are remiss in your discipline they grow insolent, and think themselves upon an equality with their masters; and if they are hardly used they are continually plotting against you and hate you. It is evident, then, that those who employ slaves have not as yet hit upon the right way of managing them.

As to the indulging of women in any particular liberties, it is hurtful to the end of government and the prosperity of the city; for as a man and his wife are the two parts of a family, if we suppose a city to be divided into two parts, we must allow that the number of men and women will be equal.

In whatever city then the women are not under good regulations, we must look upon one half of it as not under the restraint of law, as it there happened; for the legislator, desiring to make his whole city a collection of warriors with respect to the men, he most evidently accomplished his design; but in the meantime the women were quite neglected, for they live without restraint in every improper indulgence and luxury. So that in such a state riches will necessarily be in general esteem, particularly if the men are governed by their wives, which has been the case with many a brave and warlike people except the Celts, and those other nations, if there are any such, who openly practise pederasty. And the first mythologists seem not improperly to have joined Mars and Venus together; for all nations of this character are greatly addicted either to the love of women or of boys, for which reason it was thus at Lacedaemon; and many things in their state were done by the authority of the women. For what is the difference, if the power is in the hands of the women, or in the hands of those whom they themselves govern? it must turn to the same account. As this boldness of the women can be of no use in any common occurrences, if it was ever so, it must be in war; but even here we find that the Lacedaemonian women were of the greatest disservice, as was proved at the time of the Theban invasion, when they were of no use at all, as they are in other cities, but made more disturbance than even the enemy.

The origin of this indulgence which the Lacedaemonian women enjoy is easily accounted for, from the long time the men were absent from home upon foreign expeditions [1270a] against the Argives, and afterwards the Arcadians and Messenians, so that, when these wars were at an end, their military life, in which there is no little virtue, prepared them to obey the precepts of their law-giver; but we are told, that when Lycurgus endeavoured also to reduce the women to an obedience to his laws, upon their refusal he declined it. It may indeed be said that the women were the causes of these things, and of course all the fault was theirs. But we are not now considering where the fault lies, or where it does not lie, but what is right and what is wrong; and when the manners of the women are not well regulated, as I have already said, it must not only occasion faults which are disgraceful to the state, but also increase the love of money. In the next place, fault may be found with his unequal division of property, for some will have far too much, others too little; by which means the land will come into few hands, which business is badly regulated by his laws. For he made it infamous for any one either to buy or sell their possessions, in which he did right; but he permitted any one that chose it to give them away, or bequeath them, although nearly the same consequences will arise from one practice as from the other. It is supposed that near two parts in five of the whole country is the property of women, owing to their being so often sole heirs, and having such large fortunes in marriage; though it would be better to allow them none, or a little, or a certain

regulated proportion. Now every one is permitted to make a woman his heir if he pleases; and if he dies intestate, he who succeeds as heir at law gives it to whom he pleases. From whence it happens that although the country is able to support fifteen hundred horse and thirty thousand foot, the number does not amount to one thousand.

And from these facts it is evident, that this particular is badly regulated; for the city could not support one shock, but was ruined for want of men. They say, that during the reigns of their ancient kings they used to present foreigners with the freedom of their city, to prevent there being a want of men while they carried on long wars; it is also affirmed that the number of Spartans was formerly ten thousand; but be that as it will, an equality of property conduces much to increase the number of the people. The law, too, which he made to encourage population was by no means calculated to correct this inequality; for being willing that the Spartans should be as numerous as [1270b] possible, to make them desirous of having large families he ordered that he who had three children should be excused the night-watch, and that he who had four should pay no taxes: though it is very evident, that while the land was divided in this manner, that if the people increased there must many of them be very poor.

Nor was he less blamable for the manner in which he constituted the ephori; for these magistrates take cognisance of things of the last importance, and yet they are chosen out of the people in general; so that it often happens that a very poor person is elected to that office, who, from that circumstance, is easily bought. There have been many instances of this formerly, as well as in the late affair at Andros. And these men, being corrupted with money, went as far as they could to ruin the city: and, because their power was too great and nearly tyrannical, their kings were obliged to natter them, which contributed greatly to hurt the state; so that it altered from an aristocracy to a democracy. This magistracy is indeed the great support of the state; for the people are easy, knowing that they are eligible to the first office in it; so that, whether it took place by the intention of the legislator, or whether it happened by chance, this is of great service to their affairs; for it is necessary that every member of the state should endeavour that each part of the government should be preserved, and continue the same. And upon this principle their kings have always acted, out of regard to their honour; the wise and good from their attachment to the senate, a seat wherein they consider as the reward of virtue; and the common people, that they may support the ephori, of whom they consist. And it is proper that these magistrates should be chosen out of the whole community, not as the custom is at present, which is very ridiculous. The ephori are the supreme judges in causes of the last consequence; but as it is quite accidental what sort of persons they may be, it is not right that they should determine according to their own opinion, but by a written law or established custom. Their way of life also is not consistent with the manners of the city, for it is too indulgent; whereas that of others is too severe; so that they cannot support it, but are obliged privately to act contrary to law, that they may enjoy some of the pleasures of sense. There are also great defects in the institution of their senators. If indeed they were fitly trained to the practice of every human virtue, every one would readily admit that they would be useful to the government; but still it might be debated whether they should be continued judges for life, to determine points of the greatest moment, since the mind has its old age as well as the body; but as they are so brought up, [1271a] that even the legislator could not depend upon them as good men, their power must be inconsistent with the safety of the state: for it is known that the members of that body have been guilty both of bribery and partiality in many public affairs; for which reason it had been much better if they had been made answerable for their conduct, which they are not. But it may be said the ephori seem to have a check upon all the magistrates. They have indeed in this particular very great power; but I affirm that they should not be entrusted with this control in the manner they are. Moreover, the mode of choice which they make use of at the election of their senators is very childish. Nor is it right for any one to solicit for a place he is desirous of; for every person, whether he chooses it or not, ought to execute any office he is fit for. But his intention was evidently the same in this as in the other parts of his government. For making his citizens ambitious after honours, with men of that disposition he has filled his senate, since no others will solicit for that office; and yet the principal part of those crimes which men are deliberately guilty of arise from ambition and avarice.

We will inquire at another time whether the office of a king is useful to the state: thus much is certain, that they should be chosen from a consideration of their conduct and not as they are now. But that the legislator himself did not expect to make all his citizens honourable and completely virtuous is evident from this, that he distrusts them as not being good men; for he sent those upon the same embassy that were at variance with each other; and thought, that in the dispute of the kings the safety of the state consisted. Neither were their common meals at first well established: for these should rather have been provided at the public expense, as at Crete, where, as at Lacedaemon, every one was obliged to buy his portion, although he might be very poor, and could by no means bear the expense, by which means the contrary happened to what the legislator desired: for he intended that those public meals should strengthen the democratic part of his government: but this regulation had quite the contrary effect, for those who were very poor could not take part in them; and it was an observation of their forefathers, that the not allowing those who could not contribute their proportion to the common tables to partake of them, would be the ruin of the state. Other persons have censured his laws concerning naval affairs, and not

without reason, as it gave rise to disputes. For the commander of the fleet is in a manner set up in opposition to the kings, who are generals of the army for life.

[1271b] There is also another defect in his laws worthy of censure, which Plato has given in his book of Laws; that the whole constitution was calculated only for the business of war: it is indeed excellent to make them conquerors; for which reason the preservation of the state depended thereon. The destruction of it commenced with their victories: for they knew not how to be idle, or engage in any other employment than war. In this particular also they were mistaken, that though they rightly thought, that those things which are the objects of contention amongst mankind are better procured by virtue than vice, yet they wrongfully preferred the things themselves to virtue. Nor was the public revenue well managed at Sparta, for the state was worth nothing while they were obliged to carry on the most extensive wars, and the subsidies were very badly raised; for as the Spartans possessed a large extent of country, they were not exact upon each other as to what they paid in. And thus an event contrary to the legislator's intention took place; for the state was poor, the individuals avaricious. Enough of the Lacedaemonian government; for these seem the chief defects in it.

## CHAPTER X

The government of Crete bears a near resemblance to this, in some few particulars it is not worse, but in general it is far inferior in its contrivance. For it appears and is allowed in many particulars the constitution of Lacedaemon was formed in imitation of that of Crete; and in general most new things are an improvement upon the old. For they say, that when Lycurgus ceased to be guardian to King Charilles he went abroad and spent a long time with his relations in Crete, for the Lycians are a colony of the Lacedaemonians; and those who first settled there adopted that body of laws which they found already established by the inhabitants; in like manner also those who now live near them have the very laws which Minos first drew up.

This island seems formed by nature to be the mistress of Greece, for it is entirely surrounded by a navigable ocean which washes almost all the maritime parts of that country, and is not far distant on the one side from Peloponnesus, on the other, which looks towards Asia, from Triopium and Rhodes. By means of this situation Minos acquired the empire of the sea and the islands; some of which he subdued, in others planted colonies: at last he died at Camicus while he was attacking Sicily. There is this analogy between the customs of the Lacedaemonians and the Cretans, the Helots cultivate the grounds [1272a] for the one, the domestic slaves for the other. Both states have their common meals, and the Lacedaemonians called these formerly not *psiditia* but *andpia*, as the Cretans do; which proves from whence the custom arose. In this particular their governments are also alike: the ephori have the same power with those of Crete, who are called *kosmoi*; with this difference only, that the number of the one is five, of the other ten. The senators are the same as those whom the Cretans call the council. There was formerly also a kingly power in Crete; but it was afterwards dissolved, and the command of their armies was given to the *kosmoi*. Every one also has a vote in their public assembly; but this has only the power of confirming what has already passed the council and the *kosmoi*.

The Cretans conducted their public meals better than the Lacedaemonians, for at Lacedaemon each individual was obliged to furnish what was assessed upon him; which if he could not do, there was a law which deprived him of the rights of a citizen, as has been already mentioned: but in Crete they were furnished by the community; for all the corn and cattle, taxes and contributions, which the domestic slaves were obliged to furnish, were divided into parts and allotted to the gods, the exigencies of the state, and these public meals; so that all the men, women, and children were maintained from a common stock. The legislator gave great attention to encourage a habit of eating sparingly, as very useful to the citizens. He also endeavoured, that his community might not be too populous, to lessen the connection with women, by introducing the love of boys: whether in this he did well or ill we shall have some other opportunity of considering. But that the public meals were better ordered at Crete than at Lacedaemon is very evident.

The institution of the *kosmoi*, was still worse than that of the ephori: for it contained all the faults incident to that magistracy and some peculiar to itself; for in both cases it is uncertain who will be elected: but the Lacedaemonians have this advantage which the others have not, that as all are eligible, the whole community have a share in the highest honours, and therefore all desire to preserve the state: whereas among the Cretans the *kosmoi* are not chosen out of the people in general, but out of some certain families, and the senate out of the *kosmoi*. And the same observations which may be made on the senate at Lacedaemon may be applied to these; for their being under no control, and their continuing for life, is an honour greater than they merit; and to have their proceedings not regulated by a written law, but left to their own discretion, is dangerous. (As to there being no insurrections, although the people share not in the management of public affairs, this is no proof of a well-

constituted government, as the *kosmoi* have no opportunity of being bribed like the ephori, as they live in an [1272b] island far from those who would corrupt them.) But the method they take to correct that fault is absurd, impolitic, and tyrannical: for very often either their fellow-magistrates or some private persons conspire together and turn out the *kosmoi*. They are also permitted to resign their office before their time is elapsed, and if all this was done by law it would be well, and not at the pleasure of the individuals, which is a bad rule to follow. But what is worst of all is, that general confusion which those who are in power introduce to impede the ordinary course of justice; which sufficiently shows what is the nature of the government, or rather lawless force: for it is usual with the principal persons amongst them to collect together some of the common people and their friends, and then revolt and set up for themselves, and come to blows with each other. And what is the difference, if a state is dissolved at once by such violent means, or if it gradually so alters in process of time as to be no longer the same constitution? A state like this would ever be exposed to the invasions of those who were powerful and inclined to attack it; but, as has been already mentioned, its situation preserves it, as it is free from the inroads of foreigners; and for this reason the family slaves still remain quiet at Crete, while the Helots are perpetually revolting: for the Cretans take no part in foreign affairs, and it is but lately that any foreign troops have made an attack upon the island; and their ravages soon proved the ineffectualness of their laws. And thus much for the government of Crete.

## CHAPTER XI

The government of Carthage seems well established, and in many respects superior to others; in some particulars it bears a near resemblance to the Lacedaemonians; and indeed these three states, the Cretans, the Lacedaemonians and the Carthaginians are in some things very like each other, in others they differ greatly. Amongst many excellent constitutions this may show how well their government is framed, that although the people are admitted to a share in the administration, the form of it remains unaltered, without any popular insurrections, worth notice, on the one hand, or degenerating into a tyranny on the other. Now the Carthaginians have these things in common with the Lacedaemonians: public tables for those who are connected together by the tie of mutual friendship, after the manner of their Phiditia; they have also a magistracy, consisting of an hundred and four persons, similar to the ephori, or rather selected with more judgment; for amongst the Lacedaemonians, all the citizens are eligible, but amongst the Carthaginians, they are chosen out of those of the better sort: there is also some analogy between the king and the senate in both these governments, though the Carthaginian method of appointing their kings is best, for they do not confine themselves to one family; nor do they permit the election to be at large, nor have they any regard to seniority; for if amongst the candidates there are any of greater merit than the rest, these they prefer to those who may be older; for as their power is very extensive, if they are [1273a] persons of no account, they may be very hurtful to the state, as they have always been to the Lacedaemonians; also the greater part of those things which become reprehensible by their excess are common to all those governments which we have described.

Now of those principles on which the Carthaginians have established their mixed form of government, composed of an aristocracy and democracy, some incline to produce a democracy, others an oligarchy: for instance, if the kings and the senate are unanimous upon any point in debate, they can choose whether they will bring it before the people or no; but if they disagree, it is to these they must appeal, who are not only to hear what has been approved of by the senate, but are finally to determine upon it; and whosoever chooses it, has a right to speak against any matter whatsoever that may be proposed, which is not permitted in other cases. The five, who elect each other, have very great and extensive powers; and these choose the hundred, who are magistrates of the highest rank: their power also continues longer than any other magistrates, for it commences before they come into office, and is prolonged after they are out of it; and in this particular the state inclines to an oligarchy: but as they are not elected by lot, but by suffrage, and are not permitted to take money, they are the greatest supporters imaginable of an aristocracy.

The determining all causes by the same magistrates, and not orae in one court and another in another, as at Lacedaemon, has the same influence. The constitution of Carthage is now shifting from an aristocracy to an oligarchy, in consequence of an opinion which is favourably entertained by many, who think that the magistrates in the community ought not to be persons of family only, but of fortune also; as it is impossible for those who are in bad circumstances to support the dignity of their office, or to be at leisure to apply to public business. As choosing men of fortune to be magistrates make a state incline to an oligarchy, and men of abilities to an aristocracy, so is there a third method of proceeding which took place in the polity of Carthage; for they have an eye to these two particulars when they elect their officers, particularly those of the highest rank, their kings and their generals. It must be admitted, that it was a great fault in their legislator not to guard against the constitution's degenerating from an aristocracy; for this is a most necessary thing to provide for at first, that those citizens who

have the best abilities should never be obliged to do anything unworthy their character, but be always at leisure to serve the public, not only when in office, but also when private persons; for if once you are obliged to look among the wealthy, that you may have men at leisure to serve you, your greatest offices, of king and general, will soon become venal; in consequence of which, riches will be more honourable than virtue and a love of money be the ruling principle in the city-for what those who have the chief power regard as honourable will necessarily be the object which the [1273b] citizens in general will aim at; and where the first honours are not paid to virtue, there the aristocratic form of government cannot flourish: for it is reasonable to conclude, that those who bought their places should generally make an advantage of what they laid out their money for; as it is absurd to suppose, that if a man of probity who is poor should be desirous of gaining something, a bad man should not endeavour to do the same, especially to reimburse himself; for which reason the magistracy should be formed of those who are most able to support an aristocracy. It would have been better for the legislature to have passed over the poverty of men of merit, and only to have taken care to have ensured them sufficient leisure, when in office, to attend to public affairs.

It seems also improper, that one person should execute several offices, which was approved of at Carthage; for one business is best done by one person; and it is the duty of the legislator to look to this, and not make the same person a musician and a shoemaker: so that where the state is not small it is more politic and more popular to admit many persons to have a share in the government; for, as I just now said, it is not only more usual, but everything is better and sooner done, when one thing only is allotted to one person: and this is evident both in the army and navy, where almost every one, in his turn, both commands and is under command. But as their government inclines to an oligarchy, they avoid the ill effects of it by always appointing some of the popular party to the government of cities to make their fortunes. Thus they consult this fault in their constitution and render it stable; but this is depending on chance; whereas the legislator ought to frame his government, that there be no room for insurrections. But now, if there should be any general calamity, and the people should revolt from their rulers, there is no remedy for reducing them to obedience by the laws. And these are the particulars of the Lacedaemonian, the Cretan, and the Carthaginian governments which seem worthy of commendation.

## CHAPTER XII

Some of those persons who have written upon government had never any share in public affairs, but always led a private life. Everything worthy of notice in their works we have already spoke to. Others were legislators, some in their own cities, others were employed in regulating the governments of foreign states. Some of them only composed a body of laws; others formed the constitution also, as Lycurgus; and Solon, who did both. The Lacedaemonians have been already mentioned. Some persons think that Solon was an excellent legislator, who could dissolve a pure oligarchy, and save the people from that slavery which hung over them, and establish the ancient democratic form of government in his country; wherein every part of it was so framed as to be well adapted to the whole. In the senate of Areopagus an oligarchy was preserved; by the manner of electing their [1274a] magistrates, an aristocracy; and in their courts of justice, a democracy.

Solon seems not to have altered the established form of government, either with respect to the senate or the mode of electing their magistrates; but to have raised the people to great consideration in the state by allotting the supreme judicial department to them; and for this some persons blame him, as having done what would soon overturn that balance of power he intended to establish; for by trying all causes whatsoever before the people, who were chosen by lot to determine them, it was necessary to flatter a tyrannical populace who had got this power; which contributed to bring the government to that pure democracy it now is.

Both Ephialtes and Pericles abridged the power of the Areopagites, the latter of whom introduced the method of paying those who attended the courts of justice: and thus every one who aimed at being popular proceeded increasing the power of the people to what we now see it. But it is evident that this was not Solon's intention, but that it arose from accident; for the people being the cause of the naval victory over the Medes, assumed greatly upon it, and enlisted themselves under factious demagogues, although opposed by the better part of the citizens. He thought it indeed most necessary to entrust the people with the choice of their magistrates and the power of calling them to account; for without that they must have been slaves and enemies to the other citizens: but he ordered them to elect those only who were persons of good account and property, either out of those who were worth five hundred medimns, or those who were called xeugitai, or those of the third census, who were called horsemen.

As for those of the fourth, which consisted of mechanics, they were incapable of any office. Zaleucus was the legislator of the Western Locrians, as was Charondas, the Catanean, of his own cities, and those also in Italy and

Sicily which belonged to the Calcidians. Some persons endeavour to prove that Onomacritus, the Locrian, was the first person of note who drew up laws; and that he employed himself in that business while he was at Crete, where he continued some time to learn the prophetic art: and they say, that Thales was his companion; and that Lycurgus and Zaleucus were the scholars of Thales, and Charondas of Zaleucus; but those who advance this, advance what is repugnant to chronology. Philolaus also, of the family of the Bacchiades, was a Theban legislator. This man was very fond of Diocles, a victor in the Olympic games, and when he left his country from a disgust at an improper passion which his mother Alithoe had entertained for him, and settled at Thebes, Philolaus followed him, where they both died, and where they still show their tombs placed in view of each other, but so disposed, that one of them looks towards Corinth, the other does not; the reason they give for this is, that Diodes, from his detestation of his mother's passion, would have his tomb so placed that no one could see Corinth from it; but Philolaus chose that it might be seen from his: and this was the cause of their living at Thebes. [1274b]

As Philolaus gave them laws concerning many other things, so did he upon adoption, which they call adoptive laws; and this he in particular did to preserve the number of families. Charondas did nothing new, except in actions for perjury, which he was the first person who took into particular consideration. He also drew up his laws with greater elegance and accuracy than even any of our present legislators. Philolaus introduced the law for the equal distribution of goods; Plato that for the community of women, children, and goods, and also for public tables for the women; and one concerning drunkenness, that they might observe sobriety in their symposiums. He also made a law concerning their warlike exercises; that they should acquire a habit of using both hands alike, as it was necessary that one hand should be as useful as the other.

As for Draco's laws, they were published when the government was already established, and they have nothing particular in them worth mentioning, except their severity on account of the enormity of their punishments. Pittacus was the author of some laws, but never drew up any form of government; one of which was this, that if a drunken man beat any person he should be punished more than if he did it when sober; for as people are more apt to be abusive when drunk than sober, he paid no consideration to the excuse which drunkenness might claim, but regarded only the common benefit. Andromadas Regmus was also a lawgiver to the Thracian Calcidians. There are some laws of his concerning murders and heiresses extant, but these contain nothing that any one can say is new and his own. And thus much for different sorts of governments, as well those which really exist as those which different persons have proposed.

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## ARISTOTLE: POLITICS (BOOK 3)

### CHAPTER I

Every one who inquires into the nature of government, and what are its different forms, should make this almost his first question, What is a city? For upon this there is a dispute: for some persons say the city did this or that, while others say, not the city, but the oligarchy, or the tyranny. We see that the city is the only object which both the politician and legislator have in view in all they do: but government is a certain ordering of those who inhabit a city. As a city is a collective body, and, like other wholes, composed of many parts, it is evident our first inquiry must be, what a citizen is: for a city is a certain number of citizens. So that we must consider whom we ought to call citizen, and who is one; for this is often doubtful: for every one will not allow that this character is applicable to the same person; for that man who would be a citizen in a republic would very often not be one in an oligarchy. We do not include in this inquiry many of those who acquire this appellation out of the ordinary way, as honorary persons, for instance, but those only who have a natural right to it.

Now it is not residence which constitutes a man a citizen; for in this sojourners and slaves are upon an equality with him; nor will it be sufficient for this purpose, that you have the privilege of the laws, and may plead or be impleaded, for this all those of different nations, between whom there is a mutual agreement for that purpose, are allowed; although it very often happens, that sojourners have not a perfect right therein without the protection of a patron, to whom they are obliged to apply, which shows that their share in the community is incomplete. In like

manner, with respect to boys who are not yet enrolled, or old men who are past war, we admit that they are in some respects citizens, but not completely so, but with some exceptions, for these are not yet arrived to years of maturity, and those are past service; nor is there any difference between them. But what we mean is sufficiently intelligible and clear, we want a complete citizen, one in whom there is no deficiency to be corrected to make him so. As to those who are banished, or infamous, there may be the same objections made and the same answer given. There is nothing that more characterises a complete citizen than having a share in the judicial and executive part of the government.

With respect to offices, some are fixed to a particular time, so that no person is, on any account, permitted to fill them twice; or else not till some certain period has intervened; others are not fixed, as a juryman's, and a member of the general assembly: but probably some one may say these are not offices, nor have the citizens in these capacities any share in the government; though surely it is ridiculous to say that those who have the principal power in the state bear no office in it. But this objection is of no weight, for it is only a dispute about words; as there is no general term which can be applied both to the office of a juryman and a member of the assembly. For the sake of distinction, suppose we call it an indeterminate office: but I lay it down as a maxim, that those are citizens who could exercise it. Such then is the description of a citizen who comes nearest to what all those who are called citizens are. Every one also should know, that of the component parts of those things which differ from each other in species, after the first or second remove, those which follow have either nothing at all or very little common to each.

Now we see that governments differ from each other in their form, and that some of them are defective, others [1275b] as excellent as possible: for it is evident, that those which have many deficiencies and degeneracies in them must be far inferior to those which are without such faults. What I mean by degeneracies will be hereafter explained. Hence it is clear that the office of a citizen must differ as governments do from each other: for which reason he who is called a citizen has, in a democracy, every privilege which that station supposes. In other forms of government he may enjoy them; but not necessarily: for in some states the people have no power; nor have they any general assembly, but a few select men.

The trial also of different causes is allotted to different persons; as at Lacedaemon all disputes concerning contracts are brought before some of the ephori: the senate are the judges in cases of murder, and so on; some being to be heard by one magistrate, others by another: and thus at Carthage certain magistrates determine all causes. But our former description of a citizen will admit of correction; for in some governments the office of a juryman and a member of the general assembly is not an indeterminate one; but there are particular persons appointed for these purposes, some or all of the citizens being appointed jurymen or members of the general assembly, and this either for all causes and all public business whatsoever, or else for some particular one: and this may be sufficient to show what a citizen is; for he who has a right to a share in the judicial and executive part of government in any city, him we call a citizen of that place; and a city, in one word, is a collective body of such persons sufficient in themselves to all the purposes of life

## CHAPTER II

In common use they define a citizen to be one who is sprung from citizens on both sides, not on the father's or the mother's only. Others carry the matter still further, and inquire how many of his ancestors have been citizens, as his grandfather, great-grandfather, etc., but some persons have questioned how the first of the family could prove themselves citizens, according to this popular and careless definition. Gorgias of Leontium, partly entertaining the same doubt, and partly in jest, says, that as a mortar is made by a mortar-maker, so a citizen is made by a citizen-maker, and a Larisssean by a Larisssean-maker. This is indeed a very simple account of the matter; for if citizens are so, according to this definition, it will be impossible to apply it to the first founders or first inhabitants of states, who cannot possibly claim in right either of their father or mother. It is probably a matter of still more difficulty to determine their rights as citizens who are admitted to their freedom after any revolution in the state. As, for instance, at Athens, after the expulsion of the tyrants, when Clisthenes enrolled many foreigners and city-slaves amongst the tribes; and the doubt with respect to them was, not whether they were citizens or no, but whether they were legally so or not. Though indeed some persons may have this further [1276a] doubt, whether a citizen can be a citizen when he is illegally made; as if an illegal citizen, and one who is no citizen at all, were in the same predicament: but since we see some persons govern unjustly, whom yet we admit to govern, though not justly, and the definition of a citizen is one who exercises certain offices, for such a one we have defined a citizen to be, it is evident, that a citizen illegally created yet continues to be a citizen, but whether justly or unjustly so belongs to the former inquiry.

## CHAPTER III

It has also been doubted what was and what was not the act of the city; as, for instance, when a democracy arises out of an aristocracy or a tyranny; for some persons then refuse to fulfil their contracts; as if the right to receive the money was in the tyrant and not in the state, and many other things of the same nature; as if any covenant was founded for violence and not for the common good. So in like manner, if anything is done by those who have the management of public affairs where a democracy is established, their actions are to be considered as the actions of the state, as well as in the oligarchy or tyranny.

And here it seems very proper to consider this question, When shall we say that a city is the same, and when shall we say that it is different?

It is but a superficial mode of examining into this question to begin with the place and the people; for it may happen that these may be divided from that, or that some one of them may live in one place, and some in another (but this question may be regarded as no very knotty one; for, as a city may acquire that appellation on many accounts, it may be solved many ways); and in like manner, when men inhabit one common place, when shall we say that they inhabit the same city, or that the city is the same? for it does not depend upon the walls; for I can suppose Peloponnesus itself surrounded with a wall, as Babylon was, and every other place, which rather encircles many nations than one city, and that they say was taken three days when some of the inhabitants knew nothing of it: but we shall find a proper time to determine this question; for the extent of a city, how large it should be, and whether it should consist of more than one people, these are particulars that the politician should by no means be unacquainted with. This, too, is a matter of inquiry, whether we shall say that a city is the same while it is inhabited by the same race of men, though some of them are perpetually dying, others coming into the world, as we say that a river or a fountain is the same, though the waters are continually changing; or when a revolution takes place shall we [1276b] say the men are the same, but the city is different: for if a city is a community, it is a community of citizens; but if the mode of government should alter, and become of another sort, it would seem a necessary consequence that the city is not the same; as we regard the tragic chorus as different from the comic, though it may probably consist of the same performers: thus every other community or composition is said to be different if the species of composition is different; as in music the same hands produce different harmony, as the Doric and Phrygian. If this is true, it is evident, that when we speak of a city as being the same we refer to the government there established; and this, whether it is called by the same name or any other, or inhabited by the same men or different. But whether or no it is right to dissolve the community when the constitution is altered is another question.

## CHAPTER IV

What has been said, it follows that we should consider whether the same virtues which constitute a good man make a valuable citizen, or different; and if a particular inquiry is necessary for this matter we must first give a general description of the virtues of a good citizen; for as a sailor is one of those who make up a community, so is a citizen, although the province of one sailor may be different from another's (for one is a rower, another a steersman, a third a boatswain, and so on, each having their several appointments), it is evident that the most accurate description of any one good sailor must refer to his peculiar abilities, yet there are some things in which the same description may be applied to the whole crew, as the safety of the ship is the common business of all of them, for this is the general centre of all their cares: so also with respect to citizens, although they may in a few particulars be very different, yet there is one care common to them all, the safety of the community, for the community of the citizens composes the state; for which reason the virtue of a citizen has necessarily a reference to the state. But if there are different sorts of governments, it is evident that those actions which constitute the virtue of an excellent citizen in one community will not constitute it in another; wherefore the virtue of such a one cannot be perfect: but we say, a man is good when his virtues are perfect; from whence it follows, that an excellent citizen does not possess that virtue which constitutes a good man. Those who are any ways doubtful concerning this question may be convinced of the truth of it by examining into the best formed states: for, if it is impossible that a city should consist entirely of excellent citizens (while it is necessary that every one should do well in his calling, in which consists his excellence, as it is impossible that all the citizens should have the same [1277a] qualifications) it is impossible that the virtue of a citizen and a good man should be the same; for all should possess the virtue of an excellent citizen: for from hence necessarily arise the perfection of the city: but that every one should possess the virtue of a good man is impossible without all the citizens in a well-regulated state were necessarily virtuous. Besides, as a city is composed of dissimilar parts, as an animal is of life and body; the soul of reason and appetite; a family of a man and his wife—property of a master and a slave; in the

same manner, as a city is composed of all these and many other very different parts, it necessarily follows that the virtue of all the citizens cannot be the same; as the business of him who leads the band is different from the other dancers. From all which proofs it is evident that the virtues of a citizen cannot be one and the same. But do we never find those virtues united which constitute a good man and excellent citizen? for we say, such a one is an excellent magistrate and a prudent and good man; but prudence is a necessary qualification for all those who engage in public affairs. Nay, some persons affirm that the education of those who are intended to command should, from the beginning, be different from other citizens, as the children of kings are generally instructed in riding and warlike exercises; and thus Euripides says:

"... No showy arts Be mine, but teach me what the state requires."

As if those who are to rule were to have an education peculiar to themselves. But if we allow, that the virtues of a good man and a good magistrate may be the same, and a citizen is one who obeys the magistrate, it follows that the virtue of the one cannot in general be the same as the virtue of the other, although it may be true of some particular citizen; for the virtue of the magistrate must be different from the virtue of the citizen. For which reason Jason declared that was he deprived of his kingdom he should pine away with regret, as not knowing how to live a private man. But it is a great commendation to know how to command as well as to obey; and to do both these things well is the virtue of an accomplished citizen. If then the virtue of a good man consists only in being able to command, but the virtue of a good citizen renders him equally fit for the one as well as the other, the commendation of both of them is not the same. It appears, then, that both he who commands and he who obeys should each of them learn their separate business: but that the citizen should be master of and take part in both these, as any one may easily perceive; in a family government there is no occasion for the master to know how to perform the necessary offices, but rather to enjoy the labour of others; for to do the other is a servile part. I mean by the other, the common family business of the slave.

There are many sorts of slaves; for their employments are various: of these the handicraftsmen are one, who, as their name imports, get their living by the labour of their hands, and amongst these all mechanics are included; [1277b] for which reasons such workmen, in some states, were not formerly admitted into any share in the government; till at length democracies were established: it is not therefore proper for any man of honour, or any citizen, or any one who engages in public affairs, to learn these servile employments without they have occasion for them for their own use; for without this was observed the distinction between a master and a slave would be lost. But there is a government of another sort, in which men govern those who are their equals in rank, and freemen, which we call a political government, in which men learn to command by first submitting to obey, as a good general of horse, or a commander-in-chief, must acquire a knowledge of their duty by having been long under the command of another, and the like in every appointment in the army: for well is it said, no one knows how to command who has not himself been under command of another. The virtues of those are indeed different, but a good citizen must necessarily be endowed with them; he ought also to know in what manner freemen ought to govern, as well as be governed: and this, too, is the duty of a good man. And if the temperance and justice of him who commands is different from his who, though a freeman, is under command, it is evident that the virtues of a good citizen cannot be the same as justice, for instance but must be of a different species in these two different situations, as the temperance and courage of a man and a woman are different from each other; for a man would appear a coward who had only that courage which would be graceful in a woman, and a woman would be thought a talker who should take as large a part in the conversation as would become a man of consequence.

The domestic employments of each of them are also different; it is the man's business to acquire subsistence, the woman's to take care of it. But direction and knowledge of public affairs is a virtue peculiar to those who govern, while all others seem to be equally requisite for both parties; but with this the governed have no concern, it is theirs to entertain just notions: they indeed are like flute-makers, while those who govern are the musicians who play on them. And thus much to show whether the virtue of a good man and an excellent citizen is the same, or if it is different, and also how far it is the same, and how far different.

## CHAPTER V

But with respect to citizens there is a doubt remaining, whether those only are truly so who are allowed to share in the government, or whether the mechanics also are to be considered as such? for if those who are not permitted to rule are to be reckoned among them, it is impossible that the virtue of all the citizens should be the same, for these also are citizens; and if none of them are admitted to be citizens, where shall they be ranked? for they are neither [1278a] sojourners nor foreigners? or shall we say that there will no inconvenience arise from their not being citizens, as they are neither slaves nor freedmen: for this is certainly true, that all those are not citizens who

are necessary to the existence of a city, as boys are not citizens in the same manner that men are, for those are perfectly so, the others under some conditions; for they are citizens, though imperfect ones: for in former times among some people the mechanics were either slaves or foreigners, for which reason many of them are so now: and indeed the best regulated states will not permit a mechanic to be a citizen; but if it be allowed them, we cannot then attribute the virtue we have described to every citizen or freeman, but to those only who are disengaged from servile offices. Now those who are employed by one person in them are slaves; those who do them for money are mechanics and hired servants: hence it is evident on the least reflection what is their situation, for what I have said is fully explained by appearances. Since the number of communities is very great, it follows necessarily that there will be many different sorts of citizens, particularly of those who are governed by others, so that in one state it may be necessary to admit mechanics and hired servants to be citizens, but in others it may be impossible; as particularly in an aristocracy, where honours are bestowed on virtue and dignity: for it is impossible for one who lives the life of a mechanic or hired servant to acquire the practice of virtue. In an oligarchy also hired servants are not admitted to be citizens; because there a man's right to bear any office is regulated by his fortune; but mechanics are, for many citizens are very rich.

There was a law at Thebes that no one could have a share in the government till he had been ten years out of trade. In many states the law invites strangers to accept the freedom of the city; and in some democracies the son of a free-woman is himself free. The same is also observed in many others with respect to natural children; but it is through want of citizens regularly born that they admit such: for these laws are always made in consequence of a scarcity of inhabitants; so, as their numbers increase, they first deprive the children of a male or female slave of this privilege, next the child of a free-woman, and last of all they will admit none but those whose fathers and mothers were both free.

That there are many sorts of citizens, and that he may be said to be as completely who shares the honours of the state, is evident from what has been already said. Thus Achilles, in Homer, complains of Agamemnon's treating him like an unhonoured stranger; for a stranger or sojourner is one who does not partake of the honours of the state: and whenever the right to the freedom of the city is kept obscure, it is for the sake of the inhabitants. [1278b] From what has been said it is plain whether the virtue of a good man and an excellent citizen is the same or different: and we find that in some states it is the same, in others not; and also that this is not true of each citizen, but of those only who take the lead, or are capable of taking the lead, in public affairs, either alone or in conjunction with others.

## CHAPTER VI

Having established these points, we proceed next to consider whether one form of government only should be established, or more than one; and if more, how many, and of what sort, and what are the differences between them. The form of government is the ordering and regulating of the city, and all the offices in it, particularly those wherein the supreme power is lodged; and this power is always possessed by the administration; but the administration itself is that particular form of government which is established in any state: thus in a democracy the supreme power is lodged in the whole people; on the contrary, in an oligarchy it is in the hands of a few. We say then, that the form of government in these states is different, and we shall find the same thing hold good in others. Let us first determine for whose sake a city is established; and point out the different species of rule which man may submit to in social life.

I have already mentioned in my treatise on the management of a family, and the power of the master, that man is an animal naturally formed for society, and that therefore, when he does not want any foreign assistance, he will of his own accord desire to live with others; not but that mutual advantage induces them to it, as far as it enables each person to live more agreeably; and this is indeed the great object not only to all in general, but also to each individual: but it is not merely matter of choice, but they join in society also, even that they may be able to live, which probably is not without some share of merit, and they also support civil society, even for the sake of preserving life, without they are grievously overwhelmed with the miseries of it: for it is very evident that men will endure many calamities for the sake of living, as being something naturally sweet and desirable. It is easy to point out the different modes of government, and we have already settled them in our exoteric discourses. The power of the master, though by nature equally serviceable, both to the master and to the slave, yet nevertheless has for its object the benefit of the master, while the benefit of the slave arises accidentally; for if the slave is destroyed, the power of the master is at an end: but the authority which a man has over his wife, and children, and his family, which we call domestic government, is either for the benefit of those who are under subjection, or else for the common benefit of the whole: but its particular object is the benefit of the governed, as we see in other arts; in physic, for instance, and the gymnastic exercises, wherein, if any benefit [1279a] arise to the master, it is

accidental; for nothing forbids the master of the exercises from sometimes being himself one of those who exercises, as the steersman is always one of the sailors; but both the master of the exercises and the steersman consider the good of those who are under their government. Whatever good may happen to the steersman when he is a sailor, or to the master of the exercises when he himself makes one at the games, is not intentional, or the object of their power; thus in all political governments which are established to preserve and defend the equality of the citizens it is held right to rule by turns. Formerly, as was natural, every one expected that each of his fellow-citizens should in his turn serve the public, and thus administer to his private good, as he himself when in office had done for others; but now every one is desirous of being continually in power, that he may enjoy the advantage which he makes of public business and being in office; as if places were a never-failing remedy for every complaint, and were on that account so eagerly sought after.

