

AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

David Hume



AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING
THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

David Hume



AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

DAVID HUME

PUBLISHED: 1751

SOURCE: WIKISOURCE

EDITION: A. MILLAR, LONDON, 1751



This book has been downloaded from www.aliceandbooks.com.
You can find many more public domain books in our website

AN ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS



CONTENTS

SECTION.		Page.
I.	<i>Of the general Principles of Morals.</i>	1
II.	<i>Of Benevolence.</i>	11
III.	<i>Of Justice.</i>	33
IV.	<i>Of Political Society.</i>	63
V.	<i>Why Utility pleases.</i>	73
VI.	<i>Of Qualities useful to Ourselves.</i>	105
VII.	<i>Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Ourselves.</i>	143

VIII.	<u>Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Others.</u>	161
IX.	<u>Conclusion of the Whole.</u>	171
APPENDIX I.	<u>Concerning Moral Sentiment.</u>	197
APPENDIX II.	<u>Some farther Considerations with regard to Justice.</u>	213
	<u>A Dialogue.</u>	223

ERRATA.

Page			
1.	Line 10.	for <i>excepted</i> read <i>expected</i> .	
P. 12.	L. 24.	read <i>our own Gratification</i> .	
P. 15.	L. 2.	for <i>one</i> read <i>a</i> .	
P. 18.	L. 3.	for <i>others</i> read <i>other Motives</i> .	
P. 19.	L. 9.	for <i>for</i> read <i>of</i> .	
P. 21.	L. 1.	for <i>from it</i> read <i>from Fame</i> .	
P. 36.	L. 6.	for <i>Fellow</i> read <i>Fellows</i> .	
P. 43.	L. 1.	for <i>pointed</i> read <i>painted</i> .	
P. 46.	L. 22.	read <i>serve to no manner</i> .	
P. 47.	L. 4.	for <i>to whom he is not bound by any Ties</i> read <i>to none of which he is bound</i> .	
P. 50.	L. ult.	read <i>Render Possessions ever so equal, Men's different Degrees</i> .	
P. 69.	L. 17.	<i>where the Search for Health or Pleasure brings</i> .	
P. 82.	L. 18.	for <i>then</i> read <i>these</i> .	
P. 83.	L. 4.	read <i>that of the Community</i> .	
P. 86.	L. 15.	read <i>Circumstance</i> .	
P. 91.	L. 1.	read <i>threaten'd</i> .	
P. 95.	L. 1.	for <i>alone</i> read <i>along</i> ,	
P. 98.	L. 5.	for <i>will</i> read <i>shall</i> .	
P. 117.	L. 10.	read <i>pretty nearly of the same Kind or Species</i> .	
P. 129.	L. 11.	for <i>professes</i> read <i>possesses</i> .	
P. 145.	L. 5.	read <i>this Passage</i> .	
P. 150.	L. 22.	for <i>even</i> read <i>ever</i> .	
P. 174.	L. 18.	read <i>serve to no manner</i> .	
P. 178.	L. 24.	read <i>arise</i> .	
P. 202.	L. 9.	read <i>is often highly laudable</i> .	

P. 205. L. 6. read *and must suspend*.

P. 217. ^{L.}
penult. read *tends*.

P. 227. L. 17. read *had been courted*.

P. 233. L. 11. read *that there was a Nation*.

In the Notes.

Page 15. Line penult. for *these Essays* read *this Enquiry*.

P. 55. L. 9. for *Essay* read *Section*.

SECTION I

OF THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

Disputes with Persons, pertinaciously obstinate in their Principles, are, of all others, the most irksome; except, perhaps, those with Persons, who really do not believe at all the Opinion they defend, but engage in the Controversy, from Affectation, from a Spirit of Opposition, or from a Desire of showing Wit and Ingenuity, superior to the rest of Mankind. The same blind Adherence to their own Arguments is to be **expected**^[errata 1] in both; the same Contempt of their Antagonists; and the same passionate Vehemence, in enforcing Sophistry and Falshood. And as reasoning is not the Source, whence either Disputant derives his Tenets; 'tis in vain to expect, that any Logic, which speaks not to the Affections, will ever engage him to embrace sounder Principles.

THOSE who have refused the Reality of moral Distinctions, may be ranked in the latter Class, amongst the disingenuous Disputants; nor is it conceivable, that any human Creature could ever seriously believe, that all Characters and Actions were alike entitled to the Affection and Regard of every one. The Difference, which Nature has plac'd betwixt one Man and another, is so wide, and this Difference is still so much farther widened, by Education, Example, and Habit, that, where the opposite Extremes come at once under our Apprehension, there is no Scepticism so scrupulous, and scarce any

Assurance so determin'd, as absolutely to deny all Distinction betwixt them. Let a Man's Insensibility be ever so great, he must often be touch'd with the Images of RIGHT and WRONG; and let his Prejudices be ever so obstinate, he must observe, that others are susceptible of like Impressions. The only Way, therefore, of converting an Antagonist of this Kind, is to leave him to himself. For, finding that No-body keeps up the Controversy with him, 'tis probable he will, at last, of himself, from mere Weariness, come over to the Side of common Sense and Reason.