It is evident, then, that all those governments which have a common good in view are rightly established and strictly just, but those who have in view only the good of the rulers are all founded on wrong principles, and are widely different from what a government ought to be, for they are tyranny over slaves, whereas a city is a community of freemen.

## CHAPTER VII

Having established these particulars, we come to consider next the different number of governments which there are, and what they are; and first, what are their excellencies: for when we have determined this, their defects will be evident enough.

It is evident that every form of government or administration, for the words are of the same import, must contain a supreme power over the whole state, and this supreme power must necessarily be in the hands of one person, or a few, or many; and when either of these apply their power for the common good, such states are well governed; but when the interest of the one, the few, or the many who enjoy this power is alone consulted, then ill; for you must either affirm that those who make up the community are not citizens, or else let these share in the advantages of government. We usually call a state which is governed by one person for the common good, a kingdom; one that is governed by more than one, but by a few only, an aristocracy; either because the government is in the hands of the most worthy citizens, or because it is the best form for the city and its inhabitants. When the citizens at large govern for the public good, it is called a state; which is also a common name for all other governments, and these distinctions are consonant to reason; for it will not be difficult to find one person, or a very few, of very distinguished abilities, but almost impossible to meet with the majority [1279b] of a people eminent for every virtue; but if there is one common to a whole nation it is valour; for this is created and supported by numbers: for which reason in such a state the profession of arms will always have the greatest share in the government.

Now the corruptions attending each of these governments are these; a kingdom may degenerate into a tyranny, an aristocracy into an oligarchy, and a state into a democracy. Now a tyranny is a monarchy where the good of one man only is the object of government, an oligarchy considers only the rich, and a democracy only the poor; but neither of them have a common good in view.

## CHAPTER VIII

It will be necessary to enlarge a little more upon the nature of each of these states, which is not without some difficulty, for he who would enter into a philosophical inquiry into the principles of them, and not content himself with a superficial view of their outward conduct, must pass over and omit nothing, but explain the true spirit of each of them. A tyranny then is, as has been said, a monarchy, where one person has an absolute and despotic power over the whole community and every member therein: an oligarchy, where the supreme power of the state is lodged with the rich: a democracy, on the contrary, is where those have it who are worth little or nothing. But the first difficulty that arises from the distinctions which we have laid down is this, should it happen that the majority of the inhabitants who possess the power of the state (for this is a democracy) should be rich, the question is, how does this agree with what we have said? The same difficulty occurs, should it ever happen that the poor compose a smaller part of the people than the rich, but from their superior abilities acquire the supreme power; for this is what they call an oligarchy; it should seem then that our definition of the different states was not correct: nay, moreover, could any one suppose that the majority of the people were poor, and the minority rich, and then describe the state in this manner, that an oligarchy was a government in which the rich, being few in number, possessed the supreme power, and that a democracy was a state in which the poor, being many in

number, possessed it, still there will be another difficulty; for what name shall we give to those states we have been describing? I mean, that in which the greater number are rich, and that in which the lesser number are poor (where each of these possess the supreme power), if there are no other states than those we have described. It seems therefore evident to reason, that whether the supreme power is vested in the hands of many or few may be a matter of accident; but that it is clear enough, that when it is in the hands of the few, it will be a government of the rich; when in the hands of the many, it will be a government of the poor; since in all countries there are many poor and few rich: it is not therefore the cause that has been already assigned (namely, the number of people in power) that makes the difference between the two governments; but an oligarchy and democracy differ in this from each other, in the poverty of those who govern in the one, and the riches of those who govern in the other; for when the government is in the hands of the rich, be they few or be they more, it is an oligarchy; when it is in the hands of the poor, it is a democracy: but, as we have already said, the one will be always few, the other numerous, but both will enjoy liberty; and from the claims of wealth and liberty will arise continual disputes with each other for the lead in public affairs.

## CHAPTER IX

Let us first determine what are the proper limits of an oligarchy and a democracy, and what is just in each of these states; for all men have some natural inclination to justice; but they proceed therein only to a certain degree; nor can they universally point out what is absolutely just; as, for instance, what is equal appears just, and is so; but not to all; only among those who are equals: and what is unequal appears just, and is so; but not to all, only amongst those who are unequals; which circumstance some people neglect, and therefore judge ill; the reason for which is, they judge for themselves, and every one almost is the worst judge in his own cause. Since then justice has reference to persons, the same distinctions must be made with respect to persons which are made with respect to things, in the manner that I have already described in my Ethics.

As to the equality of the things, these they agree in; but their dispute is concerning the equality of the persons, and chiefly for the reason above assigned; because they judge ill in their own cause; and also because each party thinks, that if they admit what is right in some particulars, they have done justice on the whole: thus, for instance, if some persons are unequal in riches, they suppose them unequal in the whole; or, on the contrary, if they are equal in liberty, they suppose them equal in the whole: but what is absolutely just they omit; for if civil society was founded for the sake of preserving and increasing property, every one's right in the city would be equal to his fortune; and then the reasoning of those who insist upon an oligarchy would be valid; for it would not be right that he who contributed one mina should have an equal share in the hundred along with him who brought in all the rest, either of the original money or what was afterwards acquired.

Nor was civil society founded merely to preserve the lives of its members; but that they might live well: for otherwise a state might be composed of slaves, or the animal creation: but this is not so; for these have no share in the happiness of it; nor do they live after their own choice; nor is it an alliance mutually to defend each other from injuries, or for a commercial intercourse: for then the Tyrrhenians and Carthaginians, and all other nations between whom treaties of commerce subsist, would be citizens of one city; for they have articles to regulate their exports and imports, and engagements for mutual protection, and alliances for mutual defence; but [1280b] yet they have not all the same magistrates established among them, but they are different among the different people; nor does the one take any care, that the morals of the other should be as they ought, or that none of those who have entered into the common agreements should be unjust, or in any degree vicious, only that they do not injure any member of the confederacy. But whosoever endeavours to establish wholesome laws in a state, attends to the virtues and the vices of each individual who composes it; from whence it is evident, that the first care of him who would found a city, truly deserving that name, and not nominally so, must be to have his citizens virtuous; for otherwise it is merely an alliance for self-defence; differing from those of the same cast which are made between different people only in place: for law is an agreement and a pledge, as the sophist Lycophron says, between the citizens of their intending to do justice to each other, though not sufficient to make all the citizens just and good: and that this is fact is evident, for could any one bring different places together, as, for instance, enclose Megara and Corinth in a wall, yet they would not be one city, not even if the inhabitants intermarried with each other, though this inter-community contributes much to make a place one city. Besides, could we suppose a set of people to live separate from each other, but within such a distance as would admit of an intercourse, and that there were laws subsisting between each party, to prevent their injuring one another in their mutual dealings, supposing one a carpenter, another a husbandman, shoemaker, and the like, and that their numbers were ten thousand, still all that they would have together in common would be a tariff for trade, or an alliance for mutual defence, but not the same city. And why? not because their mutual intercourse is not near enough, for even if persons so situated should come to one place, and every one should live in his own house as

in his native city, and there should be alliances subsisting between each party to mutually assist and prevent any injury being done to the other, still they would not be admitted to be a city by those who think correctly, if they preserved the same customs when they were together as when they were separate.

It is evident, then, that a city is not a community of place; nor established for the sake of mutual safety or traffic with each other; but that these things are the necessary consequences of a city, although they may all exist where there is no city: but a city is a society of people joining together with their families and their children to live agreeably for the sake of having their lives as happy and as independent as possible: and for this purpose it is necessary that they should live in one place and intermarry with each other: hence in all cities there are family-meetings, clubs, sacrifices, and public entertainments to promote friendship; for a love of sociability is friendship itself; so that the end then for which a city is established is, that the inhabitants of it may live happy, and these things are conducive to that end: for it is a community of families and villages for the sake of a perfect independent life; that is, as we have already said, for the sake of living well and happily. It is not therefore founded for the purpose of men's merely [1281a] living together, but for their living as men ought; for which reason those who contribute most to this end deserve to have greater power in the city than those who are their equals in family and freedom, but their inferiors in civil virtue, or those who excel them in wealth but are below them in worth. It is evident from what has been said, that in all disputes upon government each party says something that is just.

## CHAPTER X

It may also be a doubt where the supreme power ought to be lodged. Shall it be with the majority, or the wealthy, with a number of proper persons, or one better than the rest, or with a tyrant? But whichever of these we prefer some difficulty will arise. For what? shall the poor have it because they are the majority? they may then divide among themselves, what belongs to the rich: nor is this unjust; because truly it has been so judged by the supreme power. But what avails it to point out what is the height of injustice if this is not? Again, if the many seize into their own hands everything which belongs to the few, it is evident that the city will be at an end. But virtue will never destroy what is virtuous; nor can what is right be the ruin of the state: therefore such a law can never be right, nor can the acts of a tyrant ever be wrong, for of necessity they must all be just; for he, from his unlimited power, compels every one to obey his command, as the multitude oppress the rich. Is it right then that the rich, the few, should have the supreme power? and what if they be guilty of the same rapine and plunder the possessions of the majority, that will be as right as the other: but that all things of this sort are wrong and unjust is evident. Well then, these of the better sort shall have it: but must not then all the other citizens live unhonoured, without sharing the offices of the city; for the offices of a city are its honours, and if one set of men are always in power, it is evident that the rest must be without honour. Well then, let it be with one person of all others the fittest for it: but by this means the power will be still more contracted, and a greater number than before continue unhonoured. But some one may say, that it is wrong to let man have the supreme power and not the law, as his soul is subject to so many passions. But if this law appoints an aristocracy, or a democracy, how will it help us in our present doubts? for those things will happen which we have already mentioned.

## CHAPTER XI

Other particulars we will consider separately; but it seems proper to prove, that the supreme power ought to be lodged with the many, rather than with those of the better sort, who are few; and also to explain what doubts (and probably just ones) may arise: now, though not one individual of the many may himself be fit for the supreme power, yet when these many are joined together, it does not follow but they may be better qualified for it than those; and this not separately, but as a collective body; as the public suppers exceed those which are given at one person's private expense: for, as they are many, each person brings in his share of virtue and wisdom; and thus, coming together, they are like one man made up of a multitude, with many feet, many hands, and many intelligences: thus is it with respect to the manners and understandings of the multitude taken together; for which reason the public are the best judges of music and poetry; for some understand one part, some another, and all collectively the whole; and in this particular men of consequence differ from each of the many; as they say those who are beautiful do from those who are not so, and as fine pictures excel any natural objects, by collecting the several beautiful parts which were dispersed among different originals into one, although the separate parts, as the eye or any other, might be handsomer than in the picture.

But if this distinction is to be made between every people and every general assembly, and some few men of consequence, it may be doubtful whether it is true; nay, it is clear enough that, with respect to a few, it is not; since the same conclusion might be applied even to brutes: and indeed wherein do some men differ from brutes?

Not but that nothing prevents what I have said being true of the people in some states. The doubt then which we have lately proposed, with all its consequences, may be settled in this manner; it is necessary that the freemen who compose the bulk of the people should have absolute power in some things; but as they are neither men of property, nor act uniformly upon principles of virtue, it is not safe to trust them with the first offices in the state, both on account of their iniquity and their ignorance; from the one of which they will do what is wrong, from the other they will mistake: and yet it is dangerous to allow them no power or share in the government; for when there are many poor people who are incapable of acquiring the honours of their country, the state must necessarily have many enemies in it; let them then be permitted to vote in the public assemblies and to determine causes; for which reason Socrates, and some other legislators, gave them the power of electing the officers of the state, and also of inquiring into their conduct when they came out of office, and only prevented their being magistrates by themselves; for the multitude when they are collected together have all of them sufficient understanding for these purposes, and, mixing among those of higher rank, are serviceable to the city, as some things, which alone are improper for food, when mixed with others make the whole more wholesome than a few of them would be.

But there is a difficulty attending this form of government, for it seems, that the person who himself was capable of curing any one who was then sick, must be the best judge whom to employ as a physician; but such a one must be himself a physician; and the same holds true in every other practice and art: and as a physician ought [1282a] to give an account of his practice to a physician, so ought it to be in other arts: those whose business is physic may be divided into three sorts, the first of these is he who makes up the medicines; the second prescribes, and is to the other as the architect is to the mason; the third is he who understands the science, but never practises it: now these three distinctions may be found in those who understand all other arts; nor have we less opinion of their judgment who are only instructed in the principles of the art than of those who practise it: and with respect to elections the same method of proceeding seems right; for to elect a proper person in any science is the business of those who are skilful therein; as in geometry, of geometricians; in steering, of steersmen: but if some individuals should know something of particular arts and works, they do not know more than the professors of them: so that even upon this principle neither the election of magistrates, nor the censure of their conduct, should be entrusted to the many.

But probably all that has been here said may not be right; for, to resume the argument I lately used, if the people are not very brutal indeed, although we allow that each individual knows less of these affairs than those who have given particular attention to them, yet when they come together they will know them better, or at least not worse; besides, in some particular arts it is not the workman only who is the best judge; namely, in those the works of which are understood by those who do not profess them: thus he who builds a house is not the only judge of it, for the master of the family who inhabits it is a better; thus also a steersman is a better judge of a tiller than he who made it; and he who gives an entertainment than the cook. What has been said seems a sufficient solution of this difficulty; but there is another that follows: for it seems absurd that the power of the state should be lodged with those who are but of indifferent morals, instead of those who are of excellent characters. Now the power of election and censure are of the utmost consequence, and this, as has been said, in some states they entrust to the people; for the general assembly is the supreme court of all, and they have a voice in this, and deliberate in all public affairs, and try all causes, without any objection to the meanness of their circumstances, and at any age: but their treasurers, generals, and other great officers of state are taken from men of great fortune and worth. This difficulty also may be solved upon the same principle; and here too they may be right, for the power is not in the man who is member of the assembly, or council, but the assembly itself, and the council, and the people, of which each individual of the whole community are the parts, I mean as senator, adviser, or judge; for which reason it is very right, that the many should have the greatest powers in their own hands; for the people, the council, and the judges are composed of them, and the property of all these collectively is more than the property of any person or a few who fill the great offices of the state: and thus I determine these points.

The first question that we stated shows plainly, that the supreme power should be lodged in laws duly made and that the magistrate or magistrates, either one or more, should be authorised to determine those cases which the laws cannot particularly speak to, as it is impossible for them, in general language, to explain themselves upon everything that may arise: but what these laws are which are established upon the best foundations has not been yet explained, but still remains a matter of some question: but the laws of every state will necessarily be like every state, either trifling or excellent, just or unjust; for it is evident, that the laws must be framed correspondent to the constitution of the government; and, if so, it is plain, that a well-formed government will have good laws, a bad one, bad ones.

## CHAPTER XII

Since in every art and science the end aimed at is always good, so particularly in this, which is the most excellent of all, the founding of civil society, the good wherein aimed at is justice; for it is this which is for the benefit of all. Now, it is the common opinion, that justice is a certain equality; and in this point all the philosophers are agreed when they treat of morals: for they say what is just, and to whom; and that equals ought to receive equal: but we should know how we are to determine what things are equal and what unequal; and in this there is some difficulty, which calls for the philosophy of the politician. Some persons will probably say, that the employments of the state ought to be given according to every particular excellence of each citizen, if there is no other difference between them and the rest of the community, but they are in every respect else alike: for justice attributes different things to persons differing from each other in their character, according to their respective merits. But if this is admitted to be true, complexion, or height, or any such advantage will be a claim for a greater share of the public rights. But that this is evidently absurd is clear from other arts and sciences; for with respect to musicians who play on the flute together, the best flute is not given to him who is of the best family, for he will play never the better for that, but the best instrument ought to be given to him who is the best artist.

If what is now said does not make this clear, we will explain it still further: if there should be any one, a very excellent player on the flute, but very deficient in family and beauty, though each of them are more valuable endowments than a skill in music, and excel this art in a higher degree than that player excels others, yet the best flutes ought to be given to him; for the superiority [1283a] in beauty and fortune should have a reference to the business in hand; but these have none. Moreover, according to this reasoning, every possible excellence might come in comparison with every other; for if bodily strength might dispute the point with riches or liberty, even any bodily strength might do it; so that if one person excelled in size more than another did in virtue, and his size was to qualify him to take place of the other's virtue, everything must then admit of a comparison with each other; for if such a size is greater than virtue by so much, it is evident another must be equal to it: but, since this is impossible, it is plain that it would be contrary to common sense to dispute a right to any office in the state from every superiority whatsoever: for if one person is slow and the other swift, neither is the one better qualified nor the other worse on that account, though in the gymnastic races a difference in these particulars would gain the prize; but a pretension to the offices of the state should be founded on a superiority in those qualifications which are useful to it: for which reason those of family, independency, and fortune, with great propriety, contend with each other for them; for these are the fit persons to fill them: for a city can no more consist of all poor men than it can of all slaves. But if such persons are requisite, it is evident that those also who are just and valiant are equally so; for without justice and valour no state can be supported, the former being necessary for its existence, the latter for its happiness.

## CHAPTER XIII

It seems, then, requisite for the establishment of a state, that all, or at least many of these particulars should be well canvassed and inquired into; and that virtue and education may most justly claim the right of being considered as the necessary means of making the citizens happy, as we have already said. As those who are equal in one particular are not therefore equal in all, and those who are unequal in one particular are not therefore unequal in all, it follows that all those governments which are established upon a principle which supposes they are, are erroneous.

We have already said, that all the members of the community will dispute with each other for the offices of the state; and in some particulars justly, but not so in general; the rich, for instance, because they have the greatest landed property, and the ultimate right to the soil is vested in the community; and also because their fidelity is in general most to be depended on. The freemen and men of family will dispute the point with each other, as nearly on an equality; for these latter have a right to a higher regard as citizens than obscure persons, for honourable descent is everywhere of great esteem: nor is it an improper conclusion, that the descendants of men of worth will be men of worth themselves; for noble birth is the fountain of virtue to men of family: for the same reason also we justly say, that virtue has a right to put in her pretensions. Justice, for instance, is a virtue, and so necessary to society, that all others must yield her the precedence.

Let us now see what the many have to urge on their side against the few; and they may say, that if, when collectively taken, they are compared with them, they are stronger, richer, and better than they are. But should it ever happen that all these should inhabit the [1283b] same city, I mean the good, the rich, the noble, as well as the many, such as usually make up the community, I ask, will there then be any reason to dispute concerning who

shall govern, or will there not? for in every community which we have mentioned there is no dispute where the supreme power should be placed; for as these differ from each other, so do those in whom that is placed; for in one state the rich enjoy it, in others the meritorious, and thus each according to their separate manners. Let us however consider what is to be done when all these happen at the same time to inhabit the same city. If the virtuous should be very few in number, how then shall we act? shall we prefer the virtuous on account of their abilities, if they are capable of governing the city? or should they be so many as almost entirely to compose the state?

There is also a doubt concerning the pretensions of all those who claim the honours of government: for those who found them either on fortune or family have nothing which they can justly say in their defence; since it is evident upon their principle, that if any one person can be found richer than all the rest, the right of governing all these will be justly vested in this one person. In the same manner, one man who is of the best family will claim it from those who dispute the point upon family merit: and probably in an aristocracy the same dispute might arise on the score of virtue, if there is one man better than all the other men of worth who are in the same community; it seems just, by the same reasoning, that he should enjoy the supreme power. And upon this principle also, while the many suppose they ought to have the supreme command, as being more powerful than the few, if one or more than one, though a small number should be found stronger than themselves, these ought rather to have it than they.

All these things seem to make it plain, that none of these principles are justly founded on which these persons would establish their right to the supreme power; and that all men whatsoever ought to obey them: for with respect to those who claim it as due to their virtue or their fortune, they might have justly some objection to make; for nothing hinders but that it may sometimes happen, that the many may be better or richer than the few, not as individuals, but in their collective capacity.

As to the doubt which some persons have proposed and objected, we may answer it in this manner; it is this, whether a legislator, who would establish the most perfect system of laws, should calculate them for the use of the better part of the citizens, or the many, in the circumstances we have already mentioned? The rectitude of anything consists in its equality; that therefore which is equally right will be advantageous to the whole state, and to every member of it in common.

Now, in general, a citizen is one who both shares in the government and also in his turn submits to be governed; [1284a] their condition, it is true, is different in different states: the best is that in which a man is enabled to choose and to persevere in a course of virtue during his whole life, both in his public and private state. But should there be one person, or a very few, eminent for an uncommon degree of virtue, though not enough to make up a civil state, so that the virtue of the many, or their political abilities, should be too inferior to come in comparison with theirs, if more than one; or if but one, with his only; such are not to be considered as part of the city; for it would be doing them injustice to rate them on a level with those who are so far their inferiors in virtue and political abilities, that they appear to them like a god amongst men. From whence it is evident, that a system of laws must be calculated for those who are equal to each other in nature and power. Such men, therefore, are not the object of law; for they are themselves a law: and it would be ridiculous in any one to endeavour to include them in the penalties of a law: for probably they might say what Antisthenes tells us the lions did to the hares when they demanded to be admitted to an equal share with them in the government. And it is on this account that democratic states have established the ostracism; for an equality seems the principal object of their government. For which reason they compel all those who are very eminent for their power, their fortune, their friendships, or any other cause which may give them too great weight in the government, to submit to the ostracism, and leave the city for a stated time; as the fabulous histories relate the Argonauts served Hercules, for they refused to take him with them in the ship Argo on account of his superior valour. For which reason those who hate a tyranny and find fault with the advice which Periander gave to Thrasybulus, must not think there was nothing to be said in its defence; for the story goes, that Periander said nothing to the messenger in answer to the business he was consulted about, but striking off those ears of corn which were higher than the rest, reduced the whole crop to a level; so that the messenger, without knowing the cause of what was done, related the fact to Thrasybulus, who understood by it that he must take off all the principal men in the city. Nor is this serviceable to tyrants only; nor is it tyrants only who do it; for the same thing is practised both in oligarchies and democracies: for the ostracism has in a manner nearly the same power, by restraining and banishing those who are too great; and what is done in one city is done also by those who have the supreme power in separate states; as the Athenians with respect to the Samians, the Chians, and the Lesbians; for when they suddenly acquired the superiority over all Greece, they brought the other states into subjection, contrary to the treaties which subsisted between them. The King of Persia also very often reduces the Medes and Babylonians when they assume upon their former power: [1284b] and this is a principle which all governments whatsoever keep in their eye; even those which are best administered, as well as those which are not, do it; these for the sake of private utility, the others for the public good.

The same thing is to be perceived in the other arts and sciences; for a painter would not represent an animal with a foot disproportionately large, though he had drawn it remarkably beautiful; nor would the shipwright make the prow or any other part of the vessel larger than it ought to be; nor will the master of the band permit any who sings louder and better than the rest to sing in concert with them. There is therefore no reason that a monarch should not act in agreement with free states, to support his own power, if they do the same thing for the benefit of their respective communities; upon which account when there is any acknowledged difference in the power of the citizens, the reason upon which the ostracism is founded will be politically just; but it is better for the legislator so to establish his state at the beginning as not to want this remedy: but if in course of time such an inconvenience should arise, to endeavour to amend it by some such correction. Not that this was the use it was put to: for many did not regard the benefit of their respective communities, but made the ostracism a weapon in the hand of sedition.

It is evident, then, that in corrupt governments it is partly just and useful to the individual, though probably it is as clear that it is not entirely just: for in a well-governed state there may be great doubts about the use of it, not on account of the pre-eminence which one may have in strength, riches, or connection: but when the pre-eminence is virtue, what then is to be done? for it seems not right to turn out and banish such a one; neither does it seem right to govern him, for that would be like desiring to share the power with Jupiter and to govern him: nothing then remains but what indeed seems natural, and that is for all persons quietly to submit to the government of those who are thus eminently virtuous, and let them be perpetually kings in the separate states.

## CHAPTER XIV

What has been now said, it seems proper to change our subject and to inquire into the nature of monarchies; for we have already admitted them to be one of those species of government which are properly founded. And here let us consider whether a kingly government is proper for a city or a country whose principal object is the happiness of the inhabitants, or rather some other. But let us first determine whether this is of one kind only, or more; [1285a] and it is easy to know that it consists of many different species, and that the forms of government are not the same in all: for at Sparta the kingly power seems chiefly regulated by the laws; for it is not supreme in all circumstances; but when the king quits the territories of the state he is their general in war; and all religious affairs are entrusted to him: indeed the kingly power with them is chiefly that of a general who cannot be called to an account for his conduct, and whose command is for life: for he has not the power of life and death, except as a general; as they frequently had in their expeditions by martial law, which we learn from Homer; for when Agamemnon is affronted in council, he restrains his resentment, but when he is in the field and armed with this power, he tells the Greeks:

"Whoe'er I know shall shun th' impending fight,  
To dogs and vultures soon shall be a prey; For death is mine...."

This, then, is one species of monarchical government in which the kingly power is in a general for life; and is sometimes hereditary, sometimes elective: besides, there is also another, which is to be met with among some of the barbarians, in which the kings are invested with powers nearly equal to a tyranny, yet are, in some respects, bound by the laws and the customs of their country; for as the barbarians are by nature more prone to slavery than the Greeks, and those in Asia more than those in Europe, they endure without murmuring a despotic government; for this reason their governments are tyrannies; but yet not liable to be overthrown, as being customary and according to law. Their guards also are such as are used in a kingly government, not a despotic one; for the guards of their kings are his citizens, but a tyrant's are foreigners. The one commands, in the manner the law directs, those who willingly obey; the other, arbitrarily, those who consent not. The one, therefore, is guarded by the citizens, the other against them.

These, then, are the two different sorts of these monarchies, and another is that which in ancient Greece they called *aesumnetes*; which is nothing more than an elective tyranny; and its difference from that which is to be found amongst the barbarians consists not in its not being according to law, but only in its not being according to the ancient customs of the country. Some persons possessed this power for life, others only for a particular time or particular purpose, as the people of Mitylene elected Pittacus to oppose the exiles, who were headed by Antimenides and Alcaeus the poet, as we learn from a poem of his; for he upbraids the Mitylenians for having chosen Pittacus for their tyrant, and with one [1285b] voice extolling him to the skies who was the ruin of a rash and devoted people. These sorts of government then are, and ever were, despotic, on account of their being tyrannies; but inasmuch as they are elective, and over a free people, they are also kingly.

A fourth species of kingly government is that which was in use in the heroic times, when a free people submitted to a kingly government, according to the laws and customs of their country. For those who were at first of benefit to mankind, either in arts or arms, or by collecting them into civil society, or procuring them an establishment, became the kings of a willing people, and established an hereditary monarchy. They were particularly their generals in war, and presided over their sacrifices, excepting such only as belonged to the priests: they were also the supreme judges over the people; and in this case some of them took an oath, others did not; they did, the form of swearing was by their sceptre held out.

In ancient times the power of the kings extended to everything whatsoever, both civil, domestic, and foreign; but in after-times they relinquished some of their privileges, and others the people assumed, so that, in some states, they left their kings only the right of presiding over the sacrifices; and even those whom it were worth while to call by that name had only the right of being commander-in-chief in their foreign wars.

These, then, are the four sorts of kingdoms: the first is that of the heroic times; which was a government over a free people, with its rights in some particulars marked out; for the king was their general, their judge, and their high priest. The second, that of the barbarians; which is an hereditary despotic government regulated by laws: the third is that which they call aesumnetic, which is an elective tyranny. The fourth is the Lacedaemonian; and this, in few words, is nothing more than an hereditary generalship: and in these particulars they differ from each other. There is a fifth species of kingly government, which is when one person has a supreme power over all things whatsoever, in the manner that every state and every city has over those things which belong to the public: for as the master of a family is king in his own house, so such a king is master of a family in his own city or state.

## CHAPTER XV

But the different sorts of kingly governments may, if I may so say, be reduced to two; which we will consider more particularly. The last spoken of, and the Lacedaemonian, for the chief of the others are placed between these, which are as it were at the extremities, they having less power than an absolute government, and yet more than the Lacedaemonians; so that the whole matter in question may be reduced to these two points; the one is, whether it is advantageous to the citizens to have the office of general continue in one person for life, and whether it should be confined to any particular families or whether every one should be eligible: the other, whether [1286a] it is advantageous for one person to have the supreme power over everything or not. But to enter into the particulars concerning the office of a Lacedaemonian general would be rather to frame laws for a state than to consider the nature and utility of its constitution, since we know that the appointing of a general is what is done in every state. Passing over this question then, we will proceed to consider the other part of their government, which is the polity of the state; and this it will be necessary to examine particularly into, and to go through such questions as may arise.

Now the first thing which presents itself to our consideration is this, whether it is best to be governed by a good man, or by good laws? Those who prefer a kingly government think that laws can only speak a general language, but cannot adapt themselves to particular circumstances; for which reason it is absurd in any science to follow written rule; and even in Egypt the physician was allowed to alter the mode of cure which the law prescribed to him, after the fourth day; but if he did it sooner it was at his own peril: from whence it is evident, on the very same account, that a government of written laws is not the best; and yet general reasoning is necessary to all those who are to govern, and it will be much more perfect in those who are entirely free from passions than in those to whom they are natural. But now this is a quality which laws possess; while the other is natural to the human soul. But some one will say in answer to this, that man will be a better judge of particulars. It will be necessary, then, for a king to be a lawgiver, and that his laws should be published, but that those should have no authority which are absurd, as those which are not, should. But whether is it better for the community that those things which cannot possibly come under the cognisance of the law either at all or properly should be under the government of every worthy citizen, as the present method is, when the public community, in their general assemblies, act as judges and counsellors, where all their determinations are upon particular cases, for one individual, be he who he will, will be found, upon comparison, inferior to a whole people taken collectively: but this is what a city is, as a public entertainment is better than one man's portion: for this reason the multitude judge of many things better than any one single person. They are also less liable to corruption from their numbers, as water is from its quantity: besides, the judgment of an individual must necessarily be perverted if he is overcome by anger or any other passion; but it would be hard indeed if the whole community should be misled by anger. Moreover, let the people be free, and they will do nothing but in conformity to the law, except only in those cases which the law cannot speak to. But though what I am going to propose may not easily be met with, yet if the majority of the state should happen to be good men, should they prefer one uncorrupt governor or many equally good, is it not evident that

they should choose the many? But there may be divisions among [1286b] these which cannot happen when there is but one. In answer to this it may be replied that all their souls will be as much animated with virtue as this one man's.

If then a government of many, and all of them good men, compose an aristocracy, and the government of one a kingly power, it is evident that the people should rather choose the first than the last; and this whether the state is powerful or not, if many such persons so alike can be met with: and for this reason probable it was, that the first governments were generally monarchies; because it was difficult to find a number of persons eminently virtuous, more particularly as the world was then divided into small communities; besides, kings were appointed in return for the benefits they had conferred on mankind; but such actions are peculiar to good men: but when many persons equal in virtue appeared at the time, they brooked not a superiority, but sought after an equality and established a free state; but after this, when they degenerated, they made a property of the public; which probably gave rise to oligarchies; for they made wealth meritorious, and the honours of government were reserved for the rich: and these afterwards turned to tyrannies and these in their turn gave rise to democracies; for the power of the tyrants continually decreasing, on account of their rapacious avarice, the people grew powerful enough to frame and establish democracies: and as cities after that happened to increase, probably it was not easy for them to be under any other government than a democracy. But if any person prefers a kingly government in a state, what is to be done with the king's children? Is the family also to reign? But should they have such children as some persons usually have, it will be very detrimental. It may be said, that then the king who has it in his power will never permit such children to succeed to his kingdom. But it is not easy to trust to that; for it is very hard and requires greater virtue than is to be met with in human nature. There is also a doubt concerning the power with which a king should be entrusted: whether he should be allowed force sufficient to compel those who do not choose to be obedient to the laws, and how he is to support his government? for if he is to govern according to law and do nothing of his own will which is contrary thereunto, at the same time it will be necessary to protect that power with which he guards the law, This matter however may not be very difficult to determine; for he ought to have a proper power, and such a one is that which will be sufficient to make the king superior to any one person or even a large part of the community, but inferior to the whole, as the ancients always appointed guards for that person whom they created aesumnetes or tyrant; and some one advised the Syracusians, when Dionysius asked for guards, to allow him such.

## CHAPTER XVI

[1287a] We will next consider the absolute monarch that we have just mentioned, who does everything according to his own will: for a king governing under the direction of laws which he is obliged to follow does not of himself create any particular species of government, as we have already said: for in every state whatsoever, either aristocracy or democracy, it is easy to appoint a general for life; and there are many who entrust the administration of affairs to one person only; such is the government at Dyrrachium, and nearly the same at Opus. As for an absolute monarchy as it is called, that is to say, when the whole state is wholly subject to the will of one person, namely the king, it seems to many that it is unnatural that one man should have the entire rule over his fellow-citizens when the state consists of equals: for nature requires that the same right and the same rank should necessarily take place amongst all those who are equal by nature: for as it would be hurtful to the body for those who are of different constitutions to observe the same regimen, either of diet or clothing, so is it with respect to the honours of the state as hurtful, that those who are equal in merit should be unequal in rank; for which reason it is as much a man's duty to submit to command as to assume it, and this also by rotation; for this is law, for order is law; and it is more proper that law should govern than any one of the citizens: upon the same principle, if it is advantageous to place the supreme power in some particular persons, they should be appointed to be only guardians, and the servants of the laws, for the supreme power must be placed somewhere; but they say, that it is unjust that where all are equal one person should continually enjoy it. But it seems unlikely that man should be able to adjust that which the law cannot determine; it may be replied, that the law having laid down the best rules possible, leaves the adjustment and application of particulars to the discretion of the magistrate; besides, it allows anything to be altered which experience proves may be better established. Moreover, he who would place the supreme power in mind, would place it in God and the laws; but he who entrusts man with it, gives it to a wild beast, for such his appetites sometimes make him; for passion influences those who are in power, even the very best of men: for which reason law is reason without desire.

The instance taken from the arts seems fallacious: wherein it is said to be wrong for a sick person to apply for a remedy to books, but that it would be far more eligible to employ those who are skilful in physic; for these do nothing contrary to reason from motives of friendship but earn their money by curing the sick, whereas those who have the management of public affairs do many things through hatred or favour. And, as a proof of what we have

advanced, it may be observed, that whenever a sick person suspects that his physician has been persuaded by his enemies to be guilty of any foul practice to him in his profession, he then rather chooses to apply to books for his cure: and not only this [1287b] but even physicians themselves when they are ill call in other physicians: and those who teach others the gymnastic exercises, exercise with those of the same profession, as being incapable from self-partiality to form a proper judgment of what concerns themselves. From whence it is evident, that those who seek for what is just, seek for a mean; now law is a mean. Moreover; the moral law is far superior and conversant with far superior objects than the written law; for the supreme magistrate is safer to be trusted to than the one, though he is inferior to the other. But as it is impossible that one person should have an eye to everything himself, it will be necessary that the supreme magistrate should employ several subordinate ones under him; why then should not this be done at first, instead of appointing one person in this manner? Besides, if, according to what has been already said, the man of worth is on that account fit to govern, two men of worth are certainly better than one: as, for instance, in Homer, "Let two together go:" and also Agamemnon's wish; "Were ten such faithful counsel mine!" Not but that there are even now some particular magistrates invested with supreme power to decide, as judges, those things which the law cannot, as being one of those cases which comes not properly under its jurisdiction; for of those which can there is no doubt: since then laws comprehend some things, but not all, it is necessary to enquire and consider which of the two is preferable, that the best man or the best law should govern; for to reduce every subject which can come under the deliberation of man into a law is impossible.

No one then denies, that it is necessary that there should be some person to decide those cases which cannot come under the cognisance of a written law: but we say, that it is better to have many than one; for though every one who decides according to the principles of the law decides justly; yet surely it seems absurd to suppose, that one person can see better with two eyes, and hear better with two ears, or do better with two hands and two feet, than many can do with many: for we see that absolute monarchs now furnish themselves with many eyes and ears and hands and feet; for they entrust those who are friends to them and their government with part of their power; for if they are not friends to the monarch, they will not do what he chooses; but if they are friends to him, they are friends also to his government: but a friend is an equal and like his friend: if then he thinks that such should govern, he thinks that his equal also should govern. These are nearly the objections which are usually made to a kingly power.

## CHAPTER XVII

Probably what we have said may be true of some persons, but not of others; for some men are by nature formed to be under the government of a master; others, of a king; others, to be the citizens of a free state, just and useful; but a tyranny is not according to nature, nor the other perverted forms of government; for they are contrary to it. But it is evident from what has been said, that among equals it is neither advantageous nor [1288a] right that one person should be lord over all where there are no established laws, but his will is the law; or where there are; nor is it right that one who is good should have it over those who are good; or one who is not good over those who are not good; nor one who is superior to the rest in worth, except in a particular manner, which shall be described, though indeed it has been already mentioned. But let us next determine what people are best qualified for a kingly government, what for an aristocratic, and what for a democratic. And, first, for a kingly; and it should be those who are accustomed by nature to submit the civil government of themselves to a family eminent for virtue: for an aristocracy, those who are naturally framed to bear the rule of free men, whose superior virtue makes them worthy of the management of others: for a free state, a war-like people, formed by nature both to govern and be governed by laws which admit the poorest citizen to share the honours of the commonwealth according to his worth. But whenever a whole family or any one of another shall happen so far to excel in virtue as to exceed all other persons in the community, then it is right that the kingly power should be in them, or if it is an individual who does so, that he should be king and lord of all; for this, as we have just mentioned, is not only correspondent to that principle of right which all founders of all states, whether aristocracies, oligarchies, or democracies, have a regard to (for in placing the supreme power they all think it right to fix it to excellence, though not the same); but it is also agreeable to what has been already said; as it would not be right to kill, or banish, or ostracise such a one for his superior merit. Nor would it be proper to let him have the supreme power only in turn; for it is contrary to nature that what is highest should ever be lowest: but this would be the case should such a one ever be governed by others. So that there can nothing else be done but to submit, and permit him continually to enjoy the supreme power. And thus much with respect to kingly power in different states, and whether it is or is not advantageous to them, and to what, and in what manner.

## CHAPTER XVIII

Since then we have said that there are three sorts of regular governments, and of these the best must necessarily be that which is administered by the best men (and this must be that which happens to have one man, or one family, or a number of persons excelling all the rest in virtue, who are able to govern and be governed in such a manner as will make life most agreeable, and we have already shown that the virtue of a good man and of a citizen in the most perfect government will be the same), it is evident, that in the same manner, and for those very qualities which would procure a man the character of good, any one would say, that the government of a state was a well-established aristocracy or kingdom; so that it will be found to be education and [1288b] morals that are almost the whole which go to make a good man, and the same qualities will make a good citizen or good king.

These particulars being treated of, we will now proceed to consider what sort of government is best, how it naturally arises, and how it is established; for it is necessary to make a proper inquiry concerning this.

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# COMMENTARY ON JOHN STUART MILL'S ON LIBERTY

## I.

John Stuart Mill was born on 20th May 1806. He was a delicate child, and the extraordinary education designed by his father was not calculated to develop and improve his physical powers. "I never was a boy," he says; "never played cricket." His exercise was taken in the form of walks with his father, during which the elder Mill lectured his son and examined him on his work. It is idle to speculate on the possible results of a different treatment. Mill remained delicate throughout his life, but was endowed with that intense mental energy which is so often combined with physical weakness. His youth was sacrificed to an idea; he was designed by his father to carry on his work; the individuality of the boy was unimportant. A visit to the south of France at the age of fourteen, in company with the family of General Sir Samuel Bentham, was[Pg viii] not without its influence. It was a glimpse of another atmosphere, though the studious habits of his home life were maintained. Moreover, he derived from it his interest in foreign politics, which remained one of his characteristics to the end of his life. In 1823 he was appointed junior clerk in the Examiners' Office at the India House.

Mill's first essays were written in the *Traveller* about a year before he entered the India House. From that time forward his literary work was uninterrupted save by attacks of illness. His industry was stupendous. He wrote articles on an infinite variety of subjects, political, metaphysical, philosophic, religious, poetical. He discovered Tennyson for his generation, he influenced the writing of Carlyle's *French Revolution* as well as its success. And all the while he was engaged in studying and preparing for his more ambitious works, while he rose step by step at the India Office. His *Essays on Unsettled Questions in Political Economy* were written in 1831, although they did not appear until thirteen years later. His *System of Logic*, the design of which was even then fashioning itself in his brain, took thirteen years to complete, and was actually published[Pg ix] before the *Political Economy*. In 1844 appeared the article on Michelet, which its author anticipated would cause some discussion, but which did not create the sensation he expected. Next year there were the "Claims of Labour" and "Guizot," and in 1847 his articles on Irish affairs in the *Morning Chronicle*. These years were very much influenced by his friendship and correspondence with Comte, a curious comradeship between men of such different temperament. In 1848 Mill published his *Political Economy*, to which he had given his serious study since the completion of his *Logic*. His articles and reviews, though they involved a good deal of work—as, for instance, the re-perusal of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the original before reviewing Grote's *Greece*—were recreation to the student. The year 1856 saw him head of the Examiners' Office in the India House, and another two years brought the end of his official work, owing to the transfer of India to the Crown. In the same year his wife died. *Liberty* was published shortly after, as

well as the *Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform*, and no year passed without Mill making important contributions on the political, philosophical, and ethical questions of the day.

Seven years after the death of his wife, Mill was invited to contest Westminster. His feeling on the conduct of elections made him refuse to take any personal action in the matter, and he gave the frankest expression to his political views, but nevertheless he was elected by a large majority. He was not a conventional success in the House; as a speaker he lacked magnetism. But his influence was widely felt. "For the sake of the House of Commons at large," said Mr. Gladstone, "I rejoiced in his advent and deplored his disappearance. He did us all good." After only three years in Parliament, he was defeated at the next General Election by Mr. W. H. Smith. He retired to Avignon, to the pleasant little house where the happiest years of his life had been spent in the companionship of his wife, and continued his disinterested labours. He completed his edition of his father's *Analysis of the Mind*, and also produced, in addition to less important work, *The Subjection of Women*, in which he had the active co-operation of his step-daughter. A book on Socialism was under consideration, but, like an earlier study of Sociology, it never was written. He died in 1873, his last years being spent peacefully in the pleasant society of his [Pg xi] step-daughter, from whose tender care and earnest intellectual sympathy he caught maybe a far-off reflection of the light which had irradiated his spiritual life.

## II.

The circumstances under which John Stuart Mill wrote his *Liberty* are largely connected with the influence which Mrs. Taylor wielded over his career. The dedication is well known. It contains the most extraordinary panegyric on a woman that any philosopher has ever penned. "Were I but capable of interpreting to the world one-half the great thoughts and noble feelings which are buried in her grave, I should be the medium of a greater benefit to it than is ever likely to arise from anything that I can write, unprompted and unassisted by her all but unrivalled wisdom." It is easy for the ordinary worldly cynicism to curl a sceptical lip over sentences like these. There may be exaggeration of sentiment, the necessary and inevitable reaction of a man who was trained according to the "dry light" of so unimpressionable a man as James Mill, the father; but the passage quoted is not the only one in which John Stuart Mill proclaims his unhesitating [Pg xii] belief in the intellectual influence of his wife. The treatise on *Liberty* was written especially under her authority and encouragement, but there are many earlier references to the power which she exercised over his mind. Mill was introduced to her as early as 1831, at a dinner-party at Mr. Taylor's house, where were present, amongst others, Roebuck, W. J. Fox, and Miss Harriet Martineau. The acquaintance rapidly ripened into intimacy and the intimacy into friendship, and Mill was never weary of expatiating on all the advantages of so singular a relationship. In some of the presentation copies of his work on *Political Economy*, he wrote the following dedication:—"To Mrs. John Taylor, who, of all persons known to the author, is the most highly qualified either to originate or to appreciate speculation on social advancement, this work is with the highest respect and esteem dedicated." An article on the enfranchisement of women was made the occasion for another encomium. We shall hardly be wrong in attributing a much later book, *The Subjection of Women*, published in 1869, to the influence wielded by Mrs. Taylor. Finally, the pages of the *Autobiography* ring with the dithyrambic praise of his "almost infallible counsellor."

The facts of this remarkable intimacy can easily be stated. The deductions are more difficult. There is no question that Mill's infatuation was the cause of considerable trouble to his acquaintances and friends. His father openly taxed him with being in love with another man's wife. Roebuck, Mrs. Grote, Mrs. Austin, Miss Harriet Martineau were amongst those who suffered because they made some allusion to a forbidden subject. Mrs. Taylor lived with her daughter in a lodging in the country; but in 1851 her husband died, and then Mill made her his wife. Opinions were widely divergent as to her merits; but every one agreed that up to the time of her death, in 1858, Mill was wholly lost to his friends. George Mill, one of Mill's younger brothers, gave it as his opinion that she was a clever and remarkable woman, but "nothing like what John took her to be." Carlyle, in his reminiscences, described her with ambiguous epithets. She was "vivid," "iridescent," "pale and passionate and sad-looking, a living-romance heroine of the royalist volition and questionable destiny." It is not possible to make much of a judgment like this, but we get on more certain ground when we discover that Mrs. Carlyle said on one occasion [Pg xiv] that "she is thought to be dangerous," and that Carlyle added that she was worse than dangerous, she was patronising. The occasion when Mill and his wife were brought into close contact with the Carlyles is well known. The manuscript of the first volume of the *French Revolution* had been lent to Mill, and was accidentally burnt by Mrs. Mill's servant. Mill and his wife drove up to Carlyle's door, the wife speechless, the husband so full of conversation that

he detained Carlyle with desperate attempts at loquacity for two hours. But Dr. Garnett tells us, in his *Life of Carlyle*, that Mill made a substantial reparation for the calamity for which he was responsible by inducing the aggrieved author to accept half of the £200 which he offered. Mrs. Mill, as I have said, died in 1858, after seven years of happy companionship with her husband, and was buried at Avignon. The inscription which Mill wrote for her grave is too characteristic to be omitted:—"Her great and loving heart, her noble soul, her clear, powerful, original, and comprehensive intellect, made her the guide and support, the instructor in wisdom and the example in goodness, as she was the sole earthly delight of those who had the happiness to belong to her. As earnest for[Pg xv] all public good as she was generous and devoted to all who surrounded her, her influence has been felt in many of the greatest improvements of the age, and will be in those still to come. Were there even a few hearts and intellects like hers, this earth would already become the hoped-for Heaven." These lines prove the intensity of Mill's feeling, which is not afraid of abundant verbiage; but they also prove that he could not imagine what the effect would be on others, and, as Grote said, only Mill's reputation could survive these and similar displays.

Every one will judge for himself of this romantic episode in Mill's career, according to such experience as he may possess of the philosophic mind and of the value of these curious but not infrequent relationships. It may have been a piece of infatuation, or, if we prefer to say so, it may have been the most gracious and the most human page in Mill's career. Mrs. Mill may have flattered her husband's vanity by echoing his opinions, or she may have indeed been an Egeria, full of inspiration and intellectual helpfulness. What usually happens in these cases,—although the philosopher himself, through his belief in the[Pg xvi] equality of the sexes, was debarred from thinking so,—is the extremely valuable action and reaction of two different classes and orders of mind. To any one whose thoughts have been occupied with the sphere of abstract speculation, the lively and vivid presentment of concrete fact comes as a delightful and agreeable shock. The instinct of the woman often enables her not only to apprehend but to illustrate a truth for which she would be totally unable to give the adequate philosophic reasoning. On the other hand, the man, with the more careful logical methods and the slow processes of formal reasoning, is apt to suppose that the happy intuition which leaps to the conclusion is really based on the intellectual processes of which he is conscious in his own case. Thus both parties to the happy contract are equally pleased. The abstract truth gets the concrete illustration; the concrete illustration finds its proper foundation in a series of abstract inquiries. Perhaps Carlyle's epithets of "iridescent" and "vivid" refer incidentally to Mrs. Mill's quick perceptiveness, and thus throw a useful light on the mutual advantages of the common work of husband and wife. But it savours almost of impertinence even to attempt to lift the veil on[Pg xvii] a mystery like this. It is enough to say, perhaps, that however much we may deplore the exaggeration of Mill's references to his wife, we recognise that, for whatever reason, the pair lived an ideally happy life.

It still, however, remains to estimate the extent to which Mrs. Taylor, both before and after her marriage with Mill, made actual contributions to his thoughts and his public work. Here I may be perhaps permitted to avail myself of what I have already written in a previous work.<sup>[1]</sup> Mill gives us abundant help in this matter in the *Autobiography*. When first he knew her, his thoughts were turning to the subject of Logic. But his published work on the subject owed nothing to her, he tells us, in its doctrines. It was Mill's custom to write the whole of a book so as to get his general scheme complete, and then laboriously to re-write it in order to perfect the phrases and the composition. Doubtless Mrs. Taylor was of considerable help to him as a critic of style. But to be a critic of doctrine she was hardly qualified. Mill has made some clear admissions on this point. "The only actual revolution which has ever taken place in my modes of thinking was[Pg xviii] already complete,"<sup>[2]</sup> he says, before her influence became paramount. There is a curiously humble estimate of his own powers (to which Dr. Bain has called attention), which reads at first sight as if it contradicted this. "During the greater part of my literary life I have performed the office in relation to her, which, from a rather early period, I had considered as the most useful part that I was qualified to take in the domain of thought, that of an interpreter of original thinkers, and mediator between them and the public." So far it would seem that Mill had sat at the feet of his oracle; but observe the highly remarkable exception which is made in the following sentence:—"For I had always a humble opinion of my own powers as an original thinker, *except in abstract science (logic, metaphysics, and the theoretic principles of political economy and politics).*"<sup>[3]</sup> If Mill then was an original thinker in logic, metaphysics, and the science of economy and politics, it is clear that he had not learnt these from her lips. And to most men logic and metaphysics may be safely taken as forming a domain in which originality of thought, if it can be honestly professed, is a sufficient title of distinction.

Mrs. Taylor's assistance in the *Political Economy* is confined to certain definite points. The purely scientific part was, we are assured, not learnt from her. "But it was chiefly her influence which gave to the book that general tone by which it is distinguished from all previous expositions of political economy that had any pretensions to be scientific, and which has made it so useful in conciliating minds which those previous expositions had repelled. This tone consisted chiefly in making the proper distinction between the laws of the production of wealth, which are real laws of Nature, dependent on the properties of objects, and the modes of its distribution, which, subject to

certain conditions, depend on human will.... *I had indeed partially learnt this view of things from the thoughts awakened in me by the speculations of St. Simonians*; but it was made a living principle, pervading and animating the book, by my wife's promptings."<sup>[4]</sup> The part which is italicised is noticeable. Here, as elsewhere, Mill thinks out the matter by himself; the concrete form of the thoughts is suggested or prompted by the wife. Apart from this "general tone," Mill tells us that there was a[Pg xx] specific contribution. "The chapter which has had a greater influence on opinion than all the rest, that on the Probable Future of the Labouring Classes, is entirely due to her. In the first draft of the book that chapter did not exist. She pointed out the need of such a chapter, and the extreme imperfection of the book without it; she was the cause of my writing it." From this it would appear that she gave Mill that tendency to Socialism which, while it lends a progressive spirit to his speculations on politics, at the same time does not manifestly accord with his earlier advocacy of peasant proprietorships. Nor, again, is it, on the face of it, consistent with those doctrines of individual liberty which, aided by the intellectual companionship of his wife, he propounded in a later work. The ideal of individual freedom is not the ideal of Socialism, just as that invocation of governmental aid to which the Socialist resorts is not consistent with the theory of *laissez-faire*. Yet *Liberty* was planned by Mill and his wife in concert. Perhaps a slight visionariness of speculation was no less the attribute of Mrs. Mill than an absence of rigid logical principles. Be this as it may, she undoubtedly checked the half-recognised leanings[Pg xxi] of her husband in the direction of Coleridge and Carlyle. Whether this was an instance of her steadying influence,<sup>[5]</sup> or whether it added one more unassimilated element to Mill's diverse intellectual sustenance, may be wisely left an open question. We cannot, however, be wrong in attributing to her the parentage of one book of Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. It is true that Mill had before learnt that men and women ought to be equal in legal, political, social, and domestic relations. This was a point on which he had already fallen foul of his father's essay on *Government*. But Mrs. Taylor had actually written on this very point, and the warmth and fervour of Mill's denunciations of women's servitude were unmistakably caught from his wife's view of the practical disabilities entailed by the feminine position.

### III.

*Liberty* was published in 1859, when the nineteenth century was half over, but in its general spirit and in some of its special tendencies the little tract belongs rather to the standpoint of the eighteenth century than to that which saw its birth. In many of his[Pg xxii] speculations John Stuart Mill forms a sort of connecting link between the doctrines of the earlier English empirical school and those which we associate with the name of Mr. Herbert Spencer. In his *Logic*, for instance, he represents an advance on the theories of Hume, and yet does not see how profoundly the victories of Science modify the conclusions of the earlier thinker. Similarly, in his *Political Economy*, he desires to improve and to enlarge upon Ricardo, and yet does not advance so far as the modifications of political economy by Sociology, indicated by some later—and especially German—speculations on the subject. In the tract on *Liberty*, Mill is advocating the rights of the individual as against Society at the very opening of an era that was rapidly coming to the conclusion that the individual had no absolute rights against Society. The eighteenth century view is that individuals existed first, each with their own special claims and responsibilities; that they deliberately formed a Social State, either by a contract or otherwise; and that then finally they limited their own action out of regard for the interests of the social organism thus arbitrarily produced. This is hardly the view of the nineteenth century. It is possible[Pg xxiii] that logically the individual is prior to the State; historically and in the order of Nature, the State is prior to the individual. In other words, such rights as every single personality possesses in a modern world do not belong to him by an original ordinance of Nature, but are slowly acquired in the growth and development of the social state. It is not the truth that individual liberties were forfeited by some deliberate act when men made themselves into a Commonwealth. It is more true to say, as Aristotle said long ago, that man is naturally a political animal, that he lived under strict social laws as a mere item, almost a nonentity, as compared with the Order, Society, or Community to which he belonged, and that such privileges as he subsequently acquired have been obtained in virtue of his growing importance as a member of a growing organisation. But if this is even approximately true, it seriously restricts that liberty of the individual for which Mill pleads. The individual has no chance, because he has no rights, against the social organism. Society can punish him for acts or even opinions which are anti-social in character. His virtue lies in recognising the intimate communion with his fellows. His sphere of activity is bounded by[Pg xxiv] the common interest. Just as it is an absurd and exploded theory that all men are originally equal, so it is an ancient and false doctrine to protest that a man has an individual liberty to live and think as he chooses in any spirit of antagonism to that larger body of which he forms an insignificant part.

Nowadays this view of Society and of its development, which we largely owe to the *Philosophie Positive* of M. Auguste Comte, is so familiar and possibly so damaging to the individual initiative, that it becomes necessary to advance and proclaim the truth which resides in an opposite theory. All progress, as we are aware, depends on the joint process of integration and differentiation; synthesis, analysis, and then a larger synthesis seem to form

the law of development. If it ever comes to pass that Society is tyrannical in its restrictions of the individual, if, as for instance in some forms of Socialism, based on deceptive analogies of Nature's dealings, the type is everything and the individual nothing, it must be confidently urged in answer that the fuller life of the future depends on the manifold activities, even though they may be antagonistic, of the individual. In England, at all events, we know that [Pg xxv]government in all its different forms, whether as King, or as a caste of nobles, or as an oligarchical plutocracy, or even as trades unions, is so dwarfing in its action that, for the sake of the future, the individual must revolt. Just as our former point of view limited the value of Mill's treatise on *Liberty*, so these considerations tend to show its eternal importance. The omnipotence of Society means a dead level of uniformity. The claim of the individual to be heard, to say what he likes, to do what he likes, to live as he likes, is absolutely necessary, not only for the variety of elements without which life is poor, but also for the hope of a future age. So long as individual initiative and effort are recognised as a vital element in English history, so long will Mill's *Liberty*, which he confesses was based on a suggestion derived from Von Humboldt, remain as an indispensable contribution to the speculations, and also to the health and sanity, of the world.

What his wife really was to Mill, we shall, perhaps, never know. But that she was an actual and vivid force, which roused the latent enthusiasm of his nature, we have abundant evidence. And when she died at Avignon, [Pg xxvi] though his friends may have regained an almost estranged companionship, Mill was, personally, the poorer. Into the sorrow of that bereavement we cannot enter: we have no right or power to draw the veil. It is enough to quote the simple words, so eloquent of an unspoken grief—"I can say nothing which could describe, even in the faintest manner, what that loss was and is. But because I know that she would have wished it, I endeavour to make the best of what life I have left, and to work for her purposes with such diminished strength as can be derived from thoughts of her, and communion with her memory."

## FOOTNOTES:

(Note:

[1] *Life of John Stuart Mill*, chapter vi. (Walter Scott.)

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(Note:

[2] *Autobiography*, p. 190.

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(Note:

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 242.

)

(Note:

[4] *Autobiography*, pp. 246, 247.

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(Note:

[5] Cf. an instructive page in the *Autobiography*, p. 252.

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# JOHN STUART MILL: ON LIBERTY (CHAPTER 1-- "INTRODUCTORY")

The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognised as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilised portions of the species have now[Pg 2] entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the government. By liberty, was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest, who, at all events, did not hold it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there[Pg 3] should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying on the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots, was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks; by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort, supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and to attain this, or when already in some degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became[Pg 4] everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came, in the progress of human affairs, when men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees, this new demand for elective and temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation[Pg 5] of the power itself. *That* (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannising over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of which it could itself dictate the use to be made. Their power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which it still apparently predominates. Those who

admit any limit to what a government may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it, had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as[Pg 6] well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of a usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised; and the "self-government" spoken of[Pg 7]is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means, the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority: the people, consequently, *may* desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this, as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals, loses none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant[Pg 8]—society collectively, over the separate individuals who compose it—its means of tyrannising are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of[Pg 9] human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

But though this proposition is not likely to be contested in general terms, the practical question, where to place the limit—how to make the fitting adjustment between individual independence and social control—is a subject on which nearly everything remains to be done. All that makes existence valuable to any one, depends on the enforcement of restraints upon the actions of other people. Some rules of conduct, therefore, must be imposed, by law in the first place, and by opinion on many things which are not fit subjects for the operation of law. What these rules should be, is the principal question in human affairs; but if we except a few of the most obvious cases, it is one of those which least progress has been made in resolving. No two ages, and scarcely any two countries, have decided it alike; and the decision of one age or country is a wonder to another. Yet the people of any given age and country no more suspect any difficulty in it, than if it were a subject on which mankind had always been agreed. The rules which obtain among themselves appear to them self-evident and self-justifying. This all but universal illusion is one of the examples of the magical influence of custom,[Pg 10]which is not only, as the proverb says, a second nature, but is continually mistaken for the first. The effect of custom, in preventing any misgiving respecting the rules of conduct which mankind impose on one another, is all the more complete because the subject is one on which it is not generally considered necessary that reasons should be given, either by one person to others, or by each to himself. People are accustomed to believe, and have been encouraged in the belief by some who aspire to the character of philosophers, that their feelings, on subjects of this nature, are better than reasons, and render reasons unnecessary. The practical principle which guides them to their opinions

on the regulation of human conduct, is the feeling in each person's mind that everybody should be required to act as he, and those with whom he sympathises, would like them to act. No one, indeed, acknowledges to himself that his standard of judgment is his own liking; but an opinion on a point of conduct, not supported by reasons, can only count as one person's preference; and if the reasons, when given, are a mere appeal to a similar preference felt by other people, it is still only many people's liking instead of one. To an ordinary man, however, his own preference, thus supported, is not only a perfectly satisfactory [Pg 11] reason, but the only one he generally has for any of his notions of morality, taste, or propriety, which are not expressly written in his religious creed; and his chief guide in the interpretation even of that. Men's opinions, accordingly, on what is laudable or blamable, are affected by all the multifarious causes which influence their wishes in regard to the conduct of others, and which are as numerous as those which determine their wishes on any other subject. Sometimes their reason—at other times their prejudices or superstitions: often their social affections, not seldom their anti-social ones, their envy or jealousy, their arrogance or contemptuousness: but most commonly, their desires or fears for themselves—their legitimate or illegitimate self-interest. Wherever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feelings of class superiority. The morality between Spartans and Helots, between planters and negroes, between princes and subjects, between nobles and roturiers, between men and women, has been for the most part the creation of these class interests and feelings: and the sentiments thus generated, react in turn upon the moral feelings of the members of the ascendant class, in their relations among themselves. Where, on the other [Pg 12] hand, a class, formerly ascendant, has lost its ascendancy, or where its ascendancy is unpopular, the prevailing moral sentiments frequently bear the impress of an impatient dislike of superiority. Another grand determining principle of the rules of conduct, both in act and forbearance, which have been enforced by law or opinion, has been the servility of mankind towards the supposed preferences or aversions of their temporal masters, or of their gods. This servility, though essentially selfish, is not hypocrisy; it gives rise to perfectly genuine sentiments of abhorrence; it made men burn magicians and heretics. Among so many baser influences, the general and obvious interests of society have of course had a share, and a large one, in the direction of the moral sentiments: less, however, as a matter of reason, and on their own account, than as a consequence of the sympathies and antipathies which grew out of them: and sympathies and antipathies which had little or nothing to do with the interests of society, have made themselves felt in the establishment of moralities with quite as great force.

The likings and dislikings of society, or of some powerful portion of it, are thus the main thing which has practically determined the rules laid down for general observance, under the penalties [Pg 13] of law or opinion. And in general, those who have been in advance of society in thought and feeling have left this condition of things unassailed in principle, however they may have come into conflict with it in some of its details. They have occupied themselves rather in inquiring what things society ought to like or dislike, than in questioning whether its likings or dislikings should be a law to individuals. They preferred endeavouring to alter the feelings of mankind on the particular points on which they were themselves heretical, rather than make common cause in defence of freedom, with heretics generally. The only case in which the higher ground has been taken on principle and maintained with consistency, by any but an individual here and there, is that of religious belief: a case instructive in many ways, and not least so as forming a most striking instance of the fallibility of what is called the moral sense: for the *odium theologicum*, in a sincere bigot, is one of the most unequivocal cases of moral feeling. Those who first broke the yoke of what called itself the Universal Church, were in general as little willing to permit difference of religious opinion as that church itself. But when the heat of the conflict was over, without giving a complete victory to any party, and each church or [Pg 14] sect was reduced to limit its hopes to retaining possession of the ground it already occupied; minorities, seeing that they had no chance of becoming majorities, were under the necessity of pleading to those whom they could not convert, for permission to differ. It is accordingly on this battle-field, almost solely, that the rights of the individual against society have been asserted on broad grounds of principle, and the claim of society to exercise authority over dissentients, openly controverted. The great writers to whom the world owes what religious liberty it possesses, have mostly asserted freedom of conscience as an indefeasible right, and denied absolutely that a human being is accountable to others for his religious belief. Yet so natural to mankind is intolerance in whatever they really care about, that religious freedom has hardly anywhere been practically realised, except where religious indifference, which dislikes to have its peace disturbed by theological quarrels, has added its weight to the scale. In the minds of almost all religious persons, even in the most tolerant countries, the duty of toleration is admitted with tacit reserves. One person will bear with dissent in matters of church government, but not of dogma; another can tolerate everybody, short of [Pg 15] a Papist or a Unitarian; another, every one who believes in revealed religion; a few extend their charity a little further, but stop at the belief in a God and in a future state. Wherever the sentiment of the majority is still genuine and intense, it is found to have abated little of its claim to be obeyed.

In England, from the peculiar circumstances of our political history, though the yoke of opinion is perhaps heavier, that of law is lighter, than in most other countries of Europe; and there is considerable jealousy of direct interference, by the legislative or the executive power, with private conduct; not so much from any just regard for

the independence of the individual, as from the still subsisting habit of looking on the government as representing an opposite interest to the public. The majority have not yet learnt to feel the power of the government their power, or its opinions their opinions. When they do so, individual liberty will probably be as much exposed to invasion from the government, as it already is from public opinion. But, as yet, there is a considerable amount of feeling ready to be called forth against any attempt of the law to control individuals in things in which they have not hitherto been accustomed to be controlled by it;[Pg 16] and this with very little discrimination as to whether the matter is, or is not, within the legitimate sphere of legal control; insomuch that the feeling, highly salutary on the whole, is perhaps quite as often misplaced as well grounded in the particular instances of its application. There is, in fact, no recognised principle by which the propriety or impropriety of government interference is customarily tested. People decide according to their personal preferences. Some, whenever they see any good to be done, or evil to be remedied, would willingly instigate the government to undertake the business; while others prefer to bear almost any amount of social evil, rather than add one to the departments of human interests amenable to governmental control. And men range themselves on one or the other side in any particular case, according to this general direction of their sentiments; or according to the degree of interest which they feel in the particular thing which it is proposed that the government should do, or according to the belief they entertain that the government would, or would not, do it in the manner they prefer; but very rarely on account of any opinion to which they consistently adhere, as to what things are fit to be done by a government. And it seems to me that in[Pg 17] consequence of this absence of rule or principle, one side is at present as often wrong as the other; the interference of government is, with about equal frequency, improperly invoked and improperly condemned.

The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with[Pg 18] any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood. Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury. For the same reason, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage. The early difficulties in the way of spontaneous progress are so great, that there is seldom any choice of means for overcoming them; and a ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedients that will attain an end, perhaps otherwise unattainable. Despotism is a legitimate[Pg 19] mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one. But as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion (a period long since reached in all nations with whom we need here concern ourselves), compulsion, either in the direct form or in that of pains and penalties for non-compliance, is no longer admissible as a means to their own good, and justifiable only for the security of others.

It is proper to state that I forego any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract right, as a thing independent of utility. I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being. Those interests, I contend, authorise the subjection of individual spontaneity to external control, only in respect to[Pg 20] those actions of each, which concern the interest of other people. If any one does an act hurtful to others, there is a *primâ facie* case for punishing him, by law, or, where legal penalties are not safely applicable, by general disapprobation. There are also many positive acts for the benefit of others, which he may rightfully be compelled to perform; such as, to give evidence in a court of justice; to bear his fair share in the common defence, or in any other joint work necessary to the interest of the society of which he enjoys the protection; and to perform certain

acts of individual beneficence, such as saving a fellow-creature's life, or interposing to protect the defenceless against ill-usage, things which whenever it is obviously a man's duty to do, he may rightfully be made responsible to society for not doing. A person may cause evil to others not only by his actions but by his inaction, and in either case he is justly accountable to them for the injury. The latter case, it is true, requires a much more cautious exercise of compulsion than the former. To make any one answerable for doing evil to others, is the rule; to make him answerable for not preventing evil, is, comparatively speaking, the exception. Yet there are many cases clear enough and grave enough to justify that exception. In all things which regard[Pg 21] the external relations of the individual, he is *de jure* amenable to those whose interests are concerned, and if need be, to society as their protector. There are often good reasons for not holding him to the responsibility; but these reasons must arise from the special expediences of the case: either because it is a kind of case in which he is on the whole likely to act better, when left to his own discretion, than when controlled in any way in which society have it in their power to control him; or because the attempt to exercise control would produce other evils, greater than those which it would prevent. When such reasons as these preclude the enforcement of responsibility, the conscience of the agent himself should step into the vacant judgment seat, and protect those interests of others which have no external protection; judging himself all the more rigidly, because the case does not admit of his being made accountable to the judgment of his fellow-creatures.

But there is a sphere of action in which society, as distinguished from the individual, has, if any, only an indirect interest; comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or if it also affects others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and[Pg 22] participation. When I say only himself, I mean directly, and in the first instance: for whatever affects himself, may affect others *through* himself; and the objection which may be grounded on this contingency, will receive consideration in the sequel. This, then, is the appropriate region of human liberty. It comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological. The liberty of expressing and publishing opinions may seem to fall under a different principle, since it belongs to that part of the conduct of an individual which concerns other people; but, being almost of as much importance as the liberty of thought itself, and resting in great part on the same reasons, is practically inseparable from it. Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of doing as we like, subject to such consequences as may follow: without impediment from our fellow-creatures, so long as what we do does not harm them, even though they should think our conduct foolish, perverse, or wrong. Thirdly, from this liberty of[Pg 23] each individual, follows the liberty, within the same limits, of combination among individuals; freedom to unite, for any purpose not involving harm to others: the persons combining being supposed to be of full age, and not forced or deceived.

No society in which these liberties are not, on the whole, respected, is free, whatever may be its form of government; and none is completely free in which they do not exist absolute and unqualified. The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental and spiritual. Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest.

Though this doctrine is anything but new, and, to some persons, may have the air of a truism, there is no doctrine which stands more directly opposed to the general tendency of existing opinion and practice. Society has expended fully as much effort in the attempt (according to its lights) to compel people to conform to its notions[Pg 24] of personal, as of social excellence. The ancient commonwealths thought themselves entitled to practise, and the ancient philosophers countenanced, the regulation of every part of private conduct by public authority, on the ground that the State had a deep interest in the whole bodily and mental discipline of every one of its citizens; a mode of thinking which may have been admissible in small republics surrounded by powerful enemies, in constant peril of being subverted by foreign attack or internal commotion, and to which even a short interval of relaxed energy and self-command might so easily be fatal, that they could not afford to wait for the salutary permanent effects of freedom. In the modern world, the greater size of political communities, and above all, the separation between spiritual and temporal authority (which placed the direction of men's consciences in other hands than those which controlled their worldly affairs), prevented so great an interference by law in the details of private life; but the engines of moral repression have been wielded more strenuously against divergence from the reigning opinion in self-regarding, than even in social matters; religion, the most powerful of the elements which have entered into the formation[Pg 25] of moral feeling, having almost always been governed either by the ambition of a hierarchy, seeking control over every department of human conduct, or by the spirit of Puritanism. And some of those modern reformers who have placed themselves in strongest opposition to the religions of the past, have been noway behind either churches or sects in their assertion of the right of spiritual domination: M. Comte, in particular, whose social system, as unfolded in his *Traité de Politique Positive*, aims at establishing

(though by moral more than by legal appliances) a despotism of society over the individual, surpassing anything contemplated in the political ideal of the most rigid disciplinarian among the ancient philosophers.

Apart from the peculiar tenets of individual thinkers, there is also in the world at large an increasing inclination to stretch unduly the powers of society over the individual, both by the force of opinion and even by that of legislation: and as the tendency of all the changes taking place in the world is to strengthen society, and diminish the power of the individual, this encroachment is not one of the evils which tend spontaneously to disappear, but, on the contrary, to grow more and more formidable. The disposition of mankind,[Pg 26] whether as rulers or as fellow-citizens to impose their own opinions and inclinations as a rule of conduct on others, is so energetically supported by some of the best and by some of the worst feelings incident to human nature, that it is hardly ever kept under restraint by anything but want of power; and as the power is not declining, but growing, unless a strong barrier of moral conviction can be raised against the mischief, we must expect, in the present circumstances of the world, to see it increase.

It will be convenient for the argument, if, instead of at once entering upon the general thesis, we confine ourselves in the first instance to a single branch of it, on which the principle here stated is, if not fully, yet to a certain point, recognised by the current opinions. This one branch is the Liberty of Thought: from which it is impossible to separate the cognate liberty of speaking and of writing. Although these liberties, to some considerable amount, form part of the political morality of all countries which profess religious toleration and free institutions, the grounds, both philosophical and practical, on which they rest, are perhaps not so familiar to the general mind, nor so thoroughly appreciated by many even of the leaders of opinion, as might[Pg 27]have been expected. Those grounds, when rightly understood, are of much wider application than to only one division of the subject, and a thorough consideration of this part of the question will be found the best introduction to the remainder. Those to whom nothing which I am about to say will be new, may therefore, I hope, excuse me, if on a subject which for now three centuries has been so often discussed, I venture on one discussion more.

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## JOHN STUART MILL: ON LIBERTY (CHAPTER 2-- "OF THE LIBERTY OF THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION")

The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by, when any defence would be necessary of the "liberty of the press" as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear. This aspect of the question, besides, has been so often and so triumphantly enforced by preceding writers, that it need not be specially insisted on in this place. Though the law of England, on the subject of the press, is as servile to this day as it was in the time of the Tudors, there is little danger of its being actually put in force against political discussion, except during some temporary panic, when fear of insurrection drives ministers and[Pg 29] judges from their propriety;[6]and, speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion, except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public. Let us suppose, therefore, that the government is entirely at one with the people, and never thinks of exerting any power of coercion unless in agreement with what it conceives to be their voice. But I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion, either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate. The best[Pg 30] government has no more title to it than the worst. It is as noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion, than when in or opposition to it. If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to the owner; if to be obstructed in the enjoyment of it were simply a private injury, it would make some difference whether the

injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on [Pg 31] many. But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.

It is necessary to consider separately these two hypotheses, each of which has a distinct branch of the argument corresponding to it. We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still.

First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind, and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is [Pg 32] an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not the worse for being common.

Unfortunately for the good sense of mankind, the fact of their fallibility is far from carrying the weight in their practical judgment, which is always allowed to it in theory; for while every one well knows himself to be fallible, few think it necessary to take any precautions against their own fallibility, or admit the supposition that any opinion, of which they feel very certain, may be one of the examples of the error to which they acknowledge themselves to be liable. Absolute princes, or others who are accustomed to unlimited deference, usually feel this complete confidence in their own opinions on nearly all subjects. People more happily situated, who sometimes hear their opinions disputed, and are not wholly unused to be set right when they are wrong, place the same unbounded reliance only on such of their opinions as are shared by all who surround them, or to whom they habitually defer: for in proportion to a man's want of confidence in his own solitary judgment, does he usually repose, with implicit trust, on the infallibility of "the world" in general. And the world, to each individual, means the part of it with which he comes in contact; his party, [Pg 33] his sect, his church, his class of society: the man may be called, by comparison, almost liberal and large-minded to whom it means anything so comprehensive as his own country or his own age. Nor is his faith in this collective authority at all shaken by his being aware that other ages, countries, sects, churches, classes, and parties have thought, and even now think, the exact reverse. He devolves upon his own world the responsibility of being in the right against the dissentient worlds of other people; and it never troubles him that mere accident has decided which of these numerous worlds is the object of his reliance, and that the same causes which make him a Churchman in London, would have made him a Buddhist or a Confucian in Pekin. Yet it is as evident in itself as any amount of argument can make it, that ages are no more infallible than individuals; every age having held many opinions which subsequent ages have deemed not only false but absurd; and it is as certain that many opinions, now general, will be rejected by future ages, as it is that many, once general, are rejected by the present.

The objection likely to be made to this argument, would probably take some such form as the following. There is no greater assumption of infallibility in forbidding the propagation of [Pg 34] error, than in any other thing which is done by public authority on its own judgment and responsibility. Judgment is given to men that they may use it. Because it may be used erroneously, are men to be told that they ought not to use it at all? To prohibit what they think pernicious, is not claiming exemption from error, but fulfilling the duty incumbent on them, although fallible, of acting on their conscientious conviction. If we were never to act on our opinions, because those opinions may be wrong, we should leave all our interests uncared for, and all our duties unperformed. An objection which applies to all conduct, can be no valid objection to any conduct in particular. It is the duty of governments, and of individuals, to form the truest opinions they can; to form them carefully, and never impose them upon others unless they are quite sure of being right. But when they are sure (such reasoners may say), it is not conscientiousness but cowardice to shrink from acting on their opinions, and allow doctrines which they honestly think dangerous to the welfare of mankind, either in this life or in another, to be scattered abroad without restraint, because other people, in less enlightened times, have persecuted opinions now believed to be true. Let us take [Pg 35] care, it may be said, not to make the same mistake: but governments and nations have made mistakes in other things, which are not denied to be fit subjects for the exercise of authority: they have laid on bad taxes, made unjust wars. Ought we therefore to lay on no taxes, and, under whatever provocation, make no wars? Men, and governments, must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must, assume our opinion to be true for the guidance of our own conduct: and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious.

I answer that it is assuming very much more. There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion, is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.