THERE has been a Controversy started of late, much better worth Examination, concerning the general Foundation of MORALS, whether they are derived from REASON or from SENTIMENT; whether we attain the Knowledge of them by a Chain of Argument and Deduction, or by an immediate Feeling and finer internal Sense; whether, like all sound Judgment of Truth and Falshood, they should be the same in every rational intelligent Being; or whether, like the Perception of Beauty and Deformity, they are founded entirely on the particular Fabric and Constitution of the human Species.

THE antient Philosophers, tho' they often affirm, that Virtue is nothing but Conformity to Reason, yet, in general, seem to consider Morals as deriving their Existence from Taste and Sentiment. On the other Hand, our modern Enquirers, tho' they also talk much of the Beauty of Virtue, and Deformity of Vice, yet have commonly endeavoured to account for these Distinctions by metaphysical Reasonings, and by Deductions from the most abstract Principles of human Understanding. Such Confusion reign'd in these Subjects, that an Opposition of the greatest Consequence could prevail betwixt one System and another, and even in the Parts almost of each individual System; and yet No-body, till very lately, was ever sensible of it. The elegant and sublime Lord *Shaftesbury*, who first gave Occasion to remark this Distinction, and who, in general, adher'd to the Principles of the Antients, is not, himself, entirely free from the same Confusion.

IT must be acknowledged, that both Sides of the Question are susceptible of specious Arguments. Moral Distinctions, it may be said, are discernible by pure *Reason*: Else, whence the many Disputes, that reign, in common Life, as well as in Philosophy, with regard to this Subject: The long Chain of Proofs often adduc'd on both Sides; the Examples cited, the Authorities appeal'd to, the Analogies employ'd, the Fallacies detected, the Inferences drawn, and the several Conclusions adjusted to their proper Principles. Truth is disputable; not, Taste: What exists in the Nature of Things is the Standard of our Judgment; what each Man feels within himself is the Standard of Sentiment. Propositions in Geometry may be prov'd, Systems in Physics may be controverted; but the Harmony of Verse, the Tenderness of Passion, the Brilliancy of Wit must give immediate Pleasure. No Man reasons concerning another's Beauty; but frequently concerning the Justice or Injustice of his Actions. In every Trial of Criminals, their first Object is to disprove the Facts alledged, and deny the Actions imputed to them: The second to prove, that even if these Actions were real, they might be justified, as innocent and lawful. 'Tis confessedly by Deductions of the Understanding, that the first Point is ascertain'd: How can we suppose, that a different Faculty of the Mind is employ'd in fixing the other?

ON the other Hand, those, who would resolve all moral Determinations into *Sentiment*, may endeavour to show, that 'tis impossible for Reason ever to draw Conclusions of this Nature. To Virtue, say they, it belongs to be *amiable*, and Vice *odious*. This forms their very Nature or Essence. But can Reason or Argumentation distribute these different Epithets to any Subjects, and pronounce *a priori*, that this must produce Love, and that Hatred? Or what other Reason can we ever assign for these Affections, but the original Fabric and Formation of the human Mind, which is naturally adapted to receive them?

THE End of all moral Speculations is to teach us our Duty; and by proper Representations of the Deformity of Vice and Beauty of Virtue, beget correspondent Habits, and engage us to avoid the one, and embrace the other. But is this ever to be expected from

Inferences and Conclusions of the Understanding, which, of themselves, have no Hold of the Affections, nor set the active Powers of Men in Motion and Employment? They discover Truth; but where the Truths they discover are indifferent, and beget no Desire or Aversion, they can have no Influence on Conduct and Behaviour. What is honourable, what is fair, what is becoming, what is noble, what is generous, takes Possession of the Heart, and animates us to embrace and to maintain it. What is intelligible, what is evident, what is probable, what is true, procures only the cool Assent of the Understanding; and gratifying a speculative Curiosity, puts an end to our Researches.

EXTINGUISH all the warm Feelings and Prepossessions in favour of Virtue, and all Disgust or Aversion against Vice: Render Men totally indifferent towards these Distinctions; and Morality is no longer a practical Study, nor has any Tendency to regulate our Lives and Actions.

THESE Arguments on both Sides (and many more might be adduc'd) are so plausible, that I am apt to suspect they may, both of them, be solid and satisfactory, and that *Reason* and *Sentiment* concur in almost all moral Determinations and Conclusions. The final Sentence, 'tis probable, which pronounces Characters and Actions amiable or odious, praiseworthy or blameable; that which stamps on them the Mark of Honour or Infamy, Approbation or Censure; that which renders Morality an active Principle, and constitutes Virtue our Happiness, and Vice our Misery: 'Tis probable, I say, that this final Sentence depends on some internal Sense or Feeling, which Nature has made universal to the whole Species. For what else can have an Influence of this Nature? But, in order to pave the Way for such a Sentiment, and give Men a proper Discernment of its Object, 'tis often necessary, we find, that much Reasoning should precede, that nice Distinctions he made, just Conclusions