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When we consider either the history of opinion, or the ordinary conduct of human life, to what is it to be ascribed that the one and the other are no worse than they are? Not certainly to the inherent force of the human understanding; for, on any matter not self-evident, there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging of it, for one who is capable; and the capacity of the hundredth person is only comparative; for the majority of the eminent men of every past generation held many opinions now known to be erroneous, and did or approved numerous things which no one will now justify. Why is it, then, that there is on the whole a preponderance among mankind of rational opinions and rational conduct? If there really is this preponderance—which there must be, unless human affairs are, and have always been, in an almost desperate state—it is owing to a quality of the human mind, the source of everything respectable in man either as an intellectual or as a moral being, namely, that his errors are corrigible. He is capable of rectifying his mistakes, by discussion and experience. Not by experience alone. There must be discussion, to show how experience is to be interpreted. Wrong opinions and practices gradually yield to fact and argument: but facts[Pg 37] and arguments, to produce any effect on the mind, must be brought before it. Very few facts are able to tell their own story, without comments to bring out their meaning. The whole strength and value, then, of human judgment, depending on the one property, that it can be set right when it is wrong, reliance can be placed on it only when the means of setting it right are kept constantly at hand. In the case of any person whose judgment is really deserving of confidence, how has it become so? Because he has kept his mind open to criticism of his opinions and conduct. Because it has been his practice to listen to all that could be said against him; to profit by as much of it as was just, and expound to himself, and upon occasion to others, the fallacy of what was fallacious. Because he has felt, that the only way in which a human being can make some approach to knowing the whole of a subject, is by hearing what can be said about it by persons of every variety of opinion, and studying all modes in which it can be looked at by every character of mind. No wise man ever acquired his wisdom in any mode but this; nor is it in the nature of human intellect to become wise in any other manner. The steady habit of correcting and completing his own opinion by collating it[Pg 38] with those of others, so far from causing doubt and hesitation in carrying it into practice, is the only stable foundation for a just reliance on it: for, being cognisant of all that can, at least obviously, be said against him, and having taken up his position against all gainsayers—knowing that he has sought for objections and difficulties, instead of avoiding them, and has shut out no light which can be thrown upon the subject from any quarter—he has a right to think his judgment better than that of any person, or any multitude, who have not gone through a similar process.

It is not too much to require that what the wisest of mankind, those who are best entitled to trust their own judgment, find necessary to warrant their relying on it, should be submitted to by that miscellaneous collection of a few wise and many foolish individuals, called the public. The most intolerant of churches, the Roman Catholic Church, even at the canonisation of a saint, admits, and listens patiently to, a “devil’s advocate.” The holiest of men, it appears, cannot be admitted to posthumous honours, until all that the devil could say against him is known and weighed. If even the Newtonian philosophy were not permitted to be questioned, mankind could not feel as complete assurance of its truth as they now do. The beliefs[Pg 39] which we have most warrant for, have no safeguard to rest on, but a standing invitation to the whole world to prove them unfounded. If the challenge is not accepted, or is accepted and the attempt fails, we are far enough from certainty still; but we have done the best that the existing state of human reason admits of; we have neglected nothing that could give the truth a chance of reaching us: if the lists are kept open, we may hope that if there be a better truth, it will be found when the human mind is capable of receiving it; and in the meantime we may rely on having attained such approach to truth, as is possible in our own day. This is the amount of certainty attainable by a fallible being, and this the sole way of attaining it.

Strange it is, that men should admit the validity of the arguments for free discussion, but object to their being “pushed to an extreme;” not seeing that unless the reasons are good for an extreme case, they are not good for any case. Strange that they should imagine that they are not assuming infallibility, when they acknowledge that there should be free discussion on all subjects which can possibly be *doubtful*, but think that some particular principle or doctrine should be forbidden to be questioned because it is *so certain*,[Pg 40] that is, because *they are certain* that it is certain. To call any proposition certain, while there is any one who would deny its certainty if permitted, but who is not permitted, is to assume that we ourselves, and those who agree with us, are the judges of certainty, and judges without hearing the other side.

In the present age—which has been described as “destitute of faith, but terrified at scepticism”—in which people feel sure, not so much that their opinions are true, as that they should not know what to do without them—the claims of an opinion to be protected from public attack are rested not so much on its truth, as on its importance to society. There are, it is alleged, certain beliefs, so useful, not to say indispensable to well-being, that it is as much the duty of governments to uphold those beliefs, as to protect any other of the interests of society. In a case of such necessity, and so directly in the line of their duty, something less than infallibility may, it is maintained, warrant, and even bind, governments, to act on their own opinion, confirmed by the general opinion of mankind. It is also often argued, and still oftener thought, that none but bad men would desire to weaken these salutary beliefs; and there can be nothing wrong, it is thought, in restraining bad[Pg 41] men, and prohibiting what only such men would wish to practise. This mode of thinking makes the justification of restraints on discussion not a question of the truth of doctrines, but of their usefulness; and flatters itself by that means to escape the responsibility of claiming to be an infallible judge of opinions. But those who thus satisfy themselves, do not perceive that the assumption of infallibility is merely shifted from one point to another. The usefulness of an opinion is itself matter of opinion: as disputable, as open to discussion, and requiring discussion as much, as the opinion itself. There is the same need of an infallible judge of opinions to decide an opinion to be noxious, as to decide it to be false, unless the opinion condemned has full opportunity of defending itself. And it will not do to say that the heretic may be allowed to maintain the utility or harmlessness of his opinion, though forbidden to maintain its truth. The truth of an opinion is part of its utility. If we would know whether or not it is desirable that a proposition should be believed, is it possible to exclude the consideration of whether or not it is true? In the opinion, not of bad men, but of the best men, no belief which is contrary to truth can be really useful: and can you prevent such men[Pg 42] from urging that plea, when they are charged with culpability for denying some doctrine which they are told is useful, but which they believe to be false? Those who are on the side of received opinions, never fail to take all possible advantage of this plea; you do not find *them* handling the question of utility as if it could be completely abstracted from that of truth: on the contrary, it is, above all, because their doctrine is “the truth,” that the knowledge or the belief of it is held to be so indispensable. There can be no fair discussion of the question of usefulness, when an argument so vital may be employed on one side, but not on the other. And in point of fact, when law or public feeling do not permit the truth of an opinion to be disputed, they are just as little tolerant of a denial of its usefulness. The utmost they allow is an extenuation of its absolute necessity, or of the positive guilt of rejecting it.

In order more fully to illustrate the mischief of denying a hearing to opinions because we, in our own judgment, have condemned them, it will be desirable to fix down the discussion to a concrete case; and I choose, by preference, the cases which are least favourable to me—in which the argument against freedom of opinion, both on the score of truth and on that of utility, is considered the[Pg 43] strongest. Let the opinions impugned be the belief in a God and in a future state, or any of the commonly received doctrines of morality. To fight the battle on such ground, gives a great advantage to an unfair antagonist; since he will be sure to say (and many who have no desire to be unfair will say it internally), Are these the doctrines which you do not deem sufficiently certain to be taken under the protection of law? Is the belief in a God one of the opinions, to feel sure of which, you hold to be assuming infallibility? But I must be permitted to observe, that it is not the feeling sure of a doctrine (be it what it may) which I call an assumption of infallibility. It is the undertaking to decide that question *for others*, without allowing them to hear what can be said on the contrary side. And I denounce and reprobate this pretension not the less, if put forth on the side of my most solemn convictions. However positive any one’s persuasion may be, not only of the falsity, but of the pernicious consequences—not only of the pernicious consequences, but (to adopt expressions which I altogether condemn) the immorality and impiety of an opinion; yet if, in pursuance of that private judgment, though backed by the public judgment of his country[Pg 44] or his contemporaries, he prevents the opinion from being heard in its defence, he assumes infallibility. And so far from the assumption being less objectionable or less dangerous because the opinion is called immoral or impious, this is the case of all others in which it is most fatal. These are exactly the occasions on which the men of one generation commit those dreadful mistakes, which excite the astonishment and horror of posterity. It is among such that we find the instances memorable in history, when the arm of the law has been employed to root out the best men and the noblest doctrines; with deplorable success as to the men, though some of the doctrines have survived to be (as if in mockery) invoked, in defence of similar conduct towards those who dissent from *them*, or from their received interpretation.

Mankind can hardly be too often reminded that there was once a man named Socrates, between whom and the legal authorities and public opinion of his time, there took place a memorable collision. Born in an age and country abounding in individual greatness, this man has been handed down to us by those who best knew both him and the age, as the most virtuous man in it; while we know him as the head and[Pg 45] prototype of all subsequent teachers of virtue, the source equally of the lofty inspiration of Plato and the judicious utilitarianism of Aristotle, “*i maestri di color che sanno*,” the two headsprings of ethical as of all other philosophy. This acknowledged master of all the eminent thinkers who have since lived—whose fame, still growing after more than two thousand years,

all but outweighs the whole remainder of the names which make his native city illustrious—was put to death by his countrymen, after a judicial conviction, for impiety and immorality. Impiety, in denying the gods recognised by the State; indeed his accuser asserted (see the “Apologia”) that he believed in no gods at all. Immorality, in being, by his doctrines and instructions, a “corruptor of youth.” Of these charges the tribunal, there is every ground for believing, honestly found him guilty, and condemned the man who probably of all then born had deserved best of mankind, to be put to death as a criminal.

To pass from this to the only other instance of judicial iniquity, the mention of which, after the condemnation of Socrates, would not be an anticlimax: the event which took place on Calvary rather more than eighteen hundred years[Pg 46] ago. The man who left on the memory of those who witnessed his life and conversation, such an impression of his moral grandeur, that eighteen subsequent centuries have done homage to him as the Almighty in person, was ignominiously put to death, as what? As a blasphemer. Men did not merely mistake their benefactor; they mistook him for the exact contrary of what he was, and treated him as that prodigy of impiety, which they themselves are now held to be, for their treatment of him. The feelings with which mankind now regard these lamentable transactions, especially the later of the two, render them extremely unjust in their judgment of the unhappy actors. These were, to all appearance, not bad men—not worse than men commonly are, but rather the contrary; men who possessed in a full, or somewhat more than a full measure, the religious, moral, and patriotic feelings of their time and people: the very kind of men who, in all times, our own included, have every chance of passing through life blameless and respected. The high-priest who rent his garments when the words were pronounced, which, according to all the ideas of his country, constituted the blackest guilt, was in all probability quite as sincere in his horror and indignation, as the generality of respectable and[Pg 47] pious men now are in the religious and moral sentiments they profess; and most of those who now shudder at his conduct, if they had lived in his time, and been born Jews, would have acted precisely as he did. Orthodox Christians who are tempted to think that those who stoned to death the first martyrs must have been worse men than they themselves are, ought to remember that one of those persecutors was Saint Paul.

Let us add one more example, the most striking of all, if the impressiveness of an error is measured by the wisdom and virtue of him who falls into it. If ever any one, possessed of power, had grounds for thinking himself the best and most enlightened among his cotemporaries, it was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Absolute monarch of the whole civilised world, he preserved through life not only the most unblemished justice, but what was less to be expected from his Stoical breeding, the tenderest heart. The few failings which are attributed to him, were all on the side of indulgence: while his writings, the highest ethical product of the ancient mind, differ scarcely perceptibly, if they differ at all, from the most characteristic teachings of Christ. This man, a better Christian in all but the dogmatic sense of the word, than almost any of the ostensibly[Pg 48] Christian sovereigns who have since reigned, persecuted Christianity. Placed at the summit of all the previous attainments of humanity, with an open, unfettered intellect, and a character which led him of himself to embody in his moral writings the Christian ideal, he yet failed to see that Christianity was to be a good and not an evil to the world, with his duties to which he was so deeply penetrated. Existing society he knew to be in a deplorable state. But such as it was, he saw, or thought he saw, that it was held together, and prevented from being worse, by belief and reverence of the received divinities. As a ruler of mankind, he deemed it his duty not to suffer society to fall in pieces; and saw not how, if its existing ties were removed, any others could be formed which could again knit it together. The new religion openly aimed at dissolving these ties: unless, therefore, it was his duty to adopt that religion, it seemed to be his duty to put it down. Inasmuch then as the theology of Christianity did not appear to him true or of divine origin; inasmuch as this strange history of a crucified God was not credible to him, and a system which purported to rest entirely upon a foundation to him so wholly unbelievable, could not be foreseen by him to be that renovating agency which, after[Pg 49] all abatements, it has in fact proved to be; the gentlest and most amiable of philosophers and rulers, under a solemn sense of duty, authorised the persecution of Christianity. To my mind this is one of the most tragical facts in all history. It is a bitter thought, how different a thing the Christianity of the world might have been, if the Christian faith had been adopted as the religion of the empire under the auspices of Marcus Aurelius instead of those of Constantine. But it would be equally unjust to him and false to truth, to deny, that no one plea which can be urged for punishing anti-Christian teaching, was wanting to Marcus Aurelius for punishing, as he did, the propagation of Christianity. No Christian more firmly believes that Atheism is false, and tends to the dissolution of society, than Marcus Aurelius believed the same things of Christianity; he who, of all men then living, might have been thought the most capable of appreciating it. Unless any one who approves of punishment for the promulgation of opinions, flatters himself that he is a wiser and better man than Marcus Aurelius—more deeply versed in the wisdom of his time, more elevated in his intellect above it—more earnest in his search for truth, or more single-minded in his devotion to it when found;—let him abstain from that assumption of[Pg 50] the joint infallibility of himself and the multitude, which the great Antoninus made with so unfortunate a result.

Aware of the impossibility of defending the use of punishment for restraining irreligious opinions, by any argument which will not justify Marcus Antoninus, the enemies of religious freedom, when hard pressed, occasionally accept this consequence, and say, with Dr. Johnson, that the persecutors of Christianity were in the right; that persecution is an ordeal through which truth ought to pass, and always passes successfully, legal penalties being, in the end, powerless against truth, though sometimes beneficially effective against mischievous errors. This is a form of the argument for religious intolerance, sufficiently remarkable not to be passed without notice.

A theory which maintains that truth may justifiably be persecuted because persecution cannot possibly do it any harm, cannot be charged with being intentionally hostile to the reception of new truths; but we cannot commend the generosity of its dealing with the persons to whom mankind are indebted for them. To discover to the world something which deeply concerns it, and of which it was previously ignorant; to prove to it that it had been mistaken on some vital point [Pg 51] of temporal or spiritual interest, is as important a service as a human being can render to his fellow-creatures, and in certain cases, as in those of the early Christians and of the Reformers, those who think with Dr. Johnson believe it to have been the most precious gift which could be bestowed on mankind. That the authors of such splendid benefits should be requited by martyrdom; that their reward should be to be dealt with as the vilest of criminals, is not, upon this theory, a deplorable error and misfortune, for which humanity should mourn in sackcloth and ashes, but the normal and justifiable state of things. The propounder of a new truth, according to this doctrine, should stand, as stood, in the legislation of the Locrians, the proposer of a new law, with a halter round his neck, to be instantly tightened if the public assembly did not, on hearing his reasons, then and there adopt his proposition. People who defend this mode of treating benefactors, cannot be supposed to set much value on the benefit; and I believe this view of the subject is mostly confined to the sort of persons who think that new truths may have been desirable once, but that we have had enough of them now.

But, indeed, the dictum that truth always triumphs over persecution, is one of those pleasant [Pg 52] falsehoods which men repeat after one another till they pass into commonplaces, but which all experience refutes. History teems with instances of truth put down by persecution. If not suppressed for ever, it may be thrown back for centuries. To speak only of religious opinions: the Reformation broke out at least twenty times before Luther, and was put down. Arnold of Brescia was put down. Fra Dolcino was put down. Savonarola was put down. The Albigeois were put down. The Vaudois were put down. The Lollards were put down. The Hussites were put down. Even after the era of Luther, wherever persecution was persisted in, it was successful. In Spain, Italy, Flanders, the Austrian empire, Protestantism was rooted out; and, most likely, would have been so in England, had Queen Mary lived, or Queen Elizabeth died. Persecution has always succeeded, save where the heretics were too strong a party to be effectually persecuted. No reasonable person can doubt that Christianity might have been extirpated in the Roman Empire. It spread, and became predominant, because the persecutions were only occasional, lasting but a short time, and separated by long intervals of almost undisturbed propagandism. It is a piece of idle sentimentality that truth, merely as truth, [Pg 53] has any inherent power denied to error, of prevailing against the dungeon and the stake. Men are not more zealous for truth than they often are for error, and a sufficient application of legal or even of social penalties will generally succeed in stopping the propagation of either. The real advantage which truth has, consists in this, that when an opinion is true, it may be extinguished once, twice, or many times, but in the course of ages there will generally be found persons to rediscover it, until some one of its reappearances falls on a time when from favourable circumstances it escapes persecution until it has made such head as to withstand all subsequent attempts to suppress it.

It will be said, that we do not now put to death the introducers of new opinions: we are not like our fathers who slew the prophets, we even build sepulchres to them. It is true we no longer put heretics to death; and the amount of penal infliction which modern feeling would probably tolerate, even against the most obnoxious opinions, is not sufficient to extirpate them. But let us not flatter ourselves that we are yet free from the stain even of legal persecution. Penalties for opinion, or at least for its expression, still exist by law; and their enforcement is not, even in these times, [Pg 54] so unexampled as to make it at all incredible that they may some day be revived in full force. In the year 1857, at the summer assizes of the county of Cornwall, an unfortunate man, [7] said to be of unexceptionable conduct in all relations of life, was sentenced to twenty-one months' imprisonment, for uttering, and writing on a gate, some offensive words concerning Christianity. Within a month of the same time, at the Old Bailey, two persons, on two separate occasions, [8] were rejected as jurymen, and one of them grossly insulted by the judge and by one of the counsel, because they honestly declared that they had no theological belief; and a third, a foreigner, [9] for the same reason, was denied justice against a thief. This refusal of redress took place in virtue of the legal doctrine, that no person can be allowed to give evidence in a court of justice, who does not profess belief in a God (any god is sufficient) and in a future state; which is equivalent to declaring such persons to be outlaws, excluded from the [Pg 55] protection of the tribunals; who may not only be robbed or assaulted with impunity, if no one but themselves, or persons of similar opinions, be present, but any one else may be robbed or assaulted with impunity, if the proof of the fact depends on their evidence. The assumption on which this is grounded, is that the oath is worthless, of a person who does not believe in a future state; a proposition which

betokens much ignorance of history in those who assent to it (since it is historically true that a large proportion of infidels in all ages have been persons of distinguished integrity and honour); and would be maintained by no one who had the smallest conception how many of the persons in greatest repute with the world, both for virtues and for attainments, are well known, at least to their intimates, to be unbelievers. The rule, besides, is suicidal, and cuts away its own foundation. Under pretence that atheists must be liars, it admits the testimony of all atheists who are willing to lie, and rejects only those who brave the obloquy of publicly confessing a detested creed rather than affirm a falsehood. A rule thus self-convicted of absurdity so far as regards its professed purpose, can be kept in force only as a badge of hatred, a relic of persecution; a [Pg 56] persecution, too, having the peculiarity, that the qualification for undergoing it, is the being clearly proved not to deserve it. The rule, and the theory it implies, are hardly less insulting to believers than to infidels. For if he who does not believe in a future state, necessarily lies, it follows that they who do believe are only prevented from lying, if prevented they are, by the fear of hell. We will not do the authors and abettors of the rule the injury of supposing, that the conception which they have formed of Christian virtue is drawn from their own consciousness.

These, indeed, are but rags and remnants of persecution, and may be thought to be not so much an indication of the wish to persecute, as an example of that very frequent infirmity of English minds, which makes them take a preposterous pleasure in the assertion of a bad principle, when they are no longer bad enough to desire to carry it really into practice. But unhappily there is no security in the state of the public mind, that the suspension of worse forms of legal persecution, which has lasted for about the space of a generation, will continue. In this age the quiet surface of routine is as often ruffled by attempts to resuscitate past evils, as to introduce new benefits. What is boasted of at [Pg 57] the present time as the revival of religion, is always, in narrow and uncultivated minds, at least as much the revival of bigotry; and where there is the strong permanent leaven of intolerance in the feelings of a people, which at all times abides in the middle classes of this country, it needs but little to provoke them into actively persecuting those whom they have never ceased to think proper objects of persecution. [10] For it is this—it is the opinions men entertain, and the feelings they cherish, respecting those who disown the beliefs they deem important, which makes this country not a place of mental freedom. For a long time past, the chief mischief of the legal penalties is that they strengthen the social stigma. [Pg 58] It is that stigma which is really effective, and so effective is it that the profession of opinions which are under the ban of society is much less common in England, than is, in many other countries, the avowal of those which incur risk of judicial punishment. In respect to all persons but those whose pecuniary circumstances make them independent of the good will of other people, opinion, on this subject, is as efficacious as law; men might as well be imprisoned, as excluded from the means of earning their bread. Those whose bread is already secured, and who desire no favours from men in power, or from bodies of men, or from the public, have nothing to fear from the open avowal of any opinions, but to be ill-thought [Pg 59] of and ill-spoken of, and this it ought not to require a very heroic mould to enable them to bear. There is no room for any appeal *ad misericordiam* in behalf of such persons. But though we do not now inflict so much evil on those who think differently from us, as it was formerly our custom to do, it may be that we do ourselves as much evil as ever by our treatment of them. Socrates was put to death, but the Socratic philosophy rose like the sun in heaven, and spread its illumination over the whole intellectual firmament. Christians were cast to the lions, but the Christian church grew up a stately and spreading tree, overtopping the older and less vigorous growths, and stifling them by its shade. Our merely social intolerance kills no one, roots out no opinions, but induces men to disguise them, or to abstain from any active effort for their diffusion. With us, heretical opinions do not perceptibly gain, or even lose, ground in each decade or generation; they never blaze out far and wide, but continue to smoulder in the narrow circles of thinking and studious persons among whom they originate, without ever lighting up the general affairs of mankind with either a true or a deceptive light. And thus is kept up a state of things very satisfactory to some minds, because, [Pg 60] without the unpleasant process of fining or imprisoning anybody, it maintains all prevailing opinions outwardly undisturbed, while it does not absolutely interdict the exercise of reason by dissentients afflicted with the malady of thought. A convenient plan for having peace in the intellectual world, and keeping all things going on therein very much as they do already. But the price paid for this sort of intellectual pacification, is the sacrifice of the entire moral courage of the human mind. A state of things in which a large portion of the most active and inquiring intellects find it advisable to keep the genuine principles and grounds of their convictions within their own breasts, and attempt, in what they address to the public, to fit as much as they can of their own conclusions to premises which they have internally renounced, cannot send forth the open, fearless characters, and logical, consistent intellects who once adorned the thinking world. The sort of men who can be looked for under it, are either mere conformers to commonplace, or time-servers for truth, whose arguments on all great subjects are meant for their hearers, and are not those which have convinced themselves. Those who avoid this alternative, do so by narrowing their thoughts and interest to things [Pg 61] which can be spoken of without venturing within the region of principles, that is, to small practical matters, which would come right of themselves, if but the minds of mankind were strengthened and enlarged, and which will never be made effectually right until then: while that which would strengthen and enlarge men's minds, free and daring speculation on the highest subjects, is abandoned.

Those in whose eyes this reticence on the part of heretics is no evil, should consider in the first place, that in consequence of it there is never any fair and thorough discussion of heretical opinions; and that such of them as could not stand such a discussion, though they may be prevented from spreading, do not disappear. But it is not the minds of heretics that are deteriorated most, by the ban placed on all inquiry which does not end in the orthodox conclusions. The greatest harm done is to those who are not heretics, and whose whole mental development is cramped, and their reason cowed, by the fear of heresy. Who can compute what the world loses in the multitude of promising intellects combined with timid characters, who dare not follow out any bold, vigorous, independent train of thought, lest it should land them in something which would[Pg 62] admit of being considered irreligious or immoral? Among them we may occasionally see some man of deep conscientiousness, and subtle and refined understanding, who spends a life in sophisticating with an intellect which he cannot silence, and exhausts the resources of ingenuity in attempting to reconcile the promptings of his conscience and reason with orthodoxy, which yet he does not, perhaps, to the end succeed in doing. No one can be a great thinker who does not recognise, that as a thinker it is his first duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead. Truth gains more even by the errors of one who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself, than by the true opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think. Not that it is solely, or chiefly, to form great thinkers, that freedom of thinking is required. On the contrary, it is as much, and even more indispensable, to enable average human beings to attain the mental stature which they are capable of. There have been, and may again be, great individual thinkers, in a general atmosphere of mental slavery. But there never has been, nor ever will be, in that atmosphere, an intellectually active people. Where any people has made a temporary approach to such a character, it has[Pg 63] been because the dread of heterodox speculation was for a time suspended. Where there is a tacit convention that principles are not to be disputed; where the discussion of the greatest questions which can occupy humanity is considered to be closed, we cannot hope to find that generally high scale of mental activity which has made some periods of history so remarkable. Never when controversy avoided the subjects which are large and important enough to kindle enthusiasm, was the mind of a people stirred up from its foundations, and the impulse given which raised even persons of the most ordinary intellect to something of the dignity of thinking beings. Of such we have had an example in the condition of Europe during the times immediately following the Reformation; another, though limited to the Continent and to a more cultivated class, in the speculative movement of the latter half of the eighteenth century; and a third, of still briefer duration, in the intellectual fermentation of Germany during the Goethian and Fichteian period. These periods differed widely in the particular opinions which they developed; but were alike in this, that during all three the yoke of authority was broken. In each, an old mental despotism had been thrown off, and no new one had yet[Pg 64] taken its place. The impulse given at these three periods has made Europe what it now is. Every single improvement which has taken place either in the human mind or in institutions, may be traced distinctly to one or other of them. Appearances have for some time indicated that all three impulses are well-nigh spent; and we can expect no fresh start, until we again assert our mental freedom.

Let us now pass to the second division of the argument, and dismissing the supposition that any of the received opinions may be false, let us assume them to be true, and examine into the worth of the manner in which they are likely to be held, when their truth is not freely and openly canvassed. However unwillingly a person who has a strong opinion may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.

There is a class of persons (happily not quite so numerous as formerly) who think it enough if a person assents undoubtingly to what they think true, though he has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion, and could not make a[Pg 65] tenable defence of it against the most superficial objections. Such persons, if they can once get their creed taught from authority, naturally think that no good, and some harm, comes of its being allowed to be questioned. Where their influence prevails, they make it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerately, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument. Waiving, however, this possibility—assuming that the true opinion abides in the mind, but abides as a prejudice, a belief independent of, and proof against, argument—this is not the way in which truth ought to be held by a rational being. This is not knowing the truth. Truth, thus held, is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth.

If the intellect and judgment of mankind ought to be cultivated, a thing which Protestants at least do not deny, on what can these faculties be more appropriately exercised by any one, than on the things which concern him so much that it is considered necessary for him to hold opinions on[Pg 66] them? If the cultivation of the understanding consists in one thing more than in another, it is surely in learning the grounds of one's own opinions. Whatever people believe, on subjects on which it is of the first importance to believe rightly, they ought to be able to defend against at least the common objections. But, some one may say, "Let them be *taught* the

grounds of their opinions. It does not follow that opinions must be merely parroted because they are never heard controverted. Persons who learn geometry do not simply commit the theorems to memory, but understand and learn likewise the demonstrations; and it would be absurd to say that they remain ignorant of the grounds of geometrical truths, because they never hear any one deny, and attempt to disprove them." Undoubtedly: and such teaching suffices on a subject like mathematics, where there is nothing at all to be said on the wrong side of the question. The peculiarity of the evidence of mathematical truths is, that all the argument is on one side. There are no objections, and no answers to objections. But on every subject on which difference of opinion is possible, the truth depends on a balance to be struck between two sets of conflicting reasons. Even in natural philosophy, there is always some[Pg 67] other explanation possible of the same facts; some geocentric theory instead of heliocentric, some phlogiston instead of oxygen; and it has to be shown why that other theory cannot be the true one: and until this is shown, and until we know how it is shown, we do not understand the grounds of our opinion. But when we turn to subjects infinitely more complicated, to morals, religion, politics, social relations, and the business of life, three-fourths of the arguments for every disputed opinion consist in dispelling the appearances which favour some opinion different from it. The greatest orator, save one, of antiquity, has left it on record that he always studied his adversary's case with as great, if not with still greater, intensity than even his own. What Cicero practised as the means of forensic success, requires to be imitated by all who study any subject in order to arrive at the truth. He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side; if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion. The rational position for him would be suspension of judgment, and unless he contents himself with that, he is either[Pg 68] led by authority, or adopts, like the generality of the world, the side to which he feels most inclination. Nor is it enough that he should hear the arguments of adversaries from his own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations. That is not the way to do justice to the arguments, or bring them into real contact with his own mind. He must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest, and do their very utmost for them. He must know them in their most plausible and persuasive form; he must feel the whole force of the difficulty which the true view of the subject has to encounter and dispose of; else he will never really possess himself of the portion of truth which meets and removes that difficulty. Ninety-nine in a hundred of what are called educated men are in this condition; even of those who can argue fluently for their opinions. Their conclusion may be true, but it might be false for anything they know: they have never thrown themselves into the mental position of those who think differently from them, and considered what such persons may have to say; and consequently they do not, in any proper sense of the word, know the doctrine which they themselves profess. They do[Pg 69] not know those parts of it which explain and justify the remainder; the considerations which show that a fact which seemingly conflicts with another is reconcilable with it, or that, of two apparently strong reasons, one and not the other ought to be preferred. All that part of the truth which turns the scale, and decides the judgment of a completely informed mind, they are strangers to; nor is it ever really known, but to those who have attended equally and impartially to both sides, and endeavoured to see the reasons of both in the strongest light. So essential is this discipline to a real understanding of moral and human subjects, that if opponents of all important truths do not exist, it is indispensable to imagine them, and supply them with the strongest arguments which the most skilful devil's advocate can conjure up.

To abate the force of these considerations, an enemy of free discussion may be supposed to say, that there is no necessity for mankind in general to know and understand all that can be said against or for their opinions by philosophers and theologians. That it is not needful for common men to be able to expose all the misstatements or fallacies of an ingenious opponent. That it is enough if there is always somebody capable of[Pg 70] answering them, so that nothing likely to mislead uninstructed persons remains unrefuted. That simple minds, having been taught the obvious grounds of the truths inculcated on them, may trust to authority for the rest, and being aware that they have neither knowledge nor talent to resolve every difficulty which can be raised, may repose in the assurance that all those which have been raised have been or can be answered, by those who are specially trained to the task.

Conceding to this view of the subject the utmost that can be claimed for it by those most easily satisfied with the amount of understanding of truth which ought to accompany the belief of it; even so, the argument for free discussion is no way weakened. For even this doctrine acknowledges that mankind ought to have a rational assurance that all objections have been satisfactorily answered; and how are they to be answered if that which requires to be answered is not spoken? or how can the answer be known to be satisfactory, if the objectors have no opportunity of showing that it is unsatisfactory? If not the public, at least the philosophers and theologians who are to resolve the difficulties, must make themselves familiar with those difficulties in their most puzzling form; and this cannot be [Pg 71]accomplished unless they are freely stated, and placed in the most advantageous light which they admit of. The Catholic Church has its own way of dealing with this embarrassing problem. It makes a broad separation between those who can be permitted to receive its doctrines on conviction, and those who must accept them on trust. Neither, indeed, are allowed any choice as to what they will accept; but the clergy, such at

least as can be fully confided in, may admissibly and meritoriously make themselves acquainted with the arguments of opponents, in order to answer them, and may, therefore, read heretical books; the laity, not unless by special permission, hard to be obtained. This discipline recognises a knowledge of the enemy's case as beneficial to the teachers, but finds means, consistent with this, of denying it to the rest of the world: thus giving to the *élite* more mental culture, though not more mental freedom, than it allows to the mass. By this device it succeeds in obtaining the kind of mental superiority which its purposes require; for though culture without freedom never made a large and liberal mind, it can make a clever *nisi prius* advocate of a cause. But in countries professing Protestantism, this resource is denied; since Protestants hold, at least in theory, that the [Pg 72] responsibility for the choice of a religion must be borne by each for himself, and cannot be thrown off upon teachers. Besides, in the present state of the world, it is practically impossible that writings which are read by the instructed can be kept from the uninstructed. If the teachers of mankind are to be cognisant of all that they ought to know, everything must be free to be written and published without restraint.

If, however, the mischievous operation of the absence of free discussion, when the received opinions are true, were confined to leaving men ignorant of the grounds of those opinions, it might be thought that this, if an intellectual, is no moral evil, and does not affect the worth of the opinions, regarded in their influence on the character. The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it, cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate. Instead of a vivid conception and a living belief, there remain only a few phrases retained by rote; or, if any part, the shell and husk only of the meaning is retained, the finer essence being lost. The great chapter in human history which this fact occupies [Pg 73] and fills, cannot be too earnestly studied and meditated on.

It is illustrated in the experience of almost all ethical doctrines and religious creeds. They are all full of meaning and vitality to those who originate them, and to the direct disciples of the originators. Their meaning continues to be felt in undiminished strength, and is perhaps brought out into even fuller consciousness, so long as the struggle lasts to give the doctrine or creed an ascendancy over other creeds. At last it either prevails, and becomes the general opinion, or its progress stops; it keeps possession of the ground it has gained, but ceases to spread further. When either of these results has become apparent, controversy on the subject flags, and gradually dies away. The doctrine has taken its place, if not as a received opinion, as one of the admitted sects or divisions of opinion: those who hold it have generally inherited, not adopted it; and conversion from one of these doctrines to another, being now an exceptional fact, occupies little place in the thoughts of their professors. Instead of being, as at first, constantly on the alert either to defend themselves against the world, or to bring the world over to them, they have subsided into acquiescence, and neither listen, when they [Pg 74] can help it, to arguments against their creed, nor trouble dissentients (if there be such) with arguments in its favour. From this time may usually be dated the decline in the living power of the doctrine. We often hear the teachers of all creeds lamenting the difficulty of keeping up in the minds of believers a lively apprehension of the truth which they nominally recognise, so that it may penetrate the feelings, and acquire a real mastery over the conduct. No such difficulty is complained of while the creed is still fighting for its existence: even the weaker combatants then know and feel what they are fighting for, and the difference between it and other doctrines; and in that period of every creed's existence, not a few persons may be found, who have realised its fundamental principles in all the forms of thought, have weighed and considered them in all their important bearings, and have experienced the full effect on the character, which belief in that creed ought to produce in a mind thoroughly imbued with it. But when it has come to be a hereditary creed, and to be received passively, not actively—when the mind is no longer compelled, in the same degree as at first, to exercise its vital powers on the questions which its belief presents to it, there is a progressive tendency to forget all of the [Pg 75] belief except the formularies, or to give it a dull and torpid assent, as if accepting it on trust dispensed with the necessity of realising it in consciousness, or testing it by personal experience; until it almost ceases to connect itself at all with the inner life of the human being. Then are seen the cases, so frequent in this age of the world as almost to form the majority, in which the creed remains as it were outside the mind, encrusting and petrifying it against all other influences addressed to the higher parts of our nature; manifesting its power by not suffering any fresh and living conviction to get in, but itself doing nothing for the mind or heart, except standing sentinel over them to keep them vacant.

To what an extent doctrines intrinsically fitted to make the deepest impression upon the mind may remain in it as dead beliefs, without being ever realised in the imagination, the feelings, or the understanding, is exemplified by the manner in which the majority of believers hold the doctrines of Christianity. By Christianity I here mean what is accounted such by all churches and sects—the maxims and precepts contained in the New Testament. These are considered sacred, and accepted as laws, by all professing Christians. Yet it is scarcely too much to say that not one [Pg 76] Christian in a thousand guides or tests his individual conduct by reference to those laws. The standard to which he does refer it, is the custom of his nation, his class, or his religious profession. He has thus, on the one hand, a collection of ethical maxims, which he believes to have been vouchsafed to him by infallible wisdom as

rules for his government; and on the other, a set of every-day judgments and practices, which go a certain length with some of those maxims, not so great a length with others, stand in direct opposition to some, and are, on the whole, a compromise between the Christian creed and the interests and suggestions of worldly life. To the first of these standards he gives his homage; to the other his real allegiance. All Christians believe that the blessed are the poor and humble, and those who are ill-used by the world; that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven; that they should judge not, lest they be judged; that they should swear not at all; that they should love their neighbour as themselves; that if one take their cloak, they should give him their coat also; that they should take no thought for the morrow; that if they would be perfect, they should sell all that they have and give it to[Pg 77] the poor. They are not insincere when they say that they believe these things. They do believe them, as people believe what they have always heard lauded and never discussed. But in the sense of that living belief which regulates conduct, they believe these doctrines just up to the point to which it is usual to act upon them. The doctrines in their integrity are serviceable to pelt adversaries with; and it is understood that they are to be put forward (when possible) as the reasons for whatever people do that they think laudable. But any one who reminded them that the maxims require an infinity of things which they never even think of doing, would gain nothing but to be classed among those very unpopular characters who affect to be better than other people. The doctrines have no hold on ordinary believers—are not a power in their minds. They have a habitual respect for the sound of them, but no feeling which spreads from the words to the things signified, and forces the mind to take *them* in, and make them conform to the formula. Whenever conduct is concerned, they look round for Mr. A and B to direct them how far to go in obeying Christ.

Now we may be well assured that the case was not thus, but far otherwise, with the early[Pg 78] Christians. Had it been thus, Christianity never would have expanded from an obscure sect of the despised Hebrews into the religion of the Roman empire. When their enemies said, “See how these Christians love one another” (a remark not likely to be made by anybody now), they assuredly had a much livelier feeling of the meaning of their creed than they have ever had since. And to this cause, probably, it is chiefly owing that Christianity now makes so little progress in extending its domain, and after eighteen centuries, is still nearly confined to Europeans and the descendants of Europeans. Even with the strictly religious, who are much in earnest about their doctrines, and attach a greater amount of meaning to many of them than people in general, it commonly happens that the part which is thus comparatively active in their minds is that which was made by Calvin, or Knox, or some such person much nearer in character to themselves. The sayings of Christ coexist passively in their minds, producing hardly any effect beyond what is caused by mere listening to words so amiable and bland. There are many reasons, doubtless, why doctrines which are the badge of a sect retain more of their vitality than those common to all recognised sects, and why more pains are taken by teachers to keep their[Pg 79] meaning alive; but one reason certainly is, that the peculiar doctrines are more questioned, and have to be oftener defended against open gainsayers. Both teachers and learners go to sleep at their post, as soon as there is no enemy in the field.

The same thing holds true, generally speaking, of all traditional doctrines—those of prudence and knowledge of life, as well as of morals or religion. All languages and literatures are full of general observations on life, both as to what it is, and how to conduct oneself in it; observations which everybody knows, which everybody repeats, or hears with acquiescence, which are received as truisms, yet of which most people first truly learn the meaning, when experience, generally of a painful kind, has made it a reality to them. How often, when smarting under some unforeseen misfortune or disappointment, does a person call to mind some proverb or common saying, familiar to him all his life, the meaning of which, if he had ever before felt it as he does now, would have saved him from the calamity. There are indeed reasons for this, other than the absence of discussion: there are many truths of which the full meaning *cannot* be realised, until personal experience has brought it home. But much more of[Pg 80] the meaning even of these would have been understood, and what was understood would have been far more deeply impressed on the mind, if the man had been accustomed to hear it argued *pro* and *con* by people who did understand it. The fatal tendency of mankind to leave off thinking about a thing when it is no longer doubtful, is the cause of half their errors. A contemporary author has well spoken of “the deep slumber of a decided opinion.”

But what! (it may be asked) Is the absence of unanimity an indispensable condition of true knowledge? Is it necessary that some part of mankind should persist in error, to enable any to realise the truth? Does a belief cease to be real and vital as soon as it is generally received—and is a proposition never thoroughly understood and felt unless some doubt of it remains? As soon as mankind have unanimously accepted a truth, does the truth perish within them? The highest aim and best result of improved intelligence, it has hitherto been thought, is to unite mankind more and more in the acknowledgment of all important truths: and does the intelligence only last as long as it has not achieved its object? Do the fruits of conquest perish by the very completeness of the victory?

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I affirm no such thing. As mankind improve, the number of doctrines which are no longer disputed or doubted will be constantly on the increase: and the well-being of mankind may almost be measured by the number and gravity of the truths which have reached the point of being uncontested. The cessation, on one question after another, of serious controversy, is one of the necessary incidents of the consolidation of opinion; a consolidation as salutary in the case of true opinions, as it is dangerous and noxious when the opinions are erroneous. But though this gradual narrowing of the bounds of diversity of opinion is necessary in both senses of the term, being at once inevitable and indispensable, we are not therefore obliged to conclude that all its consequences must be beneficial. The loss of so important an aid to the intelligent and living apprehension of a truth, as is afforded by the necessity of explaining it to, or defending it against, opponents, though not sufficient to outweigh, is no trifling drawback from, the benefit of its universal recognition. Where this advantage can no longer be had, I confess I should like to see the teachers of mankind endeavouring to provide a substitute for it; some contrivance for making the difficulties of the question as present to the learner's consciousness,[Pg 82] as if they were pressed upon him by a dissentient champion, eager for his conversion.

But instead of seeking contrivances for this purpose, they have lost those they formerly had. The Socratic dialectics, so magnificently exemplified in the dialogues of Plato, were a contrivance of this description. They were essentially a negative discussion of the great questions of philosophy and life, directed with consummate skill to the purpose of convincing any one who had merely adopted the commonplaces of received opinion, that he did not understand the subject—that he as yet attached no definite meaning to the doctrines he professed; in order that, becoming aware of his ignorance, he might be put in the way to attain a stable belief, resting on a clear apprehension both of the meaning of doctrines and of their evidence. The school disputations of the middle ages had a somewhat similar object. They were intended to make sure that the pupil understood his own opinion, and (by necessary correlation) the opinion opposed to it, and could enforce the grounds of the one and confute those of the other. These last-mentioned contests had indeed the incurable defect, that the premises appealed to were taken from authority, not from reason; and, as a discipline to the mind, they were in every respect[Pg 83] inferior to the powerful dialectics which formed the intellects of the "Socratici viri": but the modern mind owes far more to both than it is generally willing to admit, and the present modes of education contain nothing which in the smallest degree supplies the place either of the one or of the other. A person who derives all his instruction from teachers or books, even if he escape the besetting temptation of contenting himself with cram, is under no compulsion to hear both sides; accordingly it is far from a frequent accomplishment, even among thinkers, to know both sides; and the weakest part of what everybody says in defence of his opinion, is what he intends as a reply to antagonists. It is the fashion of the present time to disparage negative logic—that which points out weaknesses in theory or errors in practice, without establishing positive truths. Such negative criticism would indeed be poor enough as an ultimate result; but as a means to attaining any positive knowledge or conviction worthy the name, it cannot be valued too highly; and until people are again systematically trained to it, there will be few great thinkers, and a low general average of intellect, in any but the mathematical and physical departments of speculation. On any other subject no one's opinions deserve the name[Pg 84] of knowledge, except so far as he has either had forced upon him by others, or gone through of himself, the same mental process which would have been required of him in carrying on an active controversy with opponents. That, therefore, which when absent, it is so indispensable, but so difficult, to create, how worse than absurd is it to forego, when spontaneously offering itself! If there are any persons who contest a received opinion, or who will do so if law or opinion will let them, let us thank them for it, open our minds to listen to them, and rejoice that there is some one to do for us what we otherwise ought, if we have any regard for either the certainty or the vitality of our convictions, to do with much greater labour for ourselves.

It still remains to speak of one of the principal causes which make diversity of opinion advantageous, and will continue to do so until mankind shall have entered a stage of intellectual advancement which at present seems at an incalculable distance. We have hitherto considered only two possibilities: that the received opinion may be false, and some other opinion, consequently, true; or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension[Pg 85] and deep feeling of its truth. But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them; and the nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth, of which the received doctrine embodies only a part. Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth. They are a part of the truth; sometimes a greater, sometimes a smaller part, but exaggerated, distorted, and disjointed from the truths by which they ought to be accompanied and limited. Heretical opinions, on the other hand, are generally some of these suppressed and neglected truths, bursting the bonds which kept them down, and either seeking reconciliation with the truth contained in the common opinion, or fronting it as enemies, and setting themselves up, with similar exclusiveness, as the whole truth. The latter case is hitherto the most frequent, as, in the human mind, one-sidedness has always been the rule, and many-sidedness the exception. Hence, even in revolutions of opinion, one part of the truth usually sets while another rises. Even progress, which ought to superadd, for the most part only substitutes one partial and incomplete truth for[Pg 86]

another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the new fragment of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces. Such being the partial character of prevailing opinions, even when resting on a true foundation; every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious, with whatever amount of error and confusion that truth may be blended. No sober judge of human affairs will feel bound to be indignant because those who force on our notice truths which we should otherwise have overlooked, overlook some of those which we see. Rather, he will think that so long as popular truth is one-sided, it is more desirable than otherwise that unpopular truth should have one-sided asserters too; such being usually the most energetic, and the most likely to compel reluctant attention to the fragment of wisdom which they proclaim as if it were the whole.

Thus, in the eighteenth century, when nearly all the instructed, and all those of the uninstructed who were led by them, were lost in admiration of what is called civilisation, and of the marvels of modern science, literature, and philosophy, and while greatly overrating the amount of unlikeness[Pg 87] between the men of modern and those of ancient times, indulged the belief that the whole of the difference was in their own favour; with what a salutary shock did the paradoxes of Rousseau explode like bombshells in the midst, dislocating the compact mass of one-sided opinion, and forcing its elements to recombine in a better form and with additional ingredients. Not that the current opinions were on the whole farther from the truth than Rousseau's were; on the contrary, they were nearer to it; they contained more of positive truth, and very much less of error. Nevertheless there lay in Rousseau's doctrine, and has floated down the stream of opinion along with it, a considerable amount of exactly those truths which the popular opinion wanted; and these are the deposit which was left behind when the flood subsided. The superior worth of simplicity of life, the enervating and demoralising effect of the trammels and hypocrisies of artificial society, are ideas which have never been entirely absent from cultivated minds since Rousseau wrote; and they will in time produce their due effect, though at present needing to be asserted as much as ever, and to be asserted by deeds, for words, on this subject, have nearly exhausted their power.

In politics, again, it is almost a commonplace,[Pg 88] that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life; until the one or the other shall have so enlarged its mental grasp as to be a party equally of order and of progress, knowing and distinguishing what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away. Each of these modes of thinking derives its utility from the deficiencies of the other; but it is in a great measure the opposition of the other that keeps each within the limits of reason and sanity. Unless opinions favourable to democracy and to aristocracy, to property and to equality, to co-operation and to competition, to luxury and to abstinence, to sociality and individuality, to liberty and discipline, and all the other standing antagonisms of practical life, are expressed with equal freedom, and enforced and defended with equal talent and energy, there is no chance of both elements obtaining their due; one scale is sure to go up and the other down. Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between[Pg 89]combatants fighting under hostile banners. On any of the great open questions just enumerated, if either of the two opinions has a better claim than the other, not merely to be tolerated, but to be encouraged and countenanced, it is the one which happens at the particular time and place to be in a minority. That is the opinion which, for the time being, represents the neglected interests, the side of human well-being which is in danger of obtaining less than its share. I am aware that there is not, in this country, any intolerance of differences of opinion on most of these topics. They are adduced to show, by admitted and multiplied examples, the universality of the fact, that only through diversity of opinion is there, in the existing state of human intellect, a chance of fair-play to all sides of the truth. When there are persons to be found, who form an exception to the apparent unanimity of the world on any subject, even if the world is in the right, it is always probable that dissentients have something worth hearing to say for themselves, and that truth would lose something by their silence.

It may be objected, "But *some* received principles, especially on the highest and most vital subjects, are more than half-truths. The Christian morality, for instance, is the whole truth[Pg 90] on that subject, and if any one teaches a morality which varies from it, he is wholly in error." As this is of all cases the most important in practice, none can be fitter to test the general maxim. But before pronouncing what Christian morality is or is not, it would be desirable to decide what is meant by Christian morality. If it means the morality of the New Testament, I wonder that any one who derives his knowledge of this from the book itself, can suppose that it was announced, or intended, as a complete doctrine of morals. The Gospel always refers to a pre-existing morality, and confines its precepts to the particulars in which that morality was to be corrected, or superseded by a wider and higher; expressing itself, moreover, in terms most general, often impossible to be interpreted literally, and possessing rather the impressiveness of poetry or eloquence than the precision of legislation. To extract from it a body of ethical doctrine, has ever been possible without eking it out from the Old Testament, that is, from a system elaborate indeed, but in many respects barbarous, and intended only for a barbarous people. St. Paul, a declared enemy to this Judaical mode of interpreting the doctrine and filling up the scheme of his Master, equally assumes

a pre-existing[Pg 91] morality, namely, that of the Greeks and Romans; and his advice to Christians is in a great measure a system of accommodation to that; even to the extent of giving an apparent sanction to slavery. What is called Christian, but should rather be termed theological, morality, was not the work of Christ or the Apostles, but is of much later origin, having been gradually built up by the Catholic church of the first five centuries, and though not implicitly adopted by moderns and Protestants, has been much less modified by them than might have been expected. For the most part, indeed, they have contented themselves with cutting off the additions which had been made to it in the middle ages, each sect supplying the place by fresh additions, adapted to its own character and tendencies. That mankind owe a great debt to this morality, and to its early teachers, I should be the last person to deny; but I do not scruple to say of it, that it is, in many important points, incomplete and one-sided, and that unless ideas and feelings, not sanctioned by it, had contributed to the formation of European life and character, human affairs would have been in a worse condition than they now are. Christian morality (so called) has all the characters of a reaction; it is, in great part, a protest against Paganism. Its[Pg 92] ideal is negative rather than positive; passive rather than active; Innocence rather than Nobleness; Abstinence from Evil, rather than energetic Pursuit of Good: in its precepts (as has been well said) "thou shalt not" predominates unduly over "thou shalt." In its horror of sensuality, it made an idol of asceticism, which has been gradually compromised away into one of legality. It holds out the hope of heaven and the threat of hell, as the appointed and appropriate motives to a virtuous life: in this falling far below the best of the ancients, and doing what lies in it to give to human morality an essentially selfish character, by disconnecting each man's feelings of duty from the interests of his fellow-creatures, except so far as a self-interested inducement is offered to him for consulting them. It is essentially a doctrine of passive obedience; it inculcates submission to all authorities found established; who indeed are not to be actively obeyed when they command what religion forbids, but who are not to be resisted, far less rebelled against, for any amount of wrong to ourselves. And while, in the morality of the best Pagan nations, duty to the State holds even a disproportionate place, infringing on the just liberty of the individual; in purely Christian ethics, that grand department of duty is scarcely[Pg 93] noticed or acknowledged. It is in the Koran, not the New Testament, that we read the maxim—"A ruler who appoints any man to an office, when there is in his dominions another man better qualified for it, sins against God and against the State." What little recognition the idea of obligation to the public obtains in modern morality, is derived from Greek and Roman sources, not from Christian; as, even in the morality of private life, whatever exists of magnanimity, high-mindedness, personal dignity, even the sense of honour, is derived from the purely human, not the religious part of our education, and never could have grown out of a standard of ethics in which the only worth, professedly recognised, is that of obedience.

I am as far as any one from pretending that these defects are necessarily inherent in the Christian ethics, in every manner in which it can be conceived, or that the many requisites of a complete moral doctrine which it does not contain, do not admit of being reconciled with it. Far less would I insinuate this of the doctrines and precepts of Christ himself. I believe that the sayings of Christ are all, that I can see any evidence of their having been intended to be; that they are irreconcilable with nothing which a[Pg 94] comprehensive morality requires; that everything which is excellent in ethics may be brought within them, with no greater violence to their language than has been done to it by all who have attempted to deduce from them any practical system of conduct whatever. But it is quite consistent with this, to believe that they contain, and were meant to contain, only a part of the truth; that many essential elements of the highest morality are among the things which are not provided for, nor intended to be provided for, in the recorded deliverances of the Founder of Christianity, and which have been entirely thrown aside in the system of ethics erected on the basis of those deliverances by the Christian Church. And this being so, I think it a great error to persist in attempting to find in the Christian doctrine that complete rule for our guidance, which its author intended it to sanction and enforce, but only partially to provide. I believe, too, that this narrow theory is becoming a grave practical evil, detracting greatly from the value of the moral training and instruction, which so many well-meaning persons are now at length exerting themselves to promote. I much fear that by attempting to form the mind and feelings on an exclusively religious type, and discarding those[Pg 95] secular standards (as for want of a better name they may be called) which heretofore co-existed with and supplemented the Christian ethics, receiving some of its spirit, and infusing into it some of theirs, there will result, and is even now resulting, a low, abject, servile type of character, which, submit itself as it may to what it deems the Supreme Will, is incapable of rising to or sympathising in the conception of Supreme Goodness. I believe that other ethics than any which can be evolved from exclusively Christian sources, must exist side by side with Christian ethics to produce the moral regeneration of mankind; and that the Christian system is no exception to the rule, that in an imperfect state of the human mind, the interests of truth require a diversity of opinions. It is not necessary that in ceasing to ignore the moral truths not contained in Christianity, men should ignore any of those which it does contain. Such prejudice, or oversight, when it occurs, is altogether an evil; but it is one from which we cannot hope to be always exempt, and must be regarded as the price paid for an inestimable good. The exclusive pretension made by a part of the truth to be the whole, must and ought to be protested against, and if a reactionary impulse should make the protestors[Pg 96] unjust in their turn, this one-sidedness, like the other, may

be lamented, but must be tolerated. If Christians would teach infidels to be just to Christianity, they should themselves be just to infidelity. It can do truth no service to blink the fact, known to all who have the most ordinary acquaintance with literary history, that a large portion of the noblest and most valuable moral teaching has been the work, not only of men who did not know, but of men who knew and rejected, the Christian faith.

I do not pretend that the most unlimited use of the freedom of enunciating all possible opinions would put an end to the evils of religious or philosophical sectarianism. Every truth which men of narrow capacity are in earnest about, is sure to be asserted, inculcated, and in many ways even acted on, as if no other truth existed in the world, or at all events none that could limit or qualify the first. I acknowledge that the tendency of all opinions to become sectarian is not cured by the freest discussion, but is often heightened and exacerbated thereby; the truth which ought to have been, but was not, seen, being rejected all the more violently because proclaimed by persons regarded as opponents. But it is not on the impassioned partisan, it is on the calmer and more [Pg 97] disinterested bystander, that this collision of opinions works its salutary effect. Not the violent conflict between parts of the truth, but the quiet suppression of half of it, is the formidable evil: there is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides; it is when they attend only to one that errors harden into prejudices, and truth itself ceases to have the effect of truth, by being exaggerated into falsehood. And since there are few mental attributes more rare than that judicial faculty which can sit in intelligent judgment between two sides of a question, of which only one is represented by an advocate before it, truth has no chance but in proportion as every side of it, every opinion which embodies any fraction of the truth, not only finds advocates, but is so advocated as to be listened to.

We have now recognised the necessity to the mental well-being of mankind (on which all their other well-being depends) of freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of opinion, on four distinct grounds; which we will now briefly recapitulate.

First, if any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility.

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Secondly, though the silenced opinion be an error, it may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions, that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied.

Thirdly, even if the received opinion be not only true, but the whole truth; unless it is suffered to be, and actually is, vigorously and earnestly contested, it will, by most of those who receive it, be held in the manner of a prejudice, with little comprehension or feeling of its rational grounds. And not only this, but, fourthly, the meaning of the doctrine itself will be in danger of being lost, or enfeebled, and deprived of its vital effect on the character and conduct: the dogma becoming a mere formal profession, inefficacious for good, but cumbering the ground, and preventing the growth of any real and heartfelt conviction, from reason or personal experience.

Before quitting the subject of freedom of opinion, it is fit to take some notice of those who say, that the free expression of all opinions should be permitted, on condition that the manner be temperate, and do not pass the bounds of fair discussion. Much might be said on the [Pg 99] impossibility of fixing where these supposed bounds are to be placed; for if the test be offence to those whose opinion is attacked, I think experience testifies that this offence is given whenever the attack is telling and powerful, and that every opponent who pushes them hard, and whom they find it difficult to answer, appears to them, if he shows any strong feeling on the subject, an intemperate opponent. But this, though an important consideration in a practical point of view, merges in a more fundamental objection. Undoubtedly the manner of asserting an opinion, even though it be a true one, may be very objectionable, and may justly incur severe censure. But the principal offences of the kind are such as it is mostly impossible, unless by accidental self-betrayal, to bring home to conviction. The gravest of them is, to argue sophistically, to suppress facts or arguments, to misstate the elements of the case, or misrepresent the opposite opinion. But all this, even to the most aggravated degree, is so continually done in perfect good faith, by persons who are not considered, and in many other respects may not deserve to be considered, ignorant or incompetent, that it is rarely possible on adequate grounds conscientiously to stamp the misrepresentation as morally culpable; and still [Pg 100] less could law presume to interfere with this kind of controversial misconduct. With regard to what is commonly meant by intemperate discussion, namely invective, sarcasm, personality, and the like, the denunciation of these weapons would deserve more sympathy if it were ever proposed to interdict them equally to both sides; but it is only desired to restrain the employment of them against the prevailing opinion: against the unprevailing they may not only be used without general disapproval, but will be likely to obtain for him who uses them the praise of honest zeal and righteous indignation. Yet whatever mischief arises from their use, is greatest

when they are employed against the comparatively defenceless; and whatever unfair advantage can be derived by any opinion from this mode of asserting it, accrues almost exclusively to received opinions. The worst offence of this kind which can be committed by a polemic, is to stigmatise those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men. To calumny of this sort, those who hold any unpopular opinion are peculiarly exposed, because they are in general few and uninfluential, and nobody but themselves feel much interest in seeing justice done them; but this weapon is, from the nature of the case, denied to those who attack [Pg 101] a prevailing opinion: they can neither use it with safety to themselves, nor, if they could, would it do anything but recoil on their own cause. In general, opinions contrary to those commonly received can only obtain a hearing by studied moderation of language, and the most cautious avoidance of unnecessary offence, from which they hardly ever deviate even in a slight degree without losing ground: while unmeasured vituperation employed on the side of the prevailing opinion, really does deter people from professing contrary opinions, and from listening to those who profess them. For the interest, therefore, of truth and justice, it is far more important to restrain this employment of vituperative language than the other; and, for example, if it were necessary to choose, there would be much more need to discourage offensive attacks on infidelity, than on religion. It is, however, obvious that law and authority have no business with restraining either, while opinion ought, in every instance, to determine its verdict by the circumstances of the individual case; condemning every one, on whichever side of the argument he places himself, in whose mode of advocacy either want of candour, or malignity, bigotry, or intolerance of feeling manifest themselves; but not inferring these vices from the side [Pg 102] which a person takes, though it be the contrary side of the question to our own: and giving merited honour to every one, whatever opinion he may hold, who has calmness to see and honesty to state what his opponents and their opinions really are, exaggerating nothing to their discredit, keeping nothing back which tells, or can be supposed to tell, in their favour. This is the real morality of public discussion; and if often violated, I am happy to think that there are many controversialists who to a great extent observe it, and a still greater number who conscientiously strive towards it.

## FOOTNOTES:

(Note:

[6] These words had scarcely been written, when, as if to give them an emphatic contradiction, occurred the Government Press Prosecutions of 1858. That ill-judged interference with the liberty of public discussion has not, however, induced me to alter a single word in the text, nor has it at all weakened my conviction that, moments of panic excepted, the era of pains and penalties for political discussion has, in our own country, passed away. For, in the first place, the prosecutions were not persisted in; and, in the second, they were never, properly speaking, political prosecutions. The offence charged was not that of criticising institutions, or the acts or persons of rulers, but of circulating what was deemed an immoral doctrine, the lawfulness of Tyrannicide.

If the arguments of the present chapter are of any validity, there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered. It would, therefore, be irrelevant and out of place to examine here, whether the doctrine of Tyrannicide deserves that title. I shall content myself with saying, that the subject has been at all times one of the open questions of morals; that the act of a private citizen in striking down a criminal, who, by raising himself above the law, has placed himself beyond the reach of legal punishment or control, has been accounted by whole nations, and by some of the best and wisest of men, not a crime, but an act of exalted virtue; and that, right or wrong, it is not of the nature of assassination, but of civil war. As such, I hold that the instigation to it, in a specific case, may be a proper subject of punishment, but only if an overt act has followed, and at least a probable connection can be established between the act and the instigation. Even then, it is not a foreign government, but the very government assailed, which alone, in the exercise of self-defence, can legitimately punish attacks directed against its own existence.

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(Note:

[7] Thomas Pooley, Bodmin Assizes, July 31, 1857. In December following, he received a free pardon from the Crown.

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(Note:

[8] George Jacob Holyoake, August 17, 1857; Edward Truelove, July, 1857.

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(Note:

[9] Baron de Gleichen, Marlborough-Street Police Court, August 4, 1857.

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(Note:

[10] Ample warning may be drawn from the large infusion of the passions of a persecutor, which mingled with the general display of the worst parts of our national character on the occasion of the Sepoy insurrection. The ravings of fanatics or charlatans from the pulpit may be unworthy of notice; but the heads of the Evangelical party have announced as their principle, for the government of Hindoos and Mahomedans, that no schools be supported by public money in which the Bible is not taught, and by necessary consequence that no public employment be given to any but real or pretended Christians. An Under-Secretary of State, in a speech delivered to his constituents on the 12th of November, 1857, is reported to have said: "Toleration of their faith" (the faith of a hundred millions of British subjects), "the superstition which they called religion, by the British Government, had had the effect of retarding the ascendancy of the British name, and preventing the salutary growth of Christianity.... Toleration was the great corner-stone of the religious liberties of this country; but do not let them abuse that precious word toleration. As he understood it, it meant the complete liberty to all, freedom of worship, *among Christians, who worshipped upon the same foundation*. It meant toleration of all sects and denominations of *Christians who believed in the one mediation*." I desire to call attention to the fact, that a man who has been deemed fit to fill a high office in the government of this country, under a liberal Ministry, maintains the doctrine that all who do not believe in the divinity of Christ are beyond the pale of toleration. Who, after this imbecile display, can indulge the illusion that religious persecution has passed away, never to return?

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## JOHN STUART MILL: ON LIBERTY (CHAPTER 3-- "OF INDIVIDUALITY, AS ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF WELL-BEING")

Such being the reasons which make it imperative that human beings should be free to form opinions, and to express their opinions without reserve; and such the baneful consequences to the intellectual, and through that to the moral nature of man, unless this liberty is either conceded, or asserted in spite of prohibition; let us next examine whether the same reasons do not require that men should be free to act upon their opinions—to carry these out in their lives, without hindrance, either physical or moral, from their fellow-men, so long as it is at their own risk and peril. This last proviso is of course indispensable. No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity, when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their[Pg 104] expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor, or that private property is robbery, ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer, or when handed about among the same mob in the form of a placard. Acts, of whatever kind, which, without justifiable cause, do harm to others, may be, and in the more important cases absolutely require to be, controlled by the unfavourable sentiments, and, when needful, by the active interference of mankind. The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. But if he refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost. That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not[Pg 105] desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognising all sides of the truth, are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opinions. As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so is it that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try

them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

In maintaining this principle, the greatest difficulty to be encountered does not lie in the appreciation of means towards an acknowledged end, but in the indifference of persons in general to the end itself. If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated [Pg 106] by the terms civilisation, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be under-valued, and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty. But the evil is, that individual spontaneity is hardly recognised by the common modes of thinking, as having any intrinsic worth, or deserving any regard on its own account. The majority, being satisfied with the ways of mankind as they now are (for it is they who make them what they are), cannot comprehend why those ways should not be good enough for everybody; and what is more, spontaneity forms no part of the ideal of the majority of moral and social reformers, but is rather looked on with jealousy, as a troublesome and perhaps rebellious obstruction to the general acceptance of what these reformers, in their own judgment, think would be best for mankind. Few persons, out of Germany, even comprehend the meaning of the doctrine which Wilhelm von Humboldt, so eminent both as a *savant* and as a politician, made the text of a treatise—that “the end of man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient [Pg 107] desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole;” that, therefore, the object “towards which every human being must ceaselessly direct his efforts, and on which especially those who design to influence their fellow-men must ever keep their eyes, is the individuality of power and development;” that for this there are two requisites, “freedom, and a variety of situations;” and that from the union of these arise “individual vigour and manifold diversity,” which combine themselves in “originality.” [11]

Little, however, as people are accustomed to a doctrine like that of Von Humboldt, and surprising as it may be to them to find so high a value attached to individuality, the question, one must nevertheless think, can only be one of degree. No one's idea of excellence in conduct is that people should do absolutely nothing but copy one another. No one would assert that people ought not to put into their mode of life, and into the conduct of their concerns, any impress whatever of their own judgment, or of their own individual character. On the other hand, it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if nothing [Pg 108] whatever had been known in the world before they came into it; as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another. Nobody denies that people should be so taught and trained in youth, as to know and benefit by the ascertained results of human experience. But it is the privilege and proper condition of a human being, arrived at the maturity of his faculties, to use and interpret experience in his own way. It is for him to find out what part of recorded experience is properly applicable to his own circumstances and character. The traditions and customs of other people are, to a certain extent, evidence of what their experience has taught *them*; presumptive evidence, and as such, have a claim to his deference: but, in the first place, their experience may be too narrow; or they may not have interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances, and customary characters: and his circumstances or his character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom, merely *as* custom, does not educate or develop in him any of the qualities [Pg 109] which are the distinctive endowment of a human being. The human faculties of perception, judgment, discriminative feeling, mental activity, and even moral preference, are exercised only in making a choice. He who does anything because it is the custom, makes no choice. He gains no practice either in discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral, like the muscular powers, are improved only by being used. The faculties are called into no exercise by doing a thing merely because others do it, no more than by believing a thing only because others believe it. If the grounds of an opinion are not conclusive to the person's own reason, his reason cannot be strengthened, but is likely to be weakened by his adopting it: and if the inducements to an act are not such as are consentaneous to his own feelings and character (where affection, or the rights of others, are not concerned), it is so much done towards rendering his feelings and character inert and torpid, instead of active and energetic.

He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to [Pg 110] gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness and self-control to hold to his deliberate decision. And these qualities he requires and exercises exactly in proportion as the part of his conduct which he determines according to his own judgment and feelings is a large one. It is possible that he might be guided in some good path, and kept out of harm's way, without any of these things. But what will be his comparative worth as a human

being? It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said, by machinery—by automatons in human form—it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilised parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature can and will produce. Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and [Pg 111] develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.

It will probably be conceded that it is desirable people should exercise their understandings, and that an intelligent following of custom, or even occasionally an intelligent deviation from custom, is better than a blind and simply mechanical adherence to it. To a certain extent it is admitted, that our understanding should be our own: but there is not the same willingness to admit that our desires and impulses should be our own likewise; or that to possess impulses of our own, and of any strength, is anything but a peril and a snare. Yet desires and impulses are as much a part of a perfect human being, as beliefs and restraints: and strong impulses are only perilous when not properly balanced; when one set of aims and inclinations is developed into strength, while others, which ought to co-exist with them, remain weak and inactive. It is not because men's desires are strong that they act ill; it is because their consciences are weak. There is no natural connection between strong impulses and a weak conscience. The natural connection is the other way. To say that one person's desires and feelings are stronger and more various than those [Pg 112] of another, is merely to say that he has more of the raw material of human nature, and is therefore capable, perhaps of more evil, but certainly of more good. Strong impulses are but another name for energy. Energy may be turned to bad uses; but more good may always be made of an energetic nature, than of an indolent and impassive one. Those who have most natural feeling, are always those whose cultivated feelings may be made the strongest. The same strong susceptibilities which make the personal impulses vivid and powerful, are also the source from whence are generated the most passionate love of virtue, and the sternest self-control. It is through the cultivation of these, that society both does its duty and protects its interests: not by rejecting the stuff of which heroes are made, because it knows not how to make them. A person whose desires and impulses are his own—are the expression of his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture—is said to have a character. One whose desires and impulses are not his own, has no character, no more than a steam-engine has a character. If, in addition to being his own, his impulses are strong, and are under the government of a strong will, he has an energetic character. Whoever thinks that [Pg 113] individuality of desires and impulses should not be encouraged to unfold itself, must maintain that society has no need of strong natures—is not the better for containing many persons who have much character—and that a high general average of energy is not desirable.

In some early states of society, these forces might be, and were, too much ahead of the power which society then possessed of disciplining and controlling them. There has been a time when the element of spontaneity and individuality was in excess, and the social principle had a hard struggle with it. The difficulty then was, to induce men of strong bodies or minds to pay obedience to any rules which required them to control their impulses. To overcome this difficulty, law and discipline, like the Popes struggling against the Emperors, asserted a power over the whole man, claiming to control all his life in order to control his character—which society had not found any other sufficient means of binding. But society has now fairly got the better of individuality; and the danger which threatens human nature is not the excess, but the deficiency, of personal impulses and preferences. Things are vastly changed, since the passions of those who were strong by station or by personal endowment [Pg 114] were in a state of habitual rebellion against laws and ordinances, and required to be rigorously chained up to enable the persons within their reach to enjoy any particle of security. In our times, from the highest class of society down to the lowest, every one lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship. Not only in what concerns others, but in what concerns only themselves, the individual, or the family, do not ask themselves—what do I prefer? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair-play, and enable it to grow and thrive? They ask themselves, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station and pecuniary circumstances? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? I do not mean that they choose what is customary, in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of; they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done: peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct, are shunned equally with [Pg 115] crimes: until by dint of not following their own nature, they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved: they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly their own. Now is this, or is it not, the desirable condition of human nature?

It is so, on the Calvinistic theory. According to that, the one great offence of man is Self-will. All the good of which humanity is capable, is comprised in Obedience. You have no choice; thus you must do, and no otherwise: "whatever is not a duty, is a sin." Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for any one until human nature is killed within him. To one holding this theory of life, crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities, is no evil: man needs no capacity, but that of surrendering himself to the will of God: and if he uses any of his faculties for any other purpose but to do that supposed will more effectually, he is better without them. That is the theory of Calvinism; and it is held, in a mitigated form, by many who do not consider themselves Calvinists; the mitigation consisting in giving a less ascetic interpretation to the alleged will of God; asserting[Pg 116] it to be his will that mankind should gratify some of their inclinations; of course not in the manner they themselves prefer, but in the way of obedience, that is, in a way prescribed to them by authority; and, therefore, by the necessary conditions of the case, the same for all.

In some such insidious form there is at present a strong tendency to this narrow theory of life, and to the pinched and hidebound type of human character which it patronises. Many persons, no doubt, sincerely think that human beings thus cramped and dwarfed, are as their Maker designed them to be; just as many have thought that trees are a much finer thing when clipped into pollards, or cut out into figures of animals, than as nature made them. But if it be any part of religion to believe that man was made by a good being, it is more consistent with that faith to believe, that this Being gave all human faculties that they might be cultivated and unfolded, not rooted out and consumed, and that he takes delight in every nearer approach made by his creatures to the ideal conception embodied in them, every increase in any of their capabilities of comprehension, of action, or of enjoyment. There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic; a conception of humanity as having its nature[Pg 117] bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. "Pagan self-assertion" is one of the elements of human worth, as well as "Christian self-denial."<sup>[12]</sup> There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings, and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. In proportion to the development of his individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is therefore capable[Pg 118] of being more valuable to others. There is a greater fulness of life about his own existence, and when there is more life in the units there is more in the mass which is composed of them. As much compression as is necessary to prevent the stronger specimens of human nature from encroaching on the rights of others, cannot be dispensed with; but for this there is ample compensation even in the point of view of human development. The means of development which the individual loses by being prevented from gratifying his inclinations to the injury of others, are chiefly obtained at the expense of the development of other people. And even to himself there is a full equivalent in the better development of the social part of his nature, rendered possible by the restraint put upon the selfish part. To be held to rigid rules of justice for the sake of others, develops the feelings and capacities which have the good of others for their object. But to be restrained in things not affecting their good, by their mere displeasure, develops nothing valuable, except such force of character as may unfold itself in resisting the restraint. If acquiesced in, it dulls and blunts the whole nature. To give any fair-play to the nature of each, it is essential that different persons should be allowed to lead[Pg 119] different lives. In proportion as this latitude has been exercised in any age, has that age been noteworthy to posterity. Even despotism does not produce its worst effects, so long as Individuality exists under it; and whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called, and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men.

Having said that Individuality is the same thing with development, and that it is only the cultivation of individuality which produces, or can produce, well-developed human beings, I might here close the argument: for what more or better can be said of any condition of human affairs, than that it brings human beings themselves nearer to the best thing they can be? or what worse can be said of any obstruction to good, than that it prevents this? Doubtless, however, these considerations will not suffice to convince those who most need convincing; and it is necessary further to show, that these developed human beings are of some use to the undeveloped—to point out to those who do not desire liberty, and would not avail themselves of it, that they may be in some intelligible manner rewarded for allowing other people to make use of it without hindrance.

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In the first place, then, I would suggest that they might possibly learn something from them. It will not be denied by anybody, that originality is a valuable element in human affairs. There is always need of persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer, but also to commence new practices, and set the example of more enlightened conduct, and better taste and sense in human life. This cannot well be gainsaid by anybody who does not believe that the world has already attained perfection in all its ways and practices. It is true that this benefit is not capable of being rendered by everybody alike: there are but few persons, in comparison with the whole of mankind, whose experiments, if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice. But these few are the salt of the earth; without them, human life would become a stagnant pool. Not only is it they who introduce good things which did not before exist; it is they who keep the life in those which already existed. If there were nothing new to be done, would human intellect cease to be necessary? Would it be a reason why those who do the old things should forget why they are done, and do them like cattle, not like human beings? There is only too great[Pg 121] a tendency in the best beliefs and practices to degenerate into the mechanical; and unless there were a succession of persons whose ever-recurring originality prevents the grounds of those beliefs and practices from becoming merely traditional, such dead matter would not resist the smallest shock from anything really alive, and there would be no reason why civilisation should not die out, as in the Byzantine Empire. Persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow. Genius can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere of freedom*. Persons of genius are, *ex vi termini*, more individual than any other people—less capable, consequently, of fitting themselves, without hurtful compression, into any of the small number of moulds which society provides in order to save its members the trouble of forming their own character. If from timidity they consent to be forced into one of these moulds, and to let all that part of themselves which cannot expand under the pressure remain unexpanded, society will be little the better for their genius. If they are of a strong character, and break their fetters, they become a mark for the society which has not succeeded in reducing[Pg 122] them to commonplace, to point at with solemn warning as “wild,” “erratic,” and the like; much as if one should complain of the Niagara river for not flowing smoothly between its banks like a Dutch canal.

I insist thus emphatically on the importance of genius, and the necessity of allowing it to unfold itself freely both in thought and in practice, being well aware that no one will deny the position in theory, but knowing also that almost every one, in reality, is totally indifferent to it. People think genius a fine thing if it enables a man to write an exciting poem, or paint a picture. But in its true sense, that of originality in thought and action, though no one says that it is not a thing to be admired, nearly all, at heart, think that they can do very well without it. Unhappily this is too natural to be wondered at. Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of. They cannot see what it is to do for them: how should they? If they could see what it would do for them, it would not be originality. The first service which originality has to render them, is that of opening their eyes: which being once fully done, they would have a chance of being themselves original. Meanwhile, recollecting that nothing was ever yet done which some one[Pg 123] was not the first to do, and that all good things which exist are the fruits of originality, let them be modest enough to believe that there is something still left for it to accomplish, and assure themselves that they are more in need of originality, the less they are conscious of the want.

In sober truth, whatever homage may be professed, or even paid, to real or supposed mental superiority, the general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind. In ancient history, in the middle ages, and in a diminishing degree through the long transition from feudality to the present time, the individual was a power in himself; and if he had either great talents or a high social position, he was a considerable power. At present individuals are lost in the crowd. In politics it is almost a trivality to say that public opinion now rules the world. The only power deserving the name is that of masses, and of governments while they make themselves the organ of the tendencies and instincts of masses. This is as true in the moral and social relations of private life as in public transactions. Those whose opinions go by the name of public opinion, are not always the same sort of public: in[Pg 124] America they are the whole white population; in England, chiefly the middle class. But they are always a mass, that is to say, collective mediocrity. And what is a still greater novelty, the mass do not now take their opinions from dignitaries in Church or State, from ostensible leaders, or from books. Their thinking is done for them by men much like themselves, addressing them or speaking in their name, on the spur of the moment, through the newspapers. I am not complaining of all this. I do not assert that anything better is compatible, as a general rule, with the present low state of the human mind. But that does not hinder the government of mediocrity from being mediocre government. No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few. The initiation of all wise or noble things, comes and must come from individuals; generally at first from some one individual. The honour and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following that initiative; that he can[Pg 125] respond internally to wise and noble things, and be led to

them with his eyes open. I am not countenancing the sort of “hero-worship” which applauds the strong man of genius for forcibly seizing on the government of the world and making it do his bidding in spite of itself. All he can claim is, freedom to point out the way. The power of compelling others into it, is not only inconsistent with the freedom and development of all the rest, but corrupting to the strong man himself. It does seem, however, that when the opinions of masses of merely average men are everywhere become or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be, the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought. It is in these circumstances most especially, that exceptional individuals, instead of being deterred, should be encouraged in acting differently from the mass. In other times there was no advantage in their doing so, unless they acted not only differently, but better. In this age the mere example of nonconformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service. Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny,[Pg 126] that people should be eccentric. Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage which it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric, marks the chief danger of the time.

I have said that it is important to give the freest scope possible to uncustomary things, in order that it may in time appear which of these are fit to be converted into customs. But independence of action, and disregard of custom are not solely deserving of encouragement for the chance they afford that better modes of action, and customs more worthy of general adoption, may be struck out; nor is it only persons of decided mental superiority who have a just claim to carry on their lives in their own way. There is no reason that all human existences should be constructed on some one, or some small number of patterns. If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common-sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his existence is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode. Human beings are not like sheep; and even sheep are not[Pg 127] undistinguishably alike. A man cannot get a coat or a pair of boots to fit him, unless they are either made to his measure, or he has a whole warehouseful to choose from: and is it easier to fit him with a life than with a coat, or are human beings more like one another in their whole physical and spiritual conformation than in the shape of their feet? If it were only that people have diversities of taste, that is reason enough for not attempting to shape them all after one model. But different persons also require different conditions for their spiritual development; and can no more exist healthily in the same moral, than all the variety of plants can in the same physical, atmosphere and climate. The same things which are helps to one person towards the cultivation of his higher nature, are hindrances to another. The same mode of life is a healthy excitement to one, keeping all his faculties of action and enjoyment in their best order, while to another it is a distracting burthen, which suspends or crushes all internal life. Such are the differences among human beings in their sources of pleasure, their susceptibilities of pain, and the operation on them of different physical and moral agencies, that unless there is a corresponding diversity in their modes of life, they neither obtain[Pg 128] their fair share of happiness, nor grow up to the mental, moral, and aesthetic stature of which their nature is capable. Why then should tolerance, as far as the public sentiment is concerned, extend only to tastes and modes of life which extort acquiescence by the multitude of their adherents? Nowhere (except in some monastic institutions) is diversity of taste entirely unrecognised; a person may, without blame, either like or dislike rowing, or smoking, or music, or athletic exercises, or chess, or cards, or study, because both those who like each of these things, and those who dislike them, are too numerous to be put down. But the man, and still more the woman, who can be accused either of doing “what nobody does,” or of not doing “what everybody does,” is the subject of as much depreciatory remark as if he or she had committed some grave moral delinquency. Persons require to possess a title, or some other badge of rank, or of the consideration of people of rank, to be able to indulge somewhat in the luxury of doing as they like without detriment to their estimation. To indulge somewhat, I repeat: for whoever allow themselves much of that indulgence, incur the risk of something worse than disparaging speeches—they are in peril of a commission *de lunatico*, and of having their[Pg 129] property taken from them and given to their relations.[13]

There is one characteristic of the present direction of public opinion, peculiarly calculated to make it intolerant of any marked demonstration of individuality. The general average of mankind are not only moderate in intellect, but also moderate in inclinations: they have no tastes or wishes strong enough to incline them to do anything unusual, and they consequently do not understand those who have, and class all such with the wild and intemperate whom they are accustomed to look down upon. Now, in addition to this fact which is general, we have only to suppose that a strong movement has set in[Pg 130] towards the improvement of morals, and it is evident what we have to expect. In these days such a movement has set in; much has actually been effected in the way of increased regularity of conduct, and discouragement of excesses; and there is a philanthropic spirit abroad, for the exercise of which there is no more inviting field than the moral and prudential improvement of our fellow-creatures. These tendencies of the times cause the public to be more disposed than at most former periods to prescribe general rules of conduct, and endeavour to make every one conform to the approved standard. And that standard, express or tacit, is to desire nothing strongly. Its ideal of character is to be without any marked character; to maim

by compression,[Pg 131] like a Chinese lady's foot, every part of human nature which stands out prominently, and tends to make the person markedly dissimilar in outline to commonplace humanity.

As is usually the case with ideals which exclude one-half of what is desirable, the present standard of approbation produces only an inferior imitation of the other half. Instead of great energies guided by vigorous reason, and strong feelings strongly controlled by a conscientious will, its result is weak feelings and weak energies, which therefore can be kept in outward conformity to rule without any strength either of will or of reason. Already energetic characters on any large scale are becoming merely traditional. There is now scarcely any outlet for energy in this country except business. The energy expended in that may still be regarded as considerable. What little is left from that employment, is expended on some hobby; which may be a useful, even a philanthropic hobby, but is always some one thing, and generally a thing of small dimensions. The greatness of England is now all collective: individually small, we only appear capable of anything great by our habit of combining; and with this our moral and religious philanthropists are perfectly contented. But it was men of[Pg 132] another stamp than this that made England what it has been; and men of another stamp will be needed to prevent its decline.

The despotism of custom is everywhere the standing hindrance to human advancement, being in unceasing antagonism to that disposition to aim at something better than customary, which is called, according to circumstances, the spirit of liberty, or that of progress or improvement. The spirit of improvement is not always a spirit of liberty, for it may aim at forcing improvements on an unwilling people; and the spirit of liberty, in so far as it resists such attempts, may ally itself locally and temporarily with the opponents of improvement; but the only unailing and permanent source of improvement is liberty, since by it there are as many possible independent centres of improvement as there are individuals. The progressive principle, however, in either shape, whether as the love of liberty or of improvement, is antagonistic to the sway of Custom, involving at least emancipation from that yoke; and the contest between the two constitutes the chief interest of the history of mankind. The greater part of the world has, properly speaking, no history, because the despotism of Custom is complete. This is the case over the whole East.[Pg 133] Custom is there, in all things, the final appeal; justice and right mean conformity to custom; the argument of custom no one, unless some tyrant intoxicated with power, thinks of resisting. And we see the result. Those nations must once have had originality; they did not start out of the ground populous, lettered, and versed in many of the arts of life; they made themselves all this, and were then the greatest and most powerful nations in the world. What are they now? The subjects or dependants of tribes whose forefathers wandered in the forests when theirs had magnificent palaces and gorgeous temples, but over whom custom exercised only a divided rule with liberty and progress. A people, it appears, may be progressive for a certain length of time, and then stop: when does it stop? When it ceases to possess individuality. If a similar change should befall the nations of Europe, it will not be in exactly the same shape: the despotism of custom with which these nations are threatened is not precisely stationariness. It proscribes singularity, but it does not preclude change, provided all change together. We have discarded the fixed costumes of our forefathers; every one must still dress like other people, but the fashion may change once or twice a year. We thus take care that when there[Pg 134] is change, it shall be for change's sake, and not from any idea of beauty or convenience; for the same idea of beauty or convenience would not strike all the world at the same moment, and be simultaneously thrown aside by all at another moment. But we are progressive as well as changeable: we continually make new inventions in mechanical things, and keep them until they are again superseded by better; we are eager for improvement in politics, in education, even in morals, though in this last our idea of improvement chiefly consists in persuading or forcing other people to be as good as ourselves. It is not progress that we object to; on the contrary, we flatter ourselves that we are the most progressive people who ever lived. It is individuality that we war against: we should think we had done wonders if we had made ourselves all alike; forgetting that the unlikeness of one person to another is generally the first thing which draws the attention of either to the imperfection of his own type, and the superiority of another, or the possibility, by combining the advantages of both, of producing something better than either. We have a warning example in China—a nation of much talent, and, in some respects, even wisdom, owing to the rare good fortune of having been[Pg 135] provided at an early period with a particularly good set of customs, the work, in some measure, of men to whom even the most enlightened European must accord, under certain limitations, the title of sages and philosophers. They are remarkable, too, in the excellence of their apparatus for impressing, as far as possible, the best wisdom they possess upon every mind in the community, and securing that those who have appropriated most of it shall occupy the posts of honour and power. Surely the people who did this have discovered the secret of human progressiveness, and must have kept themselves steadily at the head of the movement of the world. On the contrary, they have become stationary—have remained so for thousands of years; and if they are ever to be farther improved, it must be by foreigners. They have succeeded beyond all hope in what English philanthropists are so industriously working at—in making a people all alike, all governing their thoughts and conduct by the same maxims and rules; and these are the fruits. The modern *régime* of public opinion is, in an unorganised form, what the Chinese educational and political systems are in an organised; and unless individuality shall be able

successfully to assert itself against this yoke, Europe, notwithstanding [Pg 136] its noble antecedents and its professed Christianity, will tend to become another China.

What is it that has hitherto preserved Europe from this lot? What has made the European family of nations an improving, instead of a stationary portion of mankind? Not any superior excellence in them, which, when it exists, exists as the effect, not as the cause; but their remarkable diversity of character and culture. Individuals, classes, nations, have been extremely unlike one another: they have struck out a great variety of paths, each leading to something valuable; and although at every period those who travelled in different paths have been intolerant of one another, and each would have thought it an excellent thing if all the rest could have been compelled to travel his road, their attempts to thwart each other's development have rarely had any permanent success, and each has in time endured to receive the good which the others have offered. Europe is, in my judgment, wholly indebted to this plurality of paths for its progressive and many-sided development. But it already begins to possess this benefit in a considerably less degree. It is decidedly advancing towards the Chinese ideal of making all people alike. M. de Tocqueville, in his last important [Pg 137] work, remarks how much more the Frenchmen of the present day resemble one another, than did those even of the last generation. The same remark might be made of Englishmen in a far greater degree. In a passage already quoted from Wilhelm von Humboldt, he points out two things as necessary conditions of human development, because necessary to render people unlike one another; namely, freedom, and variety of situations. The second of these two conditions is in this country every day diminishing. The circumstances which surround different classes and individuals, and shape their characters, are daily becoming more assimilated. Formerly, different ranks, different neighbourhoods, different trades and professions, lived in what might be called different worlds; at present, to a great degree in the same. Comparatively speaking, they now read the same things, listen to the same things, see the same things, go to the same places, have their hopes and fears directed to the same objects, have the same rights and liberties, and the same means of asserting them. Great as are the differences of position which remain, they are nothing to those which have ceased. And the assimilation is still proceeding. All the political changes of the age promote it, since they all tend [Pg 138] to raise the low and to lower the high. Every extension of education promotes it, because education brings people under common influences, and gives them access to the general stock of facts and sentiments. Improvements in the means of communication promote it, by bringing the inhabitants of distant places into personal contact, and keeping up a rapid flow of changes of residence between one place and another. The increase of commerce and manufactures promotes it, by diffusing more widely the advantages of easy circumstances, and opening all objects of ambition, even the highest, to general competition, whereby the desire of rising becomes no longer the character of a particular class, but of all classes. A more powerful agency than even all these, in bringing about a general similarity among mankind, is the complete establishment, in this and other free countries, of the ascendancy of public opinion in the State. As the various social eminences which enabled persons entrenched on them to disregard the opinion of the multitude, gradually become levelled; as the very idea of resisting the will of the public, when it is positively known that they have a will, disappears more and more from the minds of practical politicians; there ceases to be any social support for non-conformity—any [Pg 139] substantive power in society, which, itself opposed to the ascendancy of numbers, is interested in taking under its protection opinions and tendencies at variance with those of the public.

The combination of all these causes forms so great a mass of influences hostile to Individuality, that it is not easy to see how it can stand its ground. It will do so with increasing difficulty, unless the intelligent part of the public can be made to feel its value—to see that it is good there should be differences, even though not for the better, even though, as it may appear to them, some should be for the worse. If the claims of Individuality are ever to be asserted, the time is now, while much is still wanting to complete the enforced assimilation. It is only in the earlier stages that any stand can be successfully made against the encroachment. The demand that all other people shall resemble ourselves, grows by what it feeds on. If resistance waits till life is reduced *nearly* to one uniform type, all deviations from that type will come to be considered impious, immoral, even monstrous and contrary to nature. Mankind speedily become unable to conceive diversity, when they have been for some time unaccustomed to see it.

## FOOTNOTES:

(Note:

[11] *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, from the German of Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, pp. 11-13.

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(Note:

[12] Sterling's *Essays*.

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(Note:

[13] There is something both contemptible and frightful in the sort of evidence on which, of late years, any person can be judicially declared unfit for the management of his affairs; and after his death, his disposal of his property can be set aside, if there is enough of it to pay the expenses of litigation—which are charged on the property itself. All the minute details of his daily life are pried into, and whatever is found which, seen through the medium of the perceiving and describing faculties of the lowest of the low, bears an appearance unlike absolute commonplace, is laid before the jury as evidence of insanity, and often with success; the jurors being little, if at all, less vulgar and ignorant than the witnesses; while the judges, with that extraordinary want of knowledge of human nature and life which continually astonishes us in English lawyers, often help to mislead them. These trials speak volumes as to the state of feeling and opinion among the vulgar with regard to human liberty. So far from setting any value on individuality—so far from respecting the rights of each individual to act, in things indifferent, as seems good to his own judgment and inclinations, judges and juries cannot even conceive that a person in a state of sanity can desire such freedom. In former days, when it was proposed to burn atheists, charitable people used to suggest putting them in a madhouse instead: it would be nothing surprising nowadays were we to see this done, and the doers applauding themselves, because, instead of persecuting for religion, they had adopted so humane and Christian a mode of treating these unfortunates, not without a silent satisfaction at their having thereby obtained their deserts.

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## **JOHN STUART MILL: ON LIBERTY (CHAPTER 4-- "OF THE LIMITS TO THE AUTHORITY OF SOCIETY OVER THE INDIVIDUAL")**

What, then, is the rightful limit to the sovereignty of the individual over himself? Where does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?

Each will receive its proper share, if each has that which more particularly concerns it. To individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society.

Though society is not founded on a contract, and though no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract in order to deduce social obligations from it, every one who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit, and the fact of living in society renders it indispensable that each should be bound to [Pg 141] observe a certain line of conduct towards the rest. This conduct consists, first, in not injuring the interests of one another; or rather certain interests which, either by express legal provision or by tacit understanding, ought to be considered as rights; and secondly, in each person's bearing his share (to be fixed on some equitable principle) of the labours and sacrifices incurred for defending the society or its members from injury and molestation. These conditions society is justified in enforcing, at all costs to those who endeavour to withhold fulfilment. Nor is this all that society may do. The acts of an individual may be hurtful to others, or wanting in due consideration for their welfare, without going the length of violating any of their constituted rights. The offender may then be justly punished by opinion though not by law. As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion. But there is no room for entertaining any such question when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides himself, or needs not affect them unless they like (all the persons concerned being of full age, and [Pg 142] the ordinary amount of understanding). In all such cases there should be perfect freedom, legal and social, to do the action and stand the consequences.

It would be a great misunderstanding of this doctrine, to suppose that it is one of selfish indifference, which pretends that human beings have no business with each other's conduct in life, and that they should not concern themselves about the well-doing or well-being of one another, unless their own interest is involved. Instead of any diminution, there is need of a great increase of disinterested exertion to promote the good of others. But disinterested benevolence can find other instruments to persuade people to their good, than whips and scourges, either of the literal or the metaphorical sort. I am the last person to undervalue the self-regarding virtues; they are only second in importance, if even second, to the social. It is equally the business of education to cultivate both. But even education works by conviction and persuasion as well as by compulsion, and it is by the former only that, when the period of education is past, the self-regarding virtues should be inculcated. Human beings owe to each other help to distinguish the better from the worse, and encouragement to choose the [Pg 143] former and avoid the latter. They should be for ever stimulating each other to increased exercise of their higher faculties, and increased direction of their feelings and aims towards wise instead of foolish, elevating instead of degrading, objects and contemplations. But neither one person, nor any number of persons, is warranted in saying to another human creature of ripe years, that he shall not do with his life for his own benefit what he chooses to do with it. He is the person most interested in his own well-being: the interest which any other person, except in cases of strong personal attachment, can have in it, is trifling, compared with that which he himself has; the interest which society has in him individually (except as to his conduct to others) is fractional, and altogether indirect: while, with respect to his own feelings and circumstances, the most ordinary man or woman has means of knowledge immeasurably surpassing those that can be possessed by any one else. The interference of society to overrule his judgment and purposes in what only regards himself, must be grounded on general presumptions; which may be altogether wrong, and even if right, are as likely as not to be misapplied to individual cases, by persons no better acquainted with the circumstances of such [Pg 144] cases than those are who look at them merely from without. In this department, therefore, of human affairs, Individuality has its proper field of action. In the conduct of human beings towards one another, it is necessary that general rules should for the most part be observed, in order that people may know what they have to expect; but in each person's own concerns, his individual spontaneity is entitled to free exercise. Considerations to aid his judgment, exhortations to strengthen his will, may be offered to him, even obtruded on him, by others; but he himself is the final judge. All errors which he is likely to commit against advice and warning, are far outweighed by the evil of allowing others to constrain him to what they deem his good.

I do not mean that the feelings with which a person is regarded by others, ought not to be in any way affected by his self-regarding qualities or deficiencies. This is neither possible nor desirable. If he is eminent in any of the qualities which conduce to his own good, he is, so far, a proper object of admiration. He is so much the nearer to the ideal perfection of human nature. If he is grossly deficient in those qualities, a sentiment the opposite of admiration will follow. There is a degree of folly, and a degree of what may be [Pg 145] called (though the phrase is not unobjectionable) lowness or depravation of taste, which, though it cannot justify doing harm to the person who manifests it, renders him necessarily and properly a subject of distaste, or, in extreme cases, even of contempt: a person could not have the opposite qualities in due strength without entertaining these feelings. Though doing no wrong to any one, a person may so act as to compel us to judge him, and feel to him, as a fool, or as a being of an inferior order: and since this judgment and feeling are a fact which he would prefer to avoid, it is doing him a service to warn him of it beforehand, as of any other disagreeable consequence to which he exposes himself. It would be well, indeed, if this good office were much more freely rendered than the common notions of politeness at present permit, and if one person could honestly point out to another that he thinks him in fault, without being considered unmannerly or presuming. We have a right, also, in various ways, to act upon our unfavourable opinion of any one, not to the oppression of his individuality, but in the exercise of ours. We are not bound, for example, to seek his society; we have a right to avoid it (though not to parade the avoidance), for we have a right to choose the society most acceptable to us. We [Pg 146] have a right, and it may be our duty, to caution others against him, if we think his example or conversation likely to have a pernicious effect on those with whom he associates. We may give others a preference over him in optional good offices, except those which tend to his improvement. In these various modes a person may suffer very severe penalties at the hands of others, for faults which directly concern only himself; but he suffers these penalties only in so far as they are the natural, and, as it were, the spontaneous consequences of the faults themselves, not because they are purposely inflicted on him for the sake of punishment. A person who shows rashness, obstinacy, self-conceit—who cannot live within moderate means—who cannot restrain himself from hurtful indulgences—who pursues animal pleasures at the expense of those of feeling and intellect—must expect to be lowered in the opinion of others, and to have a less share of their favourable sentiments; but of this he has no right to complain, unless he has merited their favour by special excellence in his social relations, and has thus established a title to their good offices, which is not affected by his demerits towards himself.

What I contend for is, that the inconveniences which are strictly inseparable from the [Pg 147] unfavourable judgment of others, are the only ones to which a person should ever be subjected for that portion of his conduct and character which concerns his own good, but which does not affect the interests of others in their relations with

him. Acts injurious to others require a totally different treatment. Encroachment on their rights; infliction on them of any loss or damage not justified by his own rights; falsehood or duplicity in dealing with them; unfair or ungenerous use of advantages over them; even selfish abstinence from defending them against injury—these are fit objects of moral reprobation, and, in grave cases, of moral retribution and punishment. And not only these acts, but the dispositions which lead to them, are properly immoral, and fit subjects of disapprobation which may rise to abhorrence. Cruelty of disposition; malice and ill-nature; that most anti-social and odious of all passions, envy; dissimulation and insincerity; irascibility on insufficient cause, and resentment disproportioned to the provocation; the love of domineering over others; the desire to engross more than one's share of advantages (the πλεονεξία [Greek: pleonexia] of the Greeks); the pride which derives gratification from the abasement of others; the egotism which thinks self and its concerns more important than [Pg 148]everything else, and decides all doubtful questions in its own favour;—these are moral vices, and constitute a bad and odious moral character: unlike the self-regarding faults previously mentioned, which are not properly immoralities, and to whatever pitch they may be carried, do not constitute wickedness. They may be proofs of any amount of folly, or want of personal dignity and self-respect; but they are only a subject of moral reprobation when they involve a breach of duty to others, for whose sake the individual is bound to have care for himself. What are called duties to ourselves are not socially obligatory, unless circumstances render them at the same time duties to others. The term duty to oneself, when it means anything more than prudence, means self-respect or self-development; and for none of these is any one accountable to his fellow-creatures, because for none of them is it for the good of mankind that he be held accountable to them.

The distinction between the loss of consideration which a person may rightly incur by defect of prudence or of personal dignity, and the reprobation which is due to him for an offence against the rights of others, is not a merely nominal distinction. It makes a vast difference both in our feelings and in our conduct towards him, [Pg 149] whether he displeases us in things in which we think we have a right to control him, or in things in which we know that we have not. If he displeases us, we may express our distaste, and we may stand aloof from a person as well as from a thing that displeases us; but we shall not therefore feel called on to make his life uncomfortable. We shall reflect that he already bears, or will bear, the whole penalty of his error; if he spoils his life by mismanagement, we shall not, for that reason, desire to spoil it still further: instead of wishing to punish him, we shall rather endeavour to alleviate his punishment, by showing him how he may avoid or cure the evils his conduct tends to bring upon him. He may be to us an object of pity, perhaps of dislike, but not of anger or resentment; we shall not treat him like an enemy of society: the worst we shall think ourselves justified in doing is leaving him to himself, if we do not interfere benevolently by showing interest or concern for him. It is far otherwise if he has infringed the rules necessary for the protection of his fellow-creatures, individually or collectively. The evil consequences of his acts do not then fall on himself, but on others; and society, as the protector of all its members, must retaliate on him; must inflict pain on him for the express purpose [Pg 150] of punishment, and must take care that it be sufficiently severe. In the one case, he is an offender at our bar, and we are called on not only to sit in judgment on him, but, in one shape or another, to execute our own sentence: in the other case, it is not our part to inflict any suffering on him, except what may incidentally follow from our using the same liberty in the regulation of our own affairs, which we allow to him in his.

The distinction here pointed out between the part of a person's life which concerns only himself, and that which concerns others, many persons will refuse to admit. How (it may be asked) can any part of the conduct of a member of society be a matter of indifference to the other members? No person is an entirely isolated being; it is impossible for a person to do anything seriously or permanently hurtful to himself, without mischief reaching at least to his near connections, and often far beyond them. If he injures his property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes, by a greater or less amount, the general resources of the community. If he deteriorates his bodily or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering [Pg 151] the services which he owes to his fellow-creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burthen on their affection or benevolence; and if such conduct were very frequent, hardly any offence that is committed would detract more from the general sum of good. Finally, if by his vices or follies a person does no direct harm to others, he is nevertheless (it may be said) injurious by his example; and ought to be compelled to control himself, for the sake of those whom the sight or knowledge of his conduct might corrupt or mislead.

And even (it will be added) if the consequences of misconduct could be confined to the vicious or thoughtless individual, ought society to abandon to their own guidance those who are manifestly unfit for it? If protection against themselves is confessedly due to children and persons under age, is not society equally bound to afford it to persons of mature years who are equally incapable of self-government? If gambling, or drunkenness, or incontinence, or idleness, or uncleanness, are as injurious to happiness, and as great a hindrance to improvement, as many or most of the acts prohibited by law, why (it may be asked) should not law, so far as is consistent with practicability and social convenience, endeavour to repress these [Pg 152]also? And as a

supplement to the unavoidable imperfections of law, ought not opinion at least to organise a powerful police against these vices, and visit rigidly with social penalties those who are known to practise them? There is no question here (it may be said) about restricting individuality, or impeding the trial of new and original experiments in living. The only things it is sought to prevent are things which have been tried and condemned from the beginning of the world until now; things which experience has shown not to be useful or suitable to any person's individuality. There must be some length of time and amount of experience, after which a moral or prudential truth may be regarded as established: and it is merely desired to prevent generation after generation from falling over the same precipice which has been fatal to their predecessors.

I fully admit that the mischief which a person does to himself, may seriously affect, both through their sympathies and their interests, those nearly connected with him, and in a minor degree, society at large. When, by conduct of this sort, a person is led to violate a distinct and assignable obligation to any other person or persons, the case is taken out of the self-regarding class, and becomes amenable to moral disapprobation in the proper [Pg 153] sense of the term. If, for example, a man, through intemperance or extravagance, becomes unable to pay his debts, or, having undertaken the moral responsibility of a family, becomes from the same cause incapable of supporting or educating them, he is deservedly reprobated, and might be justly punished; but it is for the breach of duty to his family or creditors, not for the extravagance. If the resources which ought to have been devoted to them, had been diverted from them for the most prudent investment, the moral culpability would have been the same. George Barnwell murdered his uncle to get money for his mistress, but if he had done it to set himself up in business, he would equally have been hanged. Again, in the frequent case of a man who causes grief to his family by addiction to bad habits, he deserves reproach for his unkindness or ingratitude; but so he may for cultivating habits not in themselves vicious, if they are painful to those with whom he passes his life, or who from personal ties are dependent on him for their comfort. Whoever fails in the consideration generally due to the interests and feelings of others, not being compelled by some more imperative duty, or justified by allowable self-preference, is a subject of moral disapprobation [Pg 154] for that failure, but not for the cause of it, nor for the errors, merely personal to himself, which may have remotely led to it. In like manner, when a person disables himself, by conduct purely self-regarding, from the performance of some definite duty incumbent on him to the public, he is guilty of a social offence. No person ought to be punished simply for being drunk; but a soldier or a policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty. Whenever, in short, there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public, the case is taken out of the province of liberty, and placed in that of morality or law.

But with regard to the merely contingent, or, as it may be called, constructive injury which a person causes to society, by conduct which neither violates any specific duty to the public, nor occasions perceptible hurt to any assignable individual except himself; the inconvenience is one which society can afford to bear, for the sake of the greater good of human freedom. If grown persons are to be punished for not taking proper care of themselves, I would rather it were for their own sake, than under pretence of preventing them from impairing their capacity of rendering to society benefits which society does not pretend it [Pg 155] has a right to exact. But I cannot consent to argue the point as if society had no means of bringing its weaker members up to its ordinary standard of rational conduct, except waiting till they do something irrational, and then punishing them, legally or morally, for it. Society has had absolute power over them during all the early portion of their existence: it has had the whole period of childhood and nonage in which to try whether it could make them capable of rational conduct in life. The existing generation is master both of the training and the entire circumstances of the generation to come; it cannot indeed make them perfectly wise and good, because it is itself so lamentably deficient in goodness and wisdom; and its best efforts are not always, in individual cases, its most successful ones; but it is perfectly well able to make the rising generation, as a whole, as good as, and a little better than, itself. If society lets any considerable number of its members grow up mere children, incapable of being acted on by rational consideration of distant motives, society has itself to blame for the consequences. Armed not only with all the powers of education, but with the ascendancy which the authority of a received opinion always exercises over the minds who are least fitted to [Pg 156] judge for themselves; and aided by the *natural* penalties which cannot be prevented from falling on those who incur the distaste or the contempt of those who know them; let not society pretend that it needs, besides all this, the power to issue commands and enforce obedience in the personal concerns of individuals, in which, on all principles of justice and policy, the decision ought to rest with those who are to abide the consequences. Nor is there anything which tends more to discredit and frustrate the better means of influencing conduct, than a resort to the worse. If there be among those whom it is attempted to coerce into prudence or temperance, any of the material of which vigorous and independent characters are made, they will infallibly rebel against the yoke. No such person will ever feel that others have a right to control him in his concerns, such as they have to prevent him from injuring them in theirs; and it easily comes to be considered a mark of spirit and courage to fly in the face of such usurped authority, and do with ostentation the exact opposite of what it enjoins; as in the fashion of grossness which succeeded, in the time of Charles II., to the fanatical moral intolerance of the Puritans. With respect to what is said of the necessity of protecting society from [Pg 157] the bad example set to

others by the vicious or the self-indulgent; it is true that bad example may have a pernicious effect, especially the example of doing wrong to others with impunity to the wrong-doer. But we are now speaking of conduct which, while it does no wrong to others, is supposed to do great harm to the agent himself: and I do not see how those who believe this, can think otherwise than that the example, on the whole, must be more salutary than hurtful, since, if it displays the misconduct, it displays also the painful or degrading consequences which, if the conduct is justly censured, must be supposed to be in all or most cases attendant on it.

But the strongest of all the arguments against the interference of the public with purely personal conduct, is that when it does interfere, the odds are that it interferes wrongly, and in the wrong place. On questions of social morality, of duty to others, the opinion of the public, that is, of an overruling majority, though often wrong, is likely to be still oftener right; because on such questions they are only required to judge of their own interests; of the manner in which some mode of conduct, if allowed to be practised, would affect themselves. But the opinion of a similar majority, imposed as a law on the minority, on questions of [Pg 158] self-regarding conduct, is quite as likely to be wrong as right; for in these cases public opinion means, at the best, some people's opinion of what is good or bad for other people; while very often it does not even mean that; the public, with the most perfect indifference, passing over the pleasure or convenience of those whose conduct they censure, and considering only their own preference. There are many who consider as an injury to themselves any conduct which they have a distaste for, and resent it as an outrage to their feelings; as a religious bigot, when charged with disregarding the religious feelings of others, has been known to retort that they disregard his feelings, by persisting in their abominable worship or creed. But there is no parity between the feeling of a person for his own opinion, and the feeling of another who is offended at his holding it; no more than between the desire of a thief to take a purse, and the desire of the right owner to keep it. And a person's taste is as much his own peculiar concern as his opinion or his purse. It is easy for any one to imagine an ideal public, which leaves the freedom and choice of individuals in all uncertain matters undisturbed, and only requires them to abstain from modes of conduct which universal experience has condemned. But where [Pg 159] has there been seen a public which set any such limit to its censorship? or when does the public trouble itself about universal experience? In its interferences with personal conduct it is seldom thinking of anything but the enormity of acting or feeling differently from itself; and this standard of judgment, thinly disguised, is held up to mankind as the dictate of religion and philosophy, by nine-tenths of all moralists and speculative writers. These teach that things are right because they are right; because we feel them to be so. They tell us to search in our own minds and hearts for laws of conduct binding on ourselves and on all others. What can the poor public do but apply these instructions, and make their own personal feelings of good and evil, if they are tolerably unanimous in them, obligatory on all the world?

The evil here pointed out is not one which exists only in theory; and it may perhaps be expected that I should specify the instances in which the public of this age and country improperly invests its own preferences with the character of moral laws. I am not writing an essay on the aberrations of existing moral feeling. That is too weighty a subject to be discussed parenthetically, and by way of illustration. Yet examples are necessary, to show that the principle [Pg 160] I maintain is of serious and practical moment, and that I am not endeavouring to erect a barrier against imaginary evils. And it is not difficult to show, by abundant instances, that to extend the bounds of what may be called moral police, until it encroaches on the most unquestionably legitimate liberty of the individual, is one of the most universal of all human propensities.

As a first instance, consider the antipathies which men cherish on no better grounds than that persons whose religious opinions are different from theirs, do not practise their religious observances, especially their religious abstinences. To cite a rather trivial example, nothing in the creed or practice of Christians does more to envenom the hatred of Mahomedans against them, than the fact of their eating pork. There are few acts which Christians and Europeans regard with more unaffected disgust, than Mussulmans regard this particular mode of satisfying hunger. It is, in the first place, an offence against their religion; but this circumstance by no means explains either the degree or the kind of their repugnance; for wine also is forbidden by their religion, and to partake of it is by all Mussulmans accounted wrong, but not disgusting. Their aversion to the flesh of the "unclean beast" is, [Pg 161] on the contrary, of that peculiar character, resembling an instinctive antipathy, which the idea of uncleanness, when once it thoroughly sinks into the feelings, seems always to excite even in those whose personal habits are anything but scrupulously cleanly, and of which the sentiment of religious impurity, so intense in the Hindoos, is a remarkable example. Suppose now that in a people, of whom the majority were Mussulmans, that majority should insist upon not permitting pork to be eaten within the limits of the country. This would be nothing new in Mahomedan countries. [14] Would it be a legitimate exercise of the moral authority of public opinion? and if not, why not? The practice is really revolting to such a public. They also sincerely [Pg 162] think that it is forbidden and abhorred by the Deity. Neither could the prohibition be censured as religious persecution. It might be religious in its origin, but it would not be persecution for religion, since nobody's religion makes it a duty to eat pork. The only tenable ground of condemnation would be, that with the personal tastes and self-regarding concerns of individuals the public has no business to interfere.

To come somewhat nearer home: the majority of Spaniards consider it a gross impiety, offensive in the highest degree to the Supreme Being, to worship him in any other manner than the Roman Catholic; and no other public worship is lawful on Spanish soil. The people of all Southern Europe look upon a married clergy as not only irreligious, but unchaste, indecent, gross, disgusting. What do Protestants think of these perfectly sincere feelings, and of the attempt to enforce them against non-Catholics? Yet, if mankind are justified in interfering with each other's liberty in things which do not concern the interests of others, on what principle is it possible consistently to exclude these cases? or who can blame people for desiring to suppress what they regard as a scandal in the sight of God and man? No stronger case can be shown for prohibiting[Pg 163] anything which is regarded as a personal immorality, than is made out for suppressing these practices in the eyes of those who regard them as impieties; and unless we are willing to adopt the logic of persecutors, and to say that we may persecute others because we are right, and that they must not persecute us because they are wrong, we must beware of admitting a principle of which we should resent as a gross injustice the application to ourselves.

The preceding instances may be objected to, although unreasonably, as drawn from contingencies impossible among us: opinion, in this country, not being likely to enforce abstinence from meats, or to interfere with people for worshipping, and for either marrying or not marrying, according to their creed or inclination. The next example, however, shall be taken from an interference with liberty which we have by no means passed all danger of. Wherever the Puritans have been sufficiently powerful, as in New England, and in Great Britain at the time of the Commonwealth, they have endeavoured, with considerable success, to put down all public, and nearly all private, amusements: especially music, dancing, public games, or other assemblages for purposes of diversion, and the theatre. There[Pg 164] are still in this country large bodies of persons by whose notions of morality and religion these recreations are condemned; and those persons belonging chiefly to the middle class, who are the ascendant power in the present social and political condition of the kingdom, it is by no means impossible that persons of these sentiments may at some time or other command a majority in Parliament. How will the remaining portion of the community like to have the amusements that shall be permitted to them regulated by the religious and moral sentiments of the stricter Calvinists and Methodists? Would they not, with considerable peremptoriness, desire these intrusively pious members of society to mind their own business? This is precisely what should be said to every government and every public, who have the pretension that no person shall enjoy any pleasure which they think wrong. But if the principle of the pretension be admitted, no one can reasonably object to its being acted on in the sense of the majority, or other preponderating power in the country; and all persons must be ready to conform to the idea of a Christian commonwealth, as understood by the early settlers in New England, if a religious profession similar to theirs should ever succeed in[Pg 165] regaining its lost ground, as religions supposed to be declining have so often been known to do.

To imagine another contingency, perhaps more likely to be realised than the one last mentioned. There is confessedly a strong tendency in the modern world towards a democratic constitution of society, accompanied or not by popular political institutions. It is affirmed that in the country where this tendency is most completely realised—where both society and the government are most democratic—the United States—the feeling of the majority, to whom any appearance of a more showy or costly style of living than they can hope to rival is disagreeable, operates as a tolerably effectual sumptuary law, and that in many parts of the Union it is really difficult for a person possessing a very large income, to find any mode of spending it, which will not incur popular disapprobation. Though such statements as these are doubtless much exaggerated as a representation of existing facts, the state of things they describe is not only a conceivable and possible, but a probable result of democratic feeling, combined with the notion that the public has a right to a veto on the manner in which individuals shall spend their incomes. We have only further to suppose a considerable diffusion of[Pg 166] Socialist opinions, and it may become infamous in the eyes of the majority to possess more property than some very small amount, or any income not earned by manual labour. Opinions similar in principle to these, already prevail widely among the artisan class, and weigh oppressively on those who are amenable to the opinion chiefly of that class, namely, its own members. It is known that the bad workmen who form the majority of the operatives in many branches of industry, are decidedly of opinion that bad workmen ought to receive the same wages as good, and that no one ought to be allowed, through piecework or otherwise, to earn by superior skill or industry more than others can without it. And they employ a moral police, which occasionally becomes a physical one, to deter skilful workmen from receiving, and employers from giving, a larger remuneration for a more useful service. If the public have any jurisdiction over private concerns, I cannot see that these people are in fault, or that any individual's particular public can be blamed for asserting the same authority over his individual conduct, which the general public asserts over people in general.

But, without dwelling upon supposititious cases, there are, in our own day, gross usurpations upon[Pg 167] the liberty of private life actually practised, and still greater ones threatened with some expectation of success, and opinions proposed which assert an unlimited right in the public not only to prohibit by law everything which it

thinks wrong, but in order to get at what it thinks wrong, to prohibit any number of things which it admits to be innocent.

Under the name of preventing intemperance, the people of one English colony, and of nearly half the United States, have been interdicted by law from making any use whatever of fermented drinks, except for medical purposes: for prohibition of their sale is in fact, as it is intended to be, prohibition of their use. And though the impracticability of executing the law has caused its repeal in several of the States which had adopted it, including the one from which it derives its name, an attempt has notwithstanding been commenced, and is prosecuted with considerable zeal by many of the professed philanthropists, to agitate for a similar law in this country. The association, or "Alliance" as it terms itself, which has been formed for this purpose, has acquired some notoriety through the publicity given to a correspondence between its Secretary and one of the very few English public men who hold that a[Pg 168] politician's opinions ought to be founded on principles. Lord Stanley's share in this correspondence is calculated to strengthen the hopes already built on him, by those who know how rare such qualities as are manifested in some of his public appearances, unhappily are among those who figure in political life. The organ of the Alliance, who would "deeply deplore the recognition of any principle which could be wrested to justify bigotry and persecution," undertakes to point out the "broad and impassable barrier" which divides such principles from those of the association. "All matters relating to thought, opinion, conscience, appear to me," he says, "to be without the sphere of legislation; all pertaining to social act, habit, relation, subject only to a discretionary power vested in the State itself, and not in the individual, to be within it." No mention is made of a third class, different from either of these, viz. acts and habits which are not social, but individual; although it is to this class, surely, that the act of drinking fermented liquors belongs. Selling fermented liquors, however, is trading, and trading is a social act. But the infringement complained of is not on the liberty of the seller, but on that of the buyer and consumer; since the State might just as well forbid him to drink wine,[Pg 169] as purposely make it impossible for him to obtain it. The Secretary, however, says, "I claim, as a citizen, a right to legislate whenever my social rights are invaded by the social act of another." And now for the definition of these "social rights." "If anything invades my social rights, certainly the traffic in strong drink does. It destroys my primary right of security, by constantly creating and stimulating social disorder. It invades my right of equality, by deriving a profit from the creation of a misery, I am taxed to support. It impedes my right to free moral and intellectual development, by surrounding my path with dangers, and by weakening and demoralising society, from which I have a right to claim mutual aid and intercourse." A theory of "social rights," the like of which probably never before found its way into distinct language—being nothing short of this—that it is the absolute social right of every individual, that every other individual shall act in every respect exactly as he ought; that whosoever fails thereof in the smallest particular, violates my social right, and entitles me to demand from the legislature the removal of the grievance. So monstrous a principle is far more dangerous than any single interference with liberty; there is no violation of liberty which it[Pg 170] would not justify; it acknowledges no right to any freedom whatever, except perhaps to that of holding opinions in secret, without ever disclosing them: for the moment an opinion which I consider noxious, passes any one's lips, it invades all the "social rights" attributed to me by the Alliance. The doctrine ascribes to all mankind a vested interest in each other's moral, intellectual, and even physical perfection, to be defined by each claimant according to his own standard.

Another important example of illegitimate interference with the rightful liberty of the individual, not simply threatened, but long since carried into triumphant effect, is Sabbatarian legislation. Without doubt, abstinence on one day in the week, so far as the exigencies of life permit, from the usual daily occupation, though in no respect religiously binding on any except Jews, is a highly beneficial custom. And inasmuch as this custom cannot be observed without a general consent to that effect among the industrious classes, therefore, in so far as some persons by working may impose the same necessity on others, it may be allowable and right that the law should guarantee to each, the observance by others of the custom, by suspending the greater operations of industry on a particular day. But this justification, grounded on the direct[Pg 171] interest which others have in each individual's observance of the practice, does not apply to the self-chosen occupations in which a person may think fit to employ his leisure; nor does it hold good, in the smallest degree, for legal restrictions on amusements. It is true that the amusement of some is the day's work of others; but the pleasure, not to say the useful recreation, of many, is worth the labour of a few, provided the occupation is freely chosen, and can be freely resigned. The operatives are perfectly right in thinking that if all worked on Sunday, seven days' work would have to be given for six days' wages: but so long as the great mass of employments are suspended, the small number who for the enjoyment of others must still work, obtain a proportional increase of earnings; and they are not obliged to follow those occupations, if they prefer leisure to emolument. If a further remedy is sought, it might be found in the establishment by custom of a holiday on some other day of the week for those particular classes of persons. The only ground, therefore, on which restrictions on Sunday amusements can be defended, must be that they are religiously wrong; a motive of legislation which never can be too earnestly protested against. "Deorum injuriæ Diis curæ." It remains to be proved that society[Pg 172] or any of its officers holds a commission from on high to avenge any supposed offence to Omnipotence, which is not also a wrong to our fellow-creatures. The notion that

it is one man's duty that another should be religious, was the foundation of all the religious persecutions ever perpetrated, and if admitted, would fully justify them. Though the feeling which breaks out in the repeated attempts to stop railway travelling on Sunday, in the resistance to the opening of Museums, and the like, has not the cruelty of the old persecutors, the state of mind indicated by it is fundamentally the same. It is a determination not to tolerate others in doing what is permitted by their religion, because it is not permitted by the persecutor's religion. It is a belief that God not only abominates the act of the misbeliever, but will not hold us guiltless if we leave him unmolested.

I cannot refrain from adding to these examples of the little account commonly made of human liberty, the language of downright persecution which breaks out from the press of this country, whenever it feels called on to notice the remarkable phenomenon of Mormonism. Much might be said on the unexpected and instructive fact, that an alleged new revelation, and a religion founded [Pg 173] on it, the product of palpable imposture, not even supported by the *prestige* of extraordinary qualities in its founder, is believed by hundreds of thousands, and has been made the foundation of a society, in the age of newspapers, railways, and the electric telegraph. What here concerns us is, that this religion, like other and better religions, has its martyrs; that its prophet and founder was, for his teaching, put to death by a mob; that others of its adherents lost their lives by the same lawless violence; that they were forcibly expelled, in a body, from the country in which they first grew up; while, now that they have been chased into a solitary recess in the midst of a desert, many in this country openly declare that it would be right (only that it is not convenient) to send an expedition against them, and compel them by force to conform to the opinions of other people. The article of the Mormonite doctrine which is the chief provocative to the antipathy which thus breaks through the ordinary restraints of religious tolerance, is its sanction of polygamy; which, though permitted to Mahomedans, and Hindoos, and Chinese, seems to excite unquenchable animosity when practised by persons who speak English, and profess to be a kind of Christians. No one has a deeper disapprobation than I have [Pg 174] of this Mormon institution; both for other reasons, and because, far from being in any way countenanced by the principle of liberty, it is a direct infraction of that principle, being a mere riveting of the chains of one half of the community, and an emancipation of the other from reciprocity of obligation towards them. Still, it must be remembered that this relation is as much voluntary on the part of the women concerned in it, and who may be deemed the sufferers by it, as is the case with any other form of the marriage institution; and however surprising this fact may appear, it has its explanation in the common ideas and customs of the world, which teaching women to think marriage the one thing needful, make it intelligible that many a woman should prefer being one of several wives, to not being a wife at all. Other countries are not asked to recognise such unions, or release any portion of their inhabitants from their own laws on the score of Mormonite opinions. But when the dissentients have conceded to the hostile sentiments of others, far more than could justly be demanded; when they have left the countries to which their doctrines were unacceptable, and established themselves in a remote corner of the earth, which they have been the first to render habitable to human [Pg 175] beings; it is difficult to see on what principles but those of tyranny they can be prevented from living there under what laws they please, provided they commit no aggression on other nations, and allow perfect freedom of departure to those who are dissatisfied with their ways. A recent writer, in some respects of considerable merit, proposes (to use his own words), not a crusade, but a *civilizade*, against this polygamous community, to put an end to what seems to him a retrograde step in civilisation. It also appears so to me, but I am not aware that any community has a right to force another to be civilised. So long as the sufferers by the bad law do not invoke assistance from other communities, I cannot admit that persons entirely unconnected with them ought to step in and require that a condition of things with which all who are directly interested appear to be satisfied, should be put an end to because it is a scandal to persons some thousands of miles distant, who have no part or concern in it. Let them send missionaries, if they please, to preach against it; and let them, by any fair means (of which silencing the teachers is not one), oppose the progress of similar doctrines among their own people. If civilisation has got the better of barbarism when barbarism had the world to itself, [Pg 176] it is too much to profess to be afraid lest barbarism, after having been fairly got under, should revive and conquer civilisation. A civilisation that can thus succumb to its vanquished enemy, must first have become so degenerate, that neither its appointed priests and teachers, nor anybody else, has the capacity, or will take the trouble, to stand up for it. If this be so, the sooner such a civilisation receives notice to quit, the better. It can only go on from bad to worse, until destroyed and regenerated (like the Western Empire) by energetic barbarians.

## FOOTNOTE:

(Note:

[14] The case of the Bombay Parsees is a curious instance in point. When this industrious and enterprising tribe, the descendants of the Persian fire-worshippers, flying from their native country before the Caliphs, arrived in

Western India, they were admitted to toleration by the Hindoo sovereigns, on condition of not eating beef. When those regions afterwards fell under the dominion of Mahomedan conquerors, the Parsees obtained from them a continuance of indulgence, on condition of refraining from pork. What was at first obedience to authority became a second nature, and the Parsees to this day abstain both from beef and pork. Though not required by their religion, the double abstinence has had time to grow into a custom of their tribe; and custom, in the East, is a religion.

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## JOHN STUART MILL: ON LIBERTY (CHAPTER 5-- "APPLICATIONS")

The principles asserted in these pages must be more generally admitted as the basis for discussion of details, before a consistent application of them to all the various departments of government and morals can be attempted with any prospect of advantage. The few observations I propose to make on questions of detail, are designed to illustrate the principles, rather than to follow them out to their consequences. I offer, not so much applications, as specimens of application; which may serve to bring into greater clearness the meaning and limits of the two maxims which together form the entire doctrine of this Essay, and to assist the judgment in holding the balance between them, in the cases where it appears doubtful which of them is applicable to the case.

The maxims are, first, that the individual is not accountable to society for his actions, in so far as [Pg 178] these concern the interests of no person but himself. Advice, instruction, persuasion, and avoidance by other people if thought necessary by them for their own good, are the only measures by which society can justifiably express its dislike or disapprobation of his conduct. Secondly, that for such actions as are prejudicial to the interests of others, the individual is accountable and may be subjected either to social or to legal punishments, if society is of opinion that the one or the other is requisite for its protection.

In the first place, it must by no means be supposed, because damage, or probability of damage, to the interests of others, can alone justify the interference of society, that therefore it always does justify such interference. In many cases, an individual, in pursuing a legitimate object, necessarily and therefore legitimately causes pain or loss to others, or intercepts a good which they had a reasonable hope of obtaining. Such oppositions of interest between individuals often arise from bad social institutions, but are unavoidable while those institutions last; and some would be unavoidable under any institutions. Whoever succeeds in an overcrowded profession, or in a competitive examination; whoever is preferred to another in any contest for an object [Pg 179] which both desire, reaps benefit from the loss of others, from their wasted exertion and their disappointment. But it is, by common admission, better for the general interest of mankind, that persons should pursue their objects undeterred by this sort of consequences. In other words, society admits no rights, either legal or moral, in the disappointed competitors, to immunity from this kind of suffering; and feels called on to interfere, only when means of success have been employed which it is contrary to the general interest to permit—namely, fraud or treachery, and force.

Again, trade is a social act. Whoever undertakes to sell any description of goods to the public, does what affects the interest of other persons, and of society in general; and thus his conduct, in principle, comes within the jurisdiction of society: accordingly, it was once held to be the duty of governments, in all cases which were considered of importance, to fix prices, and regulate the processes of manufacture. But it is now recognised, though not till after a long struggle, that both the cheapness and the good quality of commodities are most effectually provided for by leaving the producers and sellers perfectly free, under the sole check of equal [Pg 180] freedom to the buyers for supplying themselves elsewhere. This is the so-called doctrine of Free Trade, which rests on grounds different from, though equally solid with, the principle of individual liberty asserted in this Essay. Restrictions on trade, or on production for purposes of trade, are indeed restraints; and all restraint, *quâ* restraint, is an evil: but the restraints in question affect only that part of conduct which society is competent to restrain, and are wrong solely because they do not really produce the results which it is desired to produce by them. As the principle of individual liberty is not involved in the doctrine of Free Trade, so neither is it in most of the questions which arise respecting the limits of that doctrine: as for example, what amount of public control is admissible for

the prevention of fraud by adulteration; how far sanitary precautions, or arrangements to protect work-people employed in dangerous occupations, should be enforced on employers. Such questions involve considerations of liberty, only in so far as leaving people to themselves is always better, *cæteris paribus*, than controlling them: but that they may be legitimately controlled for these ends, is in principle undeniable. On the other hand, there are questions relating to interference with trade,[Pg 181] which are essentially questions of liberty; such as the Maine Law, already touched upon; the prohibition of the importation of opium into China; the restriction of the sale of poisons; all cases, in short, where the object of the interference is to make it impossible or difficult to obtain a particular commodity. These interferences are objectionable, not as infringements on the liberty of the producer or seller, but on that of the buyer.

One of these examples, that of the sale of poisons, opens a new question; the proper limits of what may be called the functions of police; how far liberty may legitimately be invaded for the prevention of crime, or of accident. It is one of the undisputed functions of government to take precautions against crime before it has been committed, as well as to detect and punish it afterwards. The preventive function of government, however, is far more liable to be abused, to the prejudice of liberty, than the punitive function; for there is hardly any part of the legitimate freedom of action of a human being which would not admit of being represented, and fairly too, as increasing the facilities for some form or other of delinquency. Nevertheless, if a public authority, or even a private person, sees any one[Pg 182] evidently preparing to commit a crime, they are not bound to look on inactive until the crime is committed, but may interfere to prevent it. If poisons were never bought or used for any purpose except the commission of murder, it would be right to prohibit their manufacture and sale. They may, however, be wanted not only for innocent but for useful purposes, and restrictions cannot be imposed in the one case without operating in the other. Again, it is a proper office of public authority to guard against accidents. If either a public officer or any one else saw a person attempting to cross a bridge which had been ascertained to be unsafe, and there were no time to warn him of his danger, they might seize him and turn him back, without any real infringement of his liberty; for liberty consists in doing what one desires, and he does not desire to fall into the river. Nevertheless, when there is not a certainty, but only a danger of mischief, no one but the person himself can judge of the sufficiency of the motive which may prompt him to incur the risk: in this case, therefore (unless he is a child, or delirious, or in some state of excitement or absorption incompatible with the full use of the reflecting faculty), he ought, I conceive, to be only warned of the danger; not forcibly prevented from[Pg 183] exposing himself to it. Similar considerations, applied to such a question as the sale of poisons, may enable us to decide which among the possible modes of regulation are or are not contrary to principle. Such a precaution, for example, as that of labelling the drug with some word expressive of its dangerous character, may be enforced without violation of liberty: the buyer cannot wish not to know that the thing he possesses has poisonous qualities. But to require in all cases the certificate of a medical practitioner, would make it sometimes impossible, always expensive, to obtain the article for legitimate uses. The only mode apparent to me, in which difficulties may be thrown in the way of crime committed through this means, without any infringement, worth taking into account, upon the liberty of those who desire the poisonous substance for other purposes, consists in providing what, in the apt language of Bentham, is called "preappointed evidence." This provision is familiar to every one in the case of contracts. It is usual and right that the law, when a contract is entered into, should require as the condition of its enforcing performance, that certain formalities should be observed, such as signatures, attestation of witnesses, and the like, in order that in case of subsequent dispute, there may be[Pg 184] evidence to prove that the contract was really entered into, and that there was nothing in the circumstances to render it legally invalid: the effect being, to throw great obstacles in the way of fictitious contracts, or contracts made in circumstances which, if known, would destroy their validity. Precautions of a similar nature might be enforced in the sale of articles adapted to be instruments of crime. The seller, for example, might be required to enter into a register the exact time of the transaction, the name and address of the buyer, the precise quality and quantity sold; to ask the purpose for which it was wanted, and record the answer he received. When there was no medical prescription, the presence of some third person might be required, to bring home the fact to the purchaser, in case there should afterwards be reason to believe that the article had been applied to criminal purposes. Such regulations would in general be no material impediment to obtaining the article, but a very considerable one to making an improper use of it without detection.

The right inherent in society, to ward off crimes against itself by antecedent precautions, suggests the obvious limitations to the maxim, that purely self-regarding misconduct cannot properly be[Pg 185] meddled with in the way of prevention or punishment. Drunkenness, for example, in ordinary cases, is not a fit subject for legislative interference; but I should deem it perfectly legitimate that a person, who had once been convicted of any act of violence to others under the influence of drink, should be placed under a special legal restriction, personal to himself; that if he were afterwards found drunk, he should be liable to a penalty, and that if when in that state he committed another offence, the punishment to which he would be liable for that other offence should be increased in severity. The making himself drunk, in a person whom drunkenness excites to do harm to others, is a crime against others. So, again, idleness, except in a person receiving support from the public, or except when it

constitutes a breach of contract, cannot without tyranny be made a subject of legal punishment; but if either from idleness or from any other avoidable cause, a man fails to perform his legal duties to others, as for instance to support his children, it is no tyranny to force him to fulfil that obligation, by compulsory labour, if no other means are available.

Again, there are many acts which, being directly injurious only to the agents themselves, ought not to be legally interdicted, but which, if done [Pg 186] publicly, are a violation of good manners and coming thus within the category of offences against others may rightfully be prohibited. Of this kind are offences against decency; on which it is unnecessary to dwell, the rather as they are only connected indirectly with our subject, the objection to publicity being equally strong in the case of many actions not in themselves condemnable, nor supposed to be so.

There is another question to which an answer must be found, consistent with the principles which have been laid down. In cases of personal conduct supposed to be blamable, but which respect for liberty precludes society from preventing or punishing, because the evil directly resulting falls wholly on the agent; what the agent is free to do, ought other persons to be equally free to counsel or instigate? This question is not free from difficulty. The case of a person who solicits another to do an act, is not strictly a case of self-regarding conduct. To give advice or offer inducements to any one, is a social act, and may therefore, like actions in general which affect others, be supposed amenable to social control. But a little reflection corrects the first impression, by showing that if the case is not strictly within the definition of individual liberty, yet the reasons [Pg 187] on which the principle of individual liberty is grounded, are applicable to it. If people must be allowed, in whatever concerns only themselves, to act as seems best to themselves at their own peril, they must equally be free to consult with one another about what is fit to be so done; to exchange opinions, and give and receive suggestions. Whatever it is permitted to do, it must be permitted to advise to do. The question is doubtful, only when the instigator derives a personal benefit from his advice; when he makes it his occupation, for subsistence or pecuniary gain, to promote what society and the state consider to be an evil. Then, indeed, a new element of complication is introduced; namely, the existence of classes of persons with an interest opposed to what is considered as the public weal, and whose mode of living is grounded on the counteraction of it. Ought this to be interfered with, or not? Fornication, for example, must be tolerated, and so must gambling; but should a person be free to be a pimp, or to keep a gambling-house? The case is one of those which lie on the exact boundary line between two principles, and it is not at once apparent to which of the two it properly belongs. There are arguments on both sides. On the side of toleration it may be said, that the fact [Pg 188] of following anything as an occupation, and living or profiting by the practice of it, cannot make that criminal which would otherwise be admissible; that the act should either be consistently permitted or consistently prohibited; that if the principles which we have hitherto defended are true, society has no business, as society, to decide anything to be wrong which concerns only the individual; that it cannot go beyond dissuasion, and that one person should be as free to persuade, as another to dissuade. In opposition to this it may be contended, that although the public, or the State, are not warranted in authoritatively deciding, for purposes of repression or punishment, that such or such conduct affecting only the interests of the individual is good or bad, they are fully justified in assuming, if they regard it as bad, that its being so or not is at least a disputable question: That, this being supposed, they cannot be acting wrongly in endeavouring to exclude the influence of solicitations which are not disinterested, of instigators who cannot possibly be impartial—who have a direct personal interest on one side, and that side the one which the State believes to be wrong, and who confessedly promote it for personal objects only. There can surely, it may be urged, be nothing lost, no sacrifice of good, by [Pg 189] so ordering matters that persons shall make their election, either wisely or foolishly, on their own prompting, as free as possible from the arts of persons who stimulate their inclinations for interested purposes of their own. Thus (it may be said) though the statutes respecting unlawful games are utterly indefensible—though all persons should be free to gamble in their own or each other's houses, or in any place of meeting established by their own subscriptions, and open only to the members and their visitors—yet public gambling-houses should not be permitted. It is true that the prohibition is never effectual, and that whatever amount of tyrannical power is given to the police, gambling-houses can always be maintained under other pretences; but they may be compelled to conduct their operations with a certain degree of secrecy and mystery, so that nobody knows anything about them but those who seek them; and more than this, society ought not to aim at. There is considerable force in these arguments; I will not venture to decide whether they are sufficient to justify the moral anomaly of punishing the accessory, when the principal is (and must be) allowed to go free; or fining or imprisoning the procurer, but not the fornicator, the gambling-house keeper, but not the gambler. [Pg 190] Still less ought the common operations of buying and selling to be interfered with on analogous grounds. Almost every article which is bought and sold may be used in excess, and the sellers have a pecuniary interest in encouraging that excess; but no argument can be founded on this, in favour, for instance, of the Maine Law; because the class of dealers in strong drinks, though interested in their abuse, are indispensably required for the sake of their legitimate use. The interest, however, of these dealers in promoting intemperance is a real evil, and justifies the State in imposing restrictions and requiring guarantees, which but for that justification would be infringements of legitimate liberty.

A further question is, whether the State, while it permits, should nevertheless indirectly discourage conduct which it deems contrary to the best interests of the agent; whether, for example, it should take measures to render the means of drunkenness more costly, or add to the difficulty of procuring them, by limiting the number of the places of sale. On this as on most other practical questions, many distinctions require to be made. To tax stimulants for the sole purpose of making them more difficult to be obtained, is a measure differing only in degree from their entire [Pg 191]prohibition; and would be justifiable only if that were justifiable. Every increase of cost is a prohibition, to those whose means do not come up to the augmented price; and to those who do, it is a penalty laid on them for gratifying a particular taste. Their choice of pleasures, and their mode of expending their income, after satisfying their legal and moral obligations to the State and to individuals, are their own concern, and must rest with their own judgment. These considerations may seem at first sight to condemn the selection of stimulants as special subjects of taxation for purposes of revenue. But it must be remembered that taxation for fiscal purposes is absolutely inevitable; that in most countries it is necessary that a considerable part of that taxation should be indirect; that the State, therefore, cannot help imposing penalties, which to some persons may be prohibitory, on the use of some articles of consumption. It is hence the duty of the State to consider, in the imposition of taxes, what commodities the consumers can best spare; and *à fortiori*, to select in preference those of which it deems the use, beyond a very moderate quantity, to be positively injurious. Taxation, therefore, of stimulants, up to the point which produces the largest amount of revenue (supposing that the [Pg 192] State needs all the revenue which it yields) is not only admissible, but to be approved of.

The question of making the sale of these commodities a more or less exclusive privilege, must be answered differently, according to the purposes to which the restriction is intended to be subservient. All places of public resort require the restraint of a police, and places of this kind peculiarly, because offences against society are especially apt to originate there. It is, therefore, fit to confine the power of selling these commodities (at least for consumption on the spot) to persons of known or vouched-for respectability of conduct; to make such regulations respecting hours of opening and closing as may be requisite for public surveillance, and to withdraw the licence if breaches of the peace repeatedly take place through the connivance or incapacity of the keeper of the house, or if it becomes a rendezvous for concocting and preparing offences against the law. Any further restriction I do not conceive to be, in principle, justifiable. The limitation in number, for instance, of beer and spirit-houses, for the express purpose of rendering them more difficult of access, and diminishing the occasions of temptation, not only exposes all to an inconvenience because there are some by whom the [Pg 193]facility would be abused, but is suited only to a state of society in which the labouring classes are avowedly treated as children or savages, and placed under an education of restraint, to fit them for future admission to the privileges of freedom. This is not the principle on which the labouring classes are professedly governed in any free country; and no person who sets due value on freedom will give his adhesion to their being so governed, unless after all efforts have been exhausted to educate them for freedom and govern them as freemen, and it has been definitively proved that they can only be governed as children. The bare statement of the alternative shows the absurdity of supposing that such efforts have been made in any case which needs be considered here. It is only because the institutions of this country are a mass of inconsistencies, that things find admittance into our practice which belong to the system of despotic, or what is called paternal, government, while the general freedom of our institutions precludes the exercise of the amount of control necessary to render the restraint of any real efficacy as a moral education.

It was pointed out in an early part of this Essay, that the liberty of the individual, in things wherein the individual is alone concerned, [Pg 194] implies a corresponding liberty in any number of individuals to regulate by mutual agreement such things as regard them jointly, and regard no persons but themselves. This question presents no difficulty, so long as the will of all the persons implicated remains unaltered; but since that will may change, it is often necessary, even in things in which they alone are concerned, that they should enter into engagements with one another; and when they do, it is fit, as a general rule, that those engagements should be kept. Yet in the laws, probably, of every country, this general rule has some exceptions. Not only persons are not held to engagements which violate the rights of third parties, but it is sometimes considered a sufficient reason for releasing them from an engagement, that it is injurious to themselves. In this and most other civilised countries, for example, an engagement by which a person should sell himself, or allow himself to be sold, as a slave, would be null and void; neither enforced by law nor by opinion. The ground for thus limiting his power of voluntarily disposing of his own lot in life, is apparent, and is very clearly seen in this extreme case. The reason for not interfering, unless for the sake of others, with a person's voluntary acts, is consideration for his [Pg 195] liberty. His voluntary choice is evidence that what he so chooses is desirable, or at the least endurable, to him, and his good is on the whole best provided for by allowing him to take his own means of pursuing it. But by selling himself for a slave, he abdicates his liberty; he foregoes any future use of it, beyond that single act. He therefore defeats, in his own case, the very purpose which is the justification of allowing him to dispose of himself. He is no longer free; but is thenceforth in a position which has no longer the presumption in its favour, that would be afforded by his voluntarily remaining in it. The principle of freedom cannot require that he should be free not to be free. It is not freedom, to be allowed to alienate his freedom. These reasons, the force of which is so conspicuous in this

peculiar case, are evidently of far wider application; yet a limit is everywhere set to them by the necessities of life, which continually require, not indeed that we should resign our freedom, but that we should consent to this and the other limitation of it. The principle, however, which demands uncontrolled freedom of action in all that concerns only the agents themselves, requires that those who have become bound to one another, in things which concern no third party, should be able to release[Pg 196] one another from the engagement: and even without such voluntary release, there are perhaps no contracts or engagements, except those that relate to money or money's worth, of which one can venture to say that there ought to be no liberty whatever of retractation. Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, in the excellent essay from which I have already quoted, states it as his conviction, that engagements which involve personal relations or services, should never be legally binding beyond a limited duration of time; and that the most important of these engagements, marriage, having the peculiarity that its objects are frustrated unless the feelings of both the parties are in harmony with it, should require nothing more than the declared will of either party to dissolve it. This subject is too important, and too complicated, to be discussed in a parenthesis, and I touch on it only so far as is necessary for purposes of illustration. If the conciseness and generality of Baron Humboldt's dissertation had not obliged him in this instance to content himself with enunciating his conclusion without discussing the premises, he would doubtless have recognised that the question cannot be decided on grounds so simple as those to which he confines himself. When a person, either by express promise or by conduct, has[Pg 197] encouraged another to rely upon his continuing to act in a certain way—to build expectations and calculations, and stake any part of his plan of life upon that supposition, a new series of moral obligations arises on his part towards that person, which may possibly be overruled, but cannot be ignored. And again, if the relation between two contracting parties has been followed by consequences to others; if it has placed third parties in any peculiar position, or, as in the case of marriage, has even called third parties into existence, obligations arise on the part of both the contracting parties towards those third persons, the fulfilment of which, or at all events the mode of fulfilment, must be greatly affected by the continuance or disruption of the relation between the original parties to the contract. It does not follow, nor can I admit, that these obligations extend to requiring the fulfilment of the contract at all costs to the happiness of the reluctant party; but they are a necessary element in the question; and even if, as Von Humboldt maintains, they ought to make no difference in the *legal* freedom of the parties to release themselves from the engagement (and I also hold that they ought not to make *much* difference), they necessarily make a great difference in the *mora*[Pg 198] freedom. A person is bound to take all these circumstances into account, before resolving on a step which may affect such important interests of others; and if he does not allow proper weight to those interests, he is morally responsible for the wrong. I have made these obvious remarks for the better illustration of the general principle of liberty, and not because they are at all needed on the particular question, which, on the contrary, is usually discussed as if the interest of children was everything, and that of grown persons nothing.

I have already observed that, owing to the absence of any recognised general principles, liberty is often granted where it should be withheld, as well as withheld where it should be granted; and one of the cases in which, in the modern European world, the sentiment of liberty is the strongest, is a case where, in my view, it is altogether misplaced. A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns; but he ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another, under the pretext that the affairs of another are his own affairs. The State, while it respects the liberty of each in what specially regards himself, is bound to maintain a vigilant control over his exercise of any power which it allows him to possess over others. This[Pg 199] obligation is almost entirely disregarded in the case of the family relations, a case, in its direct influence on human happiness, more important than all others taken together. The almost despotic power of husbands over wives need not be enlarged upon here because nothing more is needed for the complete removal of the evil, than that wives should have the same rights, and should receive the protection of law in the same manner, as all other persons; and because, on this subject, the defenders of established injustice do not avail themselves of the plea of liberty, but stand forth openly as the champions of power. It is in the case of children, that misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfilment by the State of its duties. One would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally, and not metaphorically, a part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest interference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them; more jealous than of almost any interference with his own freedom of action: so much less do the generality of mankind value liberty than power. Consider, for example, the case of education. Is it not almost a self-evident axiom, that the State should require and compel the education, up to a certain standard, of every human being who is born its[Pg 200] citizen? Yet who is there that is not afraid to recognise and assert this truth? Hardly any one indeed will deny that it is one of the most sacred duties of the parents (or, as law and usage now stand, the father), after summoning a human being into the world, to give to that being an education fitting him to perform his part well in life towards others and towards himself. But while this is unanimously declared to be the father's duty, scarcely anybody, in this country, will bear to hear of obliging him to perform it. Instead of his being required to make any exertion or sacrifice for securing education to the child, it is left to his choice to accept it or not when it is provided gratis! It still remains unrecognised, that to bring a child into

existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body, but instruction and training for its mind, is a moral crime, both against the unfortunate offspring and against society; and that if the parent does not fulfil this obligation, the State ought to see it fulfilled, at the charge, as far as possible, of the parent.

Were the duty of enforcing universal education once admitted, there would be an end to the difficulties about what the State should teach, and how it should teach, which now convert the subject into a mere battle-field for sects and [Pg 201] parties, causing the time and labour which should have been spent in educating, to be wasted in quarrelling about education. If the government would make up its mind to *require* for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of *providing* one. It might leave to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased, and content itself with helping to pay the school fees of the poorer class of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one else to pay for them. The objections which are urged with reason against State education, do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education; which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another; and as the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the [Pg 202] majority of the existing generation, in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by the State, should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence. Unless, indeed, when society in general is in so backward a state that it could not or would not provide for itself any proper institutions of education, unless the government undertook the task; then, indeed, the government may, as the less of two great evils, take upon itself the business of schools and universities, as it may that of joint stock companies, when private enterprise, in a shape fitted for undertaking great works of industry, does not exist in the country. But in general, if the country contains a sufficient number of persons qualified to provide education under government auspices, the same persons would be able and willing to give an equally good education on the voluntary principle, under the assurance of remuneration afforded by a law rendering education compulsory, combined with State aid to those unable to defray the expense.

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The instrument for enforcing the law could be no other than public examinations, extending to all children, and beginning at an early age. An age might be fixed at which every child must be examined, to ascertain if he (or she) is able to read. If a child proves unable, the father, unless he has some sufficient ground of excuse, might be subjected to a moderate fine, to be worked out, if necessary, by his labour, and the child might be put to school at his expense. Once in every year the examination should be renewed, with a gradually extending range of subjects, so as to make the universal acquisition, and what is more, retention, of a certain minimum of general knowledge, virtually compulsory. Beyond that minimum, there should be voluntary examinations on all subjects, at which all who come up to a certain standard of proficiency might claim a certificate. To prevent the State from exercising, through these arrangements, an improper influence over opinion, the knowledge required for passing an examination (beyond the merely instrumental parts of knowledge, such as languages and their use) should, even in the higher class of examinations, be confined to facts and positive science exclusively. The examinations on religion, politics, or other disputed topics, should not turn on the [Pg 204] truth or falsehood of opinions, but on the matter of fact that such and such an opinion is held, on such grounds, by such authors, or schools, or churches. Under this system, the rising generation would be no worse off in regard to all disputed truths, than they are at present; they would be brought up either churchmen or dissenters as they now are, the state merely taking care that they should be instructed churchmen, or instructed dissenters. There would be nothing to hinder them from being taught religion, if their parents chose, at the same schools where they were taught other things. All attempts by the state to bias the conclusions of its citizens on disputed subjects, are evil; but it may very properly offer to ascertain and certify that a person possesses the knowledge, requisite to make his conclusions, on any given subject, worth attending to. A student of philosophy would be the better for being able to stand an examination both in Locke and in Kant, whichever of the two he takes up with, or even if with neither: and there is no reasonable objection to examining an atheist in the evidences of Christianity, provided he is not required to profess a belief in them. The examinations, however, in the higher branches of knowledge should, I conceive, be entirely voluntary. It would be giving [Pg 205] too dangerous a power to governments, were they allowed to exclude any one from professions, even from the profession of teacher, for alleged deficiency of qualifications: and I think, with Wilhelm von Humboldt, that degrees, or other public certificates of scientific or professional acquirements, should be given to all who present themselves for examination, and stand the test; but that such

certificates should confer no advantage over competitors, other than the weight which may be attached to their testimony by public opinion.

It is not in the matter of education only, that misplaced notions of liberty prevent moral obligations on the part of parents from being recognised, and legal obligations from being imposed, where there are the strongest grounds for the former always, and in many cases for the latter also. The fact itself, of causing the existence of a human being, is one of the most responsible actions in the range of human life. To undertake this responsibility—to bestow a life which may be either a curse or a blessing—unless the being on whom it is to be bestowed will have at least the ordinary chances of a desirable existence, is a crime against that being. And in a country either over-peopled, or threatened with being so, to produce children, beyond a very small number,[Pg 206] with the effect of reducing the reward of labour by their competition, is a serious offence against all who live by the remuneration of their labour. The laws which, in many countries on the Continent, forbid marriage unless the parties can show that they have the means of supporting a family, do not exceed the legitimate powers of the state: and whether such laws be expedient or not (a question mainly dependent on local circumstances and feelings), they are not objectionable as violations of liberty. Such laws are interferences of the state to prohibit a mischievous act—an act injurious to others, which ought to be a subject of reprobation, and social stigma, even when it is not deemed expedient to superadd legal punishment. Yet the current ideas of liberty, which bend so easily to real infringements of the freedom of the individual, in things which concern only himself, would repel the attempt to put any restraint upon his inclinations when the consequence of their indulgence is a life, or lives, of wretchedness and depravity to the offspring, with manifold evils to those sufficiently within reach to be in any way affected by their actions. When we compare the strange respect of mankind for liberty, with their strange want of respect for it, we might imagine that a man had an indispensable[Pg 207] right to do harm to others, and no right at all to please himself without giving pain to any one.

I have reserved for the last place a large class of questions respecting the limits of government interference, which, though closely connected with the subject of this Essay, do not, in strictness, belong to it. These are cases in which the reasons against interference do not turn upon the principle of liberty: the question is not about restraining the actions of individuals, but about helping them: it is asked whether the government should do, or cause to be done, something for their benefit, instead of leaving it to be done by themselves, individually, or in voluntary combination.

The objections to government interference, when it is not such as to involve infringement of liberty, may be of three kinds.

The first is, when the thing to be done is likely to be better done by individuals than by the government. Speaking generally, there is no one so fit to conduct any business, or to determine how or by whom it shall be conducted, as those who are personally interested in it. This principle condemns the interferences, once so common, of the legislature, or the officers of government, with the ordinary processes of industry. But this part of the subject has been sufficiently enlarged upon[Pg 208] by political economists, and is not particularly related to the principles of this Essay.

The second objection is more nearly allied to our subject. In many cases, though individuals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education—a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal. This is a principal, though not the sole, recommendation of jury trial (in cases not political); of free and popular local and municipal institutions; of the conduct of industrial and philanthropic enterprises by voluntary associations. These are not questions of liberty, and are connected with that subject only by remote tendencies; but they are questions of development. It belongs to a different occasion from the present to dwell on these things as parts of national education; as being, in truth, the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of[Pg 209] joint interests, the management of joint concerns—habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another. Without these habits and powers, a free constitution can neither be worked nor preserved, as is exemplified by the too-often transitory nature of political freedom in countries where it does not rest upon a sufficient basis of local liberties. The management of purely local business by the localities, and of the great enterprises of industry by the union of those who voluntarily supply the pecuniary means, is further recommended by all the advantages which have been set forth in this Essay as belonging to individuality of development, and diversity of modes of action. Government operations tend to be everywhere alike. With individuals and voluntary associations, on the contrary, there are varied experiments, and endless diversity of experience. What the State can usefully do, is to make itself a central depository, and

active circulator and diffuser, of the experience resulting from many trials. Its business is to enable each experimentalist to benefit by the experiments of others, instead of tolerating no experiments but its own.

The third, and most cogent reason for restricting[Pg 210] the interference of government, is the great evil of adding unnecessarily to its power. Every function superadded to those already exercised by the government, causes its influence over hopes and fears to be more widely diffused, and converts, more and more, the active and ambitious part of the public into hangers-on of the government, or of some party which aims at becoming the government. If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint-stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration; if the employés of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the government, and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And the evil would be greater, the more efficiently and scientifically the administrative machinery was constructed—the more skilful the arrangements for obtaining the best qualified hands and heads with which to work it. In England it has of late been proposed that all the members of the civil[Pg 211] service of government should be selected by competitive examination, to obtain for those employments the most intelligent and instructed persons procurable; and much has been said and written for and against this proposal. One of the arguments most insisted on by its opponents, is that the occupation of a permanent official servant of the State does not hold out sufficient prospects of emolument and importance to attract the highest talents, which will always be able to find a more inviting career in the professions, or in the service of companies and other public bodies. One would not have been surprised if this argument had been used by the friends of the proposition, as an answer to its principal difficulty. Coming from the opponents it is strange enough. What is urged as an objection is the safety-valve of the proposed system. If indeed all the high talent of the country *could* be drawn into the service of the government, a proposal tending to bring about that result might well inspire uneasiness. If every part of the business of society which required organised concert, or large and comprehensive views, were in the hands of the government, and if government offices were universally filled by the ablest men, all the enlarged culture and practised intelligence in the country, except the purely[Pg 212] speculative, would be concentrated in a numerous bureaucracy, to whom alone the rest of the community would look for all things: the multitude for direction and dictation in all they had to do; the able and aspiring for personal advancement. To be admitted into the ranks of this bureaucracy, and when admitted, to rise therein, would be the sole objects of ambition. Under this régime, not only is the outside public ill-qualified, for want of practical experience, to criticise or check the mode of operation of the bureaucracy, but even if the accidents of despotism or the natural working of popular institutions occasionally raise to the summit a ruler or rulers of reforming inclinations, no reform can be effected which is contrary to the interest of the bureaucracy. Such is the melancholy condition of the Russian empire, as is shown in the accounts of those who have had sufficient opportunity of observation. The Czar himself is powerless against the bureaucratic body; he can send any one of them to Siberia, but he cannot govern without them, or against their will. On every decree of his they have a tacit veto, by merely refraining from carrying it into effect. In countries of more advanced civilisation and of a more insurrectionary spirit, the public, accustomed to expect everything to be done for them by the[Pg 213] State, or at least to do nothing for themselves without asking from the State not only leave to do it, but even how it is to be done, naturally hold the State responsible for all evil which befalls them, and when the evil exceeds their amount of patience, they rise against the government and make what is called a revolution; whereupon somebody else, with or without legitimate authority from the nation, vaults into the seat, issues his orders to the bureaucracy, and everything goes on much as it did before; the bureaucracy being unchanged, and nobody else being capable of taking their place.

A very different spectacle is exhibited among a people accustomed to transact their own business. In France, a large part of the people having been engaged in military service, many of whom have held at least the rank of non-commissioned officers, there are in every popular insurrection several persons competent to take the lead, and improvise some tolerable plan of action. What the French are in military affairs, the Americans are in every kind of civil business; let them be left without a government, every body of Americans is able to improvise one, and to carry on that or any other public business with a sufficient amount of intelligence, order, and decision. This is what every[Pg 214] free people ought to be: and a people capable of this is certain to be free; it will never let itself be enslaved by any man or body of men because these are able to seize and pull the reins of the central administration. No bureaucracy can hope to make such a people as this do or undergo anything that they do not like. But where everything is done through the bureaucracy, nothing to which the bureaucracy is really adverse can be done at all. The constitution of such countries is an organisation of the experience and practical ability of the nation, into a disciplined body for the purpose of governing the rest; and the more perfect that organisation is in itself, the more successful in drawing to itself and educating for itself the persons of greatest capacity from all ranks of the community, the more complete is the bondage of all, the members of the bureaucracy included. For the governors are as much the slaves of their organisation and discipline, as the governed are of the governors. A

Chinese mandarin is as much the tool and creature of a despotism as the humblest cultivator. An individual Jesuit is to the utmost degree of abasement the slave of his order, though the order itself exists for the collective power and importance of its members.

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It is not, also, to be forgotten, that the absorption of all the principal ability of the country into the governing body is fatal, sooner or later, to the mental activity and progressiveness of the body itself. Banded together as they are—working a system which, like all systems, necessarily proceeds in a great measure by fixed rules—the official body are under the constant temptation of sinking into indolent routine, or, if they now and then desert that mill-horse round, of rushing into some half-examined crudity which has struck the fancy of some leading member of the corps: and the sole check to these closely allied, though seemingly opposite, tendencies, the only stimulus which can keep the ability of the body itself up to a high standard, is liability to the watchful criticism of equal ability outside the body. It is indispensable, therefore, that the means should exist, independently of the government, of forming such ability, and furnishing it with the opportunities and experience necessary for a correct judgment of great practical affairs. If we would possess permanently a skilful and efficient body of functionaries—above all, a body able to originate and willing to adopt improvements; if we would not have our bureaucracy degenerate into a pedantocracy, this body must not engross all the occupations which form [Pg 216] and cultivate the faculties required for the government of mankind.

To determine the point at which evils, so formidable to human freedom and advancement, begin, or rather at which they begin to predominate over the benefits attending the collective application of the force of society, under its recognised chiefs, for the removal of the obstacles which stand in the way of its well-being; to secure as much of the advantages of centralised power and intelligence, as can be had without turning into governmental channels too great a proportion of the general activity, is one of the most difficult and complicated questions in the art of government. It is, in a great measure, a question of detail, in which many and various considerations must be kept in view, and no absolute rule can be laid down. But I believe that the practical principle in which safety resides, the ideal to be kept in view, the standard by which to test all arrangements intended for overcoming the difficulty, may be conveyed in these words: the greatest dissemination of power consistent with efficiency; but the greatest possible centralisation of information, and diffusion of it from the centre. Thus, in municipal administration, there would be, as in the New England States, a very minute [Pg 217] division among separate officers, chosen by the localities, of all business which is not better left to the persons directly interested; but besides this, there would be, in each department of local affairs, a central superintendence, forming a branch of the general government. The organ of this superintendence would concentrate, as in a focus, the variety of information and experience derived from the conduct of that branch of public business in all the localities, from everything analogous which is done in foreign countries, and from the general principles of political science. This central organ should have a right to know all that is done, and its special duty should be that of making the knowledge acquired in one place available for others. Emancipated from the petty prejudices and narrow views of a locality by its elevated position and comprehensive sphere of observation, its advice would naturally carry much authority; but its actual power, as a permanent institution, should, I conceive, be limited to compelling the local officers to obey the laws laid down for their guidance. In all things not provided for by general rules, those officers should be left to their own judgment, under responsibility to their constituents. For the violation of rules, they should be responsible to law, and the rules [Pg 218] themselves should be laid down by the legislature; the central administrative authority only watching over their execution, and if they were not properly carried into effect, appealing, according to the nature of the case, to the tribunal to enforce the law, or to the constituencies to dismiss the functionaries who had not executed it according to its spirit. Such, in its general conception, is the central superintendence which the Poor Law Board is intended to exercise over the administrators of the Poor Rate throughout the country. Whatever powers the Board exercises beyond this limit, were right and necessary in that peculiar case, for the cure of rooted habits of maladministration in matters deeply affecting not the localities merely, but the whole community; since no locality has a moral right to make itself by mismanagement a nest of pauperism, necessarily overflowing into other localities, and impairing the moral and physical condition of the whole labouring community. The powers of administrative coercion and subordinate legislation possessed by the Poor Law Board (but which, owing to the state of opinion on the subject, are very scantily exercised by them), though perfectly justifiable in a case of first-rate national interest, would be wholly out of place in the superintendence [Pg 219] of interests purely local. But a central organ of information and instruction for all the localities, would be equally valuable in all departments of administration. A government cannot have too much of the kind of activity which does not impede, but aids and stimulates, individual exertion and development. The mischief begins when, instead of calling forth the activity and powers of individuals and bodies, it substitutes its own activity for theirs; when, instead of informing, advising, and, upon occasion, denouncing, it makes them work in fetters, or bids them stand aside and does their work instead of them. The worth of a State, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it; and a State which postpones the interests of *their* mental expansion and

elevation, to a little more of administrative skill, or of that semblance of it which practice gives, in the details of business; a State which dwarfs its men, in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished; and that the perfection of machinery to which it has sacrificed everything, will in the end avail it nothing, for want of the vital power which, in order that the machine might work more smoothly, it has preferred to banish.

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## COMMENTARY ON JOHN LOCKE

Although he completed a philosophical education at Oxford, John Locke declined the offer of a permanent academic position in order to avoid committing himself to a religious order. Having also studied medicine, he served for many years as private physician and secretary to Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury and one of the Lord Proprietors of the Carolina Colonies. Locke's involvement with this controversial political figure led to a period of self-imposed exile in Holland during the 1680s, but after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 he held several minor governmental offices. A friend of [Isaac Newton](#) and [Robert Boyle](#), Locke was also an early member of the Royal Society. He studied and wrote on philosophical, scientific, and political matters throughout his life, in a voluminous correspondence and [ample journals](#), but the public works for which he is best known were published in a single, sudden burst.

The fundamental principles of Locke's philosophy are presented in [An Essay Concerning Human Understanding](#) (1690), the culmination of twenty years of reflection on the origins of human knowledge. According to Locke, what we know is always properly understood as [the relation between ideas](#), and he devoted much of the *Essay* to an extended argument that all of our ideas—simple or complex—are ultimately [derived from experience](#). The consequence of this [empiricist](#) approach is that the knowledge of which we are capable is [severely limited](#) in its scope and certainty. Our knowledge of material [substances](#), for example, depends heavily on the secondary qualities by reference to which we name them, while their real inner natures derive from the [primary qualities](#) of their insensible parts.

Nevertheless, Locke held that we have no grounds for complaint about the limitations of our knowledge, since a proper application of our cognitive capacities is enough to [guide our action](#) in the practical conduct of life. The *Essay* brought great fame, and Locke spent much of the rest of his life responding to admirers and critics by making revisions in later editions of the book, including detailed accounts of human [volition](#) and moral freedom, the [personal identity](#) on which our responsibility as moral agents depends, and the dangers of religious enthusiasm. One additional section that was never included in the *Essay* itself is [Of the Conduct of the Understanding](#), a practical guide to the achievement of useful beliefs about the world. The bachelor philosopher's notions about childrearing appeared in [Some Thoughts concerning Education](#) (1693).

By contrast, Locke chose to avoid controversy by publishing his political writings anonymously. With the *Two Treatises of Civil Government* (1690) Locke established himself as a political theorist of the highest order. The *First Treatise* is a detailed refutation of the (now-forgotten) monarchist theories of [Robert Filmer](#), but the [Second Treatise of Government](#) offers a systematic account of the foundations of political obligation. On Locke's view, all rights begin in the [individual property interest](#) created by an investment of labor. The [social structure or commonwealth](#), then, depends for its formation and maintenance on the express consent of those who are governed by its political powers. Majority rule thus becomes the cornerstone of all political order, and dissatisfied citizens reserve a lasting [right to revolution](#). Similarly, Locke's [Letter Concerning Toleration](#) (1689) argued for a broad (though not limitless) acceptance of alternative religious convictions.

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# JOHN LOCKE: SECOND TREATISE OF GOVERNMENT (CHAPTER 1--"AN ESSAY CONCERNING THE TRUE ORIGINAL, EXTANT, AND END OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT")

Sect. 1. It having been shewn in the foregoing discourse,

(1). That Adam had not, either by natural right of fatherhood, or by positive donation from God, any such authority over his children, or dominion over the world, as is pretended:

(2). That if he had, his heirs, yet, had no right to it:

(3). That if his heirs had, there being no law of nature nor positive law of God that determines which is the right heir in all cases that may arise, the right of succession, and consequently of bearing rule, could not have been certainly determined:

(4). That if even that had been determined, yet the knowledge of which is the eldest line of Adam's posterity, being so long since utterly lost, that in the races of mankind and families of the world, there remains not to one above another, the least pretence to be the eldest house, and to have the right of inheritance:

All these premises having, as I think, been clearly made out, it is impossible that the rulers now on earth should make any benefit, or derive any the least shadow of authority from that, which is held to be the fountain of all power, Adam's private dominion and paternal jurisdiction; so that he that will not give just occasion to think that all government in the world is the product only of force and violence, and that men live together by no other rules but that of beasts, where the strongest carries it, and so lay a foundation for perpetual disorder and mischief, tumult, sedition and rebellion, (things that the followers of that hypothesis so loudly cry out against) must of necessity find out another rise of government, another original of political power, and another way of designing and knowing the persons that have it, than what Sir Robert Filmer hath taught us.

Sect. 2. To this purpose, I think it may not be amiss, to set down what I take to be political power; that the power of a MAGISTRATE over a subject may be distinguished from that of a FATHER over his children, a MASTER over his servant, a HUSBAND over his wife, and a LORD over his slave. All which distinct powers happening sometimes together in the same man, if he be considered under these different relations, it may help us to distinguish these powers one from wealth, a father of a family, and a captain of a galley.

Sect. 3. POLITICAL POWER, then, I take to be a RIGHT of making laws with penalties of death, and consequently all less penalties, for the regulating and preserving of property, and of employing the force of the community, in the execution of such laws, and in the defence of the commonwealth from foreign injury; and all this only for the public good.

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# JOHN LOCKE: SECOND TREATISE OF GOVERNMENT (CHAPTER 2--"OF THE STATE OF NATURE")

Sect. 4. TO understand political power right, and derive it from its original, we must consider, what state all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man.

A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident, than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another without subordination or subjection, unless the lord and master of them all should, by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above another, and confer on him, by an evident and clear appointment, an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty.

Sect. 5. This equality of men by nature, the judicious Hooker looks upon as so evident in itself, and beyond all question, that he makes it the foundation of that obligation to mutual love amongst men, on which he builds the duties they owe one another, and from whence he derives the great maxims of justice and charity. His words are,

The like natural inducement hath brought men to know that it is no less their duty, to love others than themselves; for seeing those things which are equal, must needs all have one measure; if I cannot but wish to receive good, even as much at every man's hands, as any man can wish unto his own soul, how should I look to have any part of my desire herein satisfied, unless myself be careful to satisfy the like desire, which is undoubtedly in other men, being of one and the same nature? To have any thing offered them repugnant to this desire, must needs in all respects grieve them as much as me; so that if I do harm, I must look to suffer, there being no reason that others should shew greater measure of love to me, than they have by me shewed unto them: my desire therefore to be loved of my equals in nature as much as possible may be, imposeth upon me a natural duty of bearing to them-ward fully the like affection; from which relation of equality between ourselves and them that are as ourselves, what several rules and canons natural reason hath drawn, for direction of life, no man is ignorant, Eccl. Pol. Lib. 1.

Sect. 6. But though this be a state of liberty, yet it is not a state of licence: though man in that state have an uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possessions, yet he has not liberty to destroy himself, or so much as any creature in his possession, but where some nobler use than its bare preservation calls for it. The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions: for men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent, and infinitely wise maker; all the servants of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order, and about his business; they are his property, whose workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one another's pleasure: and being furnished with like faculties, sharing all in one community of nature, there cannot be supposed any such subordination among us, that may authorize us to destroy one another, as if we were made for one another's uses, as the inferior ranks of creatures are for our's. Every one, as he is bound to preserve himself, and not to quit his station wilfully, so by the like reason, when his own preservation comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of mankind, and may not, unless it be to do justice on an offender, take away, or impair the life, or what tends to the preservation of the life, the liberty, health, limb, or goods of another.

Sect. 7. And that all men may be restrained from invading others rights, and from doing hurt to one another, and the law of nature be observed, which willeth the peace and preservation of all mankind, the execution of the law of nature is, in that state, put into every man's hands, whereby every one has a right to punish the transgressors of that law to such a degree, as may hinder its violation: for the law of nature would, as all other laws that concern men in this world 'be in vain, if there were no body that in the state of nature had a power to execute that law, and thereby preserve the innocent and restrain offenders. And if any one in the state of nature may punish another for any evil he has done, every one may do so: for in that state of perfect equality, where naturally there is no

superiority or jurisdiction of one over another, what any may do in prosecution of that law, every one must needs have a right to do.

Sect. 8. And thus, in the state of nature, one man comes by a power over another; but yet no absolute or arbitrary power, to use a criminal, when he has got him in his hands, according to the passionate heats, or boundless extravagancy of his own will; but only to retribute to him, so far as calm reason and conscience dictate, what is proportionate to his transgression, which is so much as may serve for reparation and restraint: for these two are the only reasons, why one man may lawfully do harm to another, which is that we call punishment. In transgressing the law of nature, the offender declares himself to live by another rule than that of reason and common equity, which is that measure God has set to the actions of men, for their mutual security; and so he becomes dangerous to mankind, the tie, which is to secure them from injury and violence, being slighted and broken by him. Which being a trespass against the whole species, and the peace and safety of it, provided for by the law of nature, every man upon this score, by the right he hath to preserve mankind in general, may restrain, or where it is necessary, destroy things noxious to them, and so may bring such evil on any one, who hath transgressed that law, as may make him repent the doing of it, and thereby deter him, and by his example others, from doing the like mischief. And in the case, and upon this ground, EVERY MAN HATH A RIGHT TO PUNISH THE OFFENDER, AND BE EXECUTIONER OF THE LAW OF NATURE.

Sect. 9. I doubt not but this will seem a very strange doctrine to some men: but before they condemn it, I desire them to resolve me, by what right any prince or state can put to death, or punish an alien, for any crime he commits in their country. It is certain their laws, by virtue of any sanction they receive from the promulgated will of the legislative, reach not a stranger: they speak not to him, nor, if they did, is he bound to hearken to them. The legislative authority, by which they are in force over the subjects of that commonwealth, hath no power over him. Those who have the supreme power of making laws in England, France or Holland, are to an Indian, but like the rest of the world, men without authority: and therefore, if by the law of nature every man hath not a power to punish offences against it, as he soberly judges the case to require, I see not how the magistrates of any community can punish an alien of another country; since, in reference to him, they can have no more power than what every man naturally may have over another.

Sect. 10. Besides the crime which consists in violating the law, and varying from the right rule of reason, whereby a man so far becomes degenerate, and declares himself to quit the principles of human nature, and to be a noxious creature, there is commonly injury done to some person or other, and some other man receives damage by his transgression: in which case he who hath received any damage, has, besides the right of punishment common to him with other men, a particular right to seek reparation from him that has done it: and any other person, who finds it just, may also join with him that is injured, and assist him in recovering from the offender so much as may make satisfaction for the harm he has suffered.

Sect. 11. From these two distinct rights, the one of punishing the crime for restraint, and preventing the like offence, which right of punishing is in every body; the other of taking reparation, which belongs only to the injured party, comes it to pass that the magistrate, who by being magistrate hath the common right of punishing put into his hands, can often, where the public good demands not the execution of the law, remit the punishment of criminal offences by his own authority, but yet cannot remit the satisfaction due to any private man for the damage he has received. That, he who has suffered the damage has a right to demand in his own name, and he alone can remit: the damnified person has this power of appropriating to himself the goods or service of the offender, by right of self-preservation, as every man has a power to punish the crime, to prevent its being committed again, by the right he has of preserving all mankind, and doing all reasonable things he can in order to that end: and thus it is, that every man, in the state of nature, has a power to kill a murderer, both to deter others from doing the like injury, which no reparation can compensate, by the example of the punishment that attends it from every body, and also to secure men from the attempts of a criminal, who having renounced reason, the common rule and measure God hath given to mankind, hath, by the unjust violence and slaughter he hath committed upon one, declared war against all mankind, and therefore may be destroyed as a lion or a tyger, one of those wild savage beasts, with whom men can have no society nor security: and upon this is grounded that great law of nature, Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. And Cain was so fully convinced, that every one had a right to destroy such a criminal, that after the murder of his brother, he cries out, Every one that findeth me, shall slay me; so plain was it writ in the hearts of all mankind.

Sect. 12. By the same reason may a man in the state of nature punish the lesser breaches of that law. It will perhaps be demanded, with death? I answer, each transgression may be punished to that degree, and with so much severity, as will suffice to make it an ill bargain to the offender, give him cause to repent, and terrify others from doing the like. Every offence, that can be committed in the state of nature, may in the state of nature be also punished equally, and as far forth as it may, in a commonwealth: for though it would be besides my present

purpose, to enter here into the particulars of the law of nature, or its measures of punishment; yet, it is certain there is such a law, and that too, as intelligible and plain to a rational creature, and a studier of that law, as the positive laws of commonwealths; nay, possibly plainer; as much as reason is easier to be understood, than the fancies and intricate contrivances of men, following contrary and hidden interests put into words; for so truly are a great part of the municipal laws of countries, which are only so far right, as they are founded on the law of nature, by which they are to be regulated and interpreted.

Sect. 13. To this strange doctrine, viz. That in the state of nature every one has the executive power of the law of nature, I doubt not but it will be objected, that it is unreasonable for men to be judges in their own cases, that self-love will make men partial to themselves and their friends: and on the other side, that ill nature, passion and revenge will carry them too far in punishing others; and hence nothing but confusion and disorder will follow, and that therefore God hath certainly appointed government to restrain the partiality and violence of men. I easily grant, that civil government is the proper remedy for the inconveniencies of the state of nature, which must certainly be great, where men may be judges in their own case, since it is easy to be imagined, that he who was so unjust as to do his brother an injury, will scarce be so just as to condemn himself for it: but I shall desire those who make this objection, to remember, that absolute monarchs are but men; and if government is to be the remedy of those evils, which necessarily follow from men's being judges in their own cases, and the state of nature is therefore not to be endured, I desire to know what kind of government that is, and how much better it is than the state of nature, where one man, commanding a multitude, has the liberty to be judge in his own case, and may do to all his subjects whatever he pleases, without the least liberty to any one to question or controul those who execute his pleasure? and in whatsoever he doth, whether led by reason, mistake or passion, must be submitted to? much better it is in the state of nature, wherein men are not bound to submit to the unjust will of another: and if he that judges, judges amiss in his own, or any other case, he is answerable for it to the rest of mankind.

Sect. 14. It is often asked as a mighty objection, where are, or ever were there any men in such a state of nature? To which it may suffice as an answer at present, that since all princes and rulers of independent governments all through the world, are in a state of nature, it is plain the world never was, nor ever will be, without numbers of men in that state. I have named all governors of independent communities, whether they are, or are not, in league with others: for it is not every compact that puts an end to the state of nature between men, but only this one of agreeing together mutually to enter into one community, and make one body politic; other promises, and compacts, men may make one with another, and yet still be in the state of nature. The promises and bargains for truck, &c. between the two men in the desert island, mentioned by Garcilasso de la Vega, in his history of Peru; or between a Swiss and an Indian, in the woods of America, are binding to them, though they are perfectly in a state of nature, in reference to one another: for truth and keeping of faith belongs to men, as men, and not as members of society.

Sect. 15. To those that say, there were never any men in the state of nature, I will not only oppose the authority of the judicious Hooker, Eccl. Pol. lib. i. sect. 10, where he says,

The laws which have been hitherto mentioned, i.e. the laws of nature, do bind men absolutely, even as they are men, although they have never any settled fellowship, never any solemn agreement amongst themselves what to do, or not to do: but forasmuch as we are not by ourselves sufficient to furnish ourselves with competent store of things, needful for such a life as our nature doth desire, a life fit for the dignity of man; therefore to supply those defects and imperfections which are in us, as living single and solely by ourselves, we are naturally induced to seek communion and fellowship with others: this was the cause of men's uniting themselves at first in politic societies.

But I moreover affirm, that all men are naturally in that state, and remain so, till by their own consents they make themselves members of some politic society; and I doubt not in the sequel of this discourse, to make it very clear.

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# JOHN LOCKE: SECOND TREATISE OF GOVERNMENT (CHAPTER 3--"OF THE STATE OF WAR")

Sect. 16. THE state of war is a state of enmity and destruction: and therefore declaring by word or action, not a passionate and hasty, but a sedate settled design upon another man's life, puts him in a state of war with him against whom he has declared such an intention, and so has exposed his life to the other's power to be taken away by him, or any one that joins with him in his defence, and espouses his quarrel; it being reasonable and just, I should have a right to destroy that which threatens me with destruction: for, by the fundamental law of nature, man being to be preserved as much as possible, when all cannot be preserved, the safety of the innocent is to be preferred: and one may destroy a man who makes war upon him, or has discovered an enmity to his being, for the same reason that he may kill a wolf or a lion; because such men are not under the ties of the commonlaw of reason, have no other rule, but that of force and violence, and so may be treated as beasts of prey, those dangerous and noxious creatures, that will be sure to destroy him whenever he falls into their power.

Sect. 17. And hence it is, that he who attempts to get another man into his absolute power, does thereby put himself into a state of war with him; it being to be understood as a declaration of a design upon his life: for I have reason to conclude, that he who would get me into his power without my consent, would use me as he pleased when he had got me there, and destroy me too when he had a fancy to it; for no body can desire to have me in his absolute power, unless it be to compel me by force to that which is against the right of my freedom, i.e. make me a slave. To be free from such force is the only security of my preservation; and reason bids me look on him, as an enemy to my preservation, who would take away that freedom which is the fence to it; so that he who makes an attempt to enslave me, thereby puts himself into a state of war with me. He that, in the state of nature, would take away the freedom that belongs to any one in that state, must necessarily be supposed to have a design to take away every thing else, that freedom being the foundation of all the rest; as he that, in the state of society, would take away the freedom belonging to those of that society or commonwealth, must be supposed to design to take away from them every thing else, and so be looked on as in a state of war.

Sect. 18. This makes it lawful for a man to kill a thief, who has not in the least hurt him, nor declared any design upon his life, any farther than, by the use of force, so to get him in his power, as to take away his money, or what he pleases, from him; because using force, where he has no right, to get me into his power, let his pretence be what it will, I have no reason to suppose, that he, who would take away my liberty, would not, when he had me in his power, take away every thing else. And therefore it is lawful for me to treat him as one who has put himself into a state of war with me, i.e. kill him if I can; for to that hazard does he justly expose himself, whoever introduces a state of war, and is aggressor in it.

Sect. 19. And here we have the plain difference between the state of nature and the state of war, which however some men have confounded, are as far distant, as a state of peace, good will, mutual assistance and preservation, and a state of enmity, malice, violence and mutual destruction, are one from another. Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature. But force, or a declared design of force, upon the person of another, where there is no common superior on earth to appeal to for relief, is the state of war: and it is the want of such an appeal gives a man the right of war even against an aggressor, tho' he be in society and a fellow subject. Thus a thief, whom I cannot harm, but by appeal to the law, for having stolen all that I am worth, I may kill, when he sets on me to rob me but of my horse or coat; because the law, which was made for my preservation, where it cannot interpose to secure my life from present force, which, if lost, is capable of no reparation, permits me my own defence, and the right of war, a liberty to kill the aggressor, because the aggressor allows not time to appeal to our common judge, nor the decision of the law, for remedy in a case where the mischief may be irreparable. Want of a common judge with authority, puts all men in a state of nature: force without right, upon a man's person, makes a state of war, both where there is, and is not, a common judge.

Sect. 20. But when the actual force is over, the state of war ceases between those that are in society, and are equally on both sides subjected to the fair determination of the law; because then there lies open the remedy of

appeal for the past injury, and to prevent future harm: but where no such appeal is, as in the state of nature, for want of positive laws, and judges with authority to appeal to, the state of war once begun, continues, with a right to the innocent party to destroy the other whenever he can, until the aggressor offers peace, and desires reconciliation on such terms as may repair any wrongs he has already done, and secure the innocent for the future; nay, where an appeal to the law, and constituted judges, lies open, but the remedy is denied by a manifest perverting of justice, and a barefaced wresting of the laws to protect or indemnify the violence or injuries of some men, or party of men, there it is hard to imagine any thing but a state of war: for wherever violence is used, and injury done, though by hands appointed to administer justice, it is still violence and injury, however coloured with the name, pretences, or forms of law, the end whereof being to protect and redress the innocent, by an unbiassed application of it, to all who are under it; wherever that is not bona fide done, war is made upon the sufferers, who having no appeal on earth to right them, they are left to the only remedy in such cases, an appeal to heaven.

Sect. 21. To avoid this state of war (wherein there is no appeal but to heaven, and wherein every the least difference is apt to end, where there is no authority to decide between the contenders) is one great reason of men's putting themselves into society, and quitting the state of nature: for where there is an authority, a power on earth, from which relief can be had by appeal, there the continuance of the state of war is excluded, and the controversy is decided by that power. Had there been any such court, any superior jurisdiction on earth, to determine the right between Jephtha and the Ammonites, they had never come to a state of war: but we see he was forced to appeal to heaven. The Lord the Judge (says he) be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon, Judg. xi. 27. and then prosecuting, and relying on his appeal, he leads out his army to battle: and therefore in such controversies, where the question is put, who shall be judge? It cannot be meant, who shall decide the controversy; every one knows what Jephtha here tells us, that the Lord the Judge shall judge. Where there is no judge on earth, the appeal lies to God in heaven. That question then cannot mean, who shall judge, whether another hath put himself in a state of war with me, and whether I may, as Jephtha did, appeal to heaven in it? of that I myself can only be judge in my own conscience, as I will answer it, at the great day, to the supreme judge of all men.

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# APPENDIX

## PHILOSOPHICAL DIALOGUE

Verbal discussion of serious topics is in no way tangential to the practice of philosophy. From Socratic gatherings to the philosophical conventions of today, thinking things through out loud—and in the presence of others—has always been of the essence of the philosophical method. (Most philosophical texts embody this give-and-take, either in explicit use of dialogue form or by a more subtle alteration of proposal, objection, and reply in expository prose.) Your philosophical education demands that you enter into the great conversation of Western thought. A few suggestions may help:

**Be prepared** Productive dialogue presupposes informed participants. This means that during every class session, each of us will have read the material assigned for the day, we will pay careful attention to what others have already said, and we will think carefully before speaking. Of course, each of us will often be mistaken, but none of us should ever speak randomly.

**Respect others** Joint participants in dialogue show a deep, personal respect for each other. We owe it to each other to listen well and to give each other the benefit of doubt in interpreting charitably what has been said, trying always to see the worthwhile point. Although we will rarely find ourselves in total agreement on the issues at stake, we will never attack or make fun of each other personally.

**Expect conflict** Disagreement with an expressed opinion and criticism of its putative support is *not* disrespectful; it is an acknowledgment that we are taking the matter seriously. The more significant the issue under discussion, the more likely our exchanges will become passionate, even heated. But we must always deal with each other fairly, helping each other to see the light.

**Quality counts more than quantity** No discussion will be perfectly balanced among its participants, and each of us will have days on which we are quieter or more vocal. But no one should dominate the conversation, nor should anyone be utterly silent. If you find yourself speaking too much, try to listen more; if you find yourself saying too little, look for opportunities to contribute. But always remember that it is what you say, not the fact of your speaking, that matters.

**Ask questions** Not every contribution to the dialogue needs to be the proposal or defence of a thesis. It is always proper to ask for a clarification of the meaning of something that has already been said or for the justification of a claim that has already been made. (Those who are naturally quiet may find that a well-timed question is the most comfortable way to participate in the dialogue.)

Above all, remember that philosophical discussion is a cooperative activity, aiming at a mutual achievement of truth (or, at least, convergence on a shared opinion). It is not a competition in which “points” are to be scored against an opponent. We are working together, and each can learn from all.

## USING ELECTRONIC TEXTS

Please learn to make use of these materials regularly. I think you'll find that e-texts offer a number of advantages for research in philosophy:

- With a little practice, you'll find the virtual library easy to get around in. Well-designed hypertext files are particularly useful, but even straight text files are often easier to manipulate than physical books.
- It is much more convenient to compare related texts in electronic than in print form. (The trilingual version of Descartes's *Meditations* is an excellent example.
- Using the utilities provided with your browser or word-processing software makes it easy to search the text for key words or phrases and to excerpt crucial passages for further study.

Exciting prospects! As David Hume wrote in a different context, "When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make?" Before committing any of our old print volumes to the flames, however, we might consider a few words of caution:

- Not every significant text is available in electronic form. Although many worthwhile projects are busy expanding the number of texts on-line, the process of conversion from print media to reliable e-text is time-consuming and labor-intensive. It will be a long time before Internet resources can begin to rival the holdings of even a small research library.
- Because of copyright restrictions, the electronic texts available on the Internet rarely include the best critical editions or the most recent translations of the work of major philosophers. (For those we must still rely on more costly print or CD-ROM media.) When using e-texts in the preparation of a written assignment, you'll want to refer to the more definitive print versions before quoting directly.
- Not all of the readily available e-texts are of the highest quality; scanning errors are common, and proof-reading is sometimes spotty. Although I've tried to identify reliable versions, I've certainly not checked every word myself. Again, be sure to double-check against a more standard print version of the text.
- Finally, in my own experience, at least, for the kind of leisurely, ruminative reading that most philosophical texts require, a physical volume—the kind of thing you can spread out on your lap or mark up with a pencil or even heave across the room—is still hard to beat.

## ELECTRONIC FORUM

Conducting an on-line discussion during the semester enables us to expand our study of philosophy beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of traditional class meetings. If you've not participated in this way extensively before, it may take a little energy to get started, but you'll soon find this medium a comfortable one for communicating with the entire group. Early in the session, we'll get to know each other and learn to manage our networking tools effectively.

Here are a few general ground rules for getting started on the electronic forum:

**Check the discussion space frequently** Every member of the class will be contributing multiple messages each week—perhaps one or two substantive efforts and several short comments. This means that your list of messages will pile up pretty quickly. You'll want to read it daily, or at least several times a week, so that you have a chance to chime in on a subject before we move on to something else.

**Avoid lengthy quotes** When responding to someone else's comments, don't quote the whole message—we've all seen it already. Just mention the person's name, the date of the message, and quote the few crucial lines that provide a context for what you want to say. (Some identification is a good idea, since we'll all be "speaking" at once.)

**Never be deliberately offensive** Lacking the visual cues present in face-to-face communication, typed electronic messages can easily seem more harsh than they were intended to be. Even in the passion of a vigorous philosophical exchange, let's try to be considerate of each other on both sides—in writing and in reading—by assuming the best. No "flaming," please.

Remember that this substitute for the more traditional methods of discussion is still unfamiliar for some of us. That's no reason to be timid: let's plunge in, try everything we can think of, learn from our mistakes and from our successes, and enjoy the adventure.

## WRITING PHILOSOPHY

Write to learn. Expressing your thoughts is an excellent way of discovering what they really are. Even when you're the only one who ever sees the results of your explorations, trying to put them down in written form often helps, and when you wish to communicate to others, the ability to write clear, meaningful prose is vital. Here are some suggestions for proceeding:

- Understand the assignment** Whether you're completing a specific assignment or developing your own project, it is important to have the aims firmly in mind. Focus on a single question you wish to address, be clear about your own answer to it, and explicitly state a thesis that answers the question. You will often want to divide the central issue into several smaller questions, each with its own answer, and this will naturally lead to a coherent structure for the entire essay.
- Interpret fairly** Most of your writing projects will begin with a careful effort to interpret a philosophical text, and this step should never be taken lightly. Your first responsibility is to develop an accurate reading of the original text; then your criticism can begin. Focus primarily on the adequacy of the arguments which support the stated conclusions. If you disagree, you can look for the weaknesses of that support; if you agree, you can defend it against possible attacks.
- Support your thesis** Don't just state your own position; make it the conclusion of a line of reasoning. Claim only what you can prove (or are, at least, prepared to defend), and support it with evidence and argument. Philosophy is not just a list of true opinions, but the reasoned effort to provide justification.
- Consider alternatives** Be sure to explore arguments on all sides of the issue you address. Of course you will want to emphasize the reasoning that supports your thesis, but it is also important to consider likely objections and to respond with counter-arguments. Be especially carefully in your use of examples: the best positive example can only clarify meaning and lend some evidentiary confirmation, but a single counter-example disproves a general claim completely.
- Omit the unnecessary** Include in your written work only what is germane to your topic: after the first draft, mercilessly eliminate from your text anything that does not directly and uniquely support the thesis. Padding with irrelevant or redundant material is never worthwhile. Be particularly careful in your use of material prepared by others: **do not** plagiarize, paraphrase without attribution, quote directly often or at length, or rely extensively on a single secondary source.
- Write clearly** It is your responsibility as writer to express yourself in a way that can be understood. Use specific, concrete language in active voice whenever you can. Define your terms explicitly and use them consistently throughout your paper.

Finally, you may find it helpful to keep an appropriate audience in mind as you write. Don't write just for the instructor and your classmates—that is, don't assume that your audience has professional knowledge of the philosophical texts or total awareness of every conversation that has taken place, inside and outside the classroom. Unless otherwise directed by the details of a particular assignment, think of yourself as presenting the material to a friend, your parents, or a class: intelligent, interested people who are well-informed generally but who lack your knowledge of the philosophical issues. Write to teach.

# PAPER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All written assignments should be submitted in the designated form, and should include a clear indication of the course and assignment number. Be sure to observe the designated due date; work that is turned in late will automatically receive a significantly reduced grade.

It is reasonable to expect any assignment prepared outside class to be written well, with careful attention to grammar, spelling, and usage. Philosophical writing should avoid offensive sexual, racial, ethnic, religious, and material or physical bias.

You may employ any one of the methods of attribution described in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, but must be consistent in both notes and bibliographies. Direct quotations from the philosophers should be taken from the standard edition of the works or the definitive English translation as listed in Richard T. DeGeorge, *The Philosopher's Guide* or from the texts you have been asked to read for this course.

If you make significant use of an electronic source, remember that this deserves documentation, too, including the author's name, titles for both the page and the site, a complete Uniform Resource Locator, and the date on which you viewed it on-line. Thus, for example, work on George Berkeley's philosophy might include references to:

- George Berkeley, *A Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, Section 22. HTML edition by David R. Wilkins. <<http://www.maths.tcd.ie/pub/HistMath/People/Berkeley/HumanKnowledge/HumanKnowledge.html#Sect22>> Accessed 30 September 1998.
- "George Berkeley," *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by James Fieser. <<http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/b/berkeley.htm>> Accessed 25 April 1999.
- Garth Kemerling, "Berkeley's Immaterialism," *Philosophy Pages*. <<http://www.philosophypages.com/hy/4r.htm>> Accessed 14 October 2000.
- Peter B. Lloyd, "Berkeley's Metaphysics," *Berkeley Studies*. <<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~ursa/philos/berkmeta.htm>> Accessed 23 June 1999.

Although you're welcome to use such sources, it is not possible to write an adequate research paper using on-line materials alone. Print resources are far more extensive, detailed, and reliable.

In addition to these formal criteria, please consult the general suggestions for [Writing Philosophy](#) above.

## WRITING ESSAY EXAMS

Since a significant portion of your grade for this course will depend upon assessment of your knowledge and skill as reflected in examinations, here are a few suggestions for dealing with essay exams:

**Be prepared** Rely heavily upon the study questions distributed at the outset of the course: look over them at the beginning of each unit; use them to guide your reading of the texts and our discussion in class; and review them before the exam. If you have considered these issues fully, nothing on the exam itself can surprise you. Arrive promptly for the exam, and try to be well-rested, and relaxed.

**Understand the question** Before beginning to write, read each question carefully and completely; it will ask that you address a specific issue in a particular way. Pay close attention to words (such as "Describe...", "Explain...", "Compare and contrast...", "Assess...", and "Evaluate...") that suggest the appropriate mode of response. If you are uncertain what a question means, ask me for a clarification. Take a moment to organize your thoughts on the subject, and dive in.

**Stick to the point** Make sure that your essay is directly relevant to the question asked. Although you will know a great deal more about the philosopher or topic at issue than your answer requires, it will be

read **only** for information and/or argumentation that responds to the specific question. If you believe that additional material is required, indicate clearly and explicitly how it connects with the matter at hand.

**Use your time wisely** Although essay exams in philosophy are not meant to be intensely time-pressured, they must be completed within certain limits. You may be asked to write four or five short essays during an exam, allowing fifteen or twenty minutes for each. Don't get so absorbed in one question that you spend much more than its share of the available time; if you have more to say, jot down a note or two, move on to another question, and return to complete your answer if time allows.

**Make every word count** Although it is always helpful to write clearly—that is, in complete, grammatically correct sentences—there is no need to craft beautiful prose. Avoid lengthy prefatory, transitional, and summary verbiage. Get the essentials down on paper, and trust the instructor to evaluate your essay by its quality, not its quantity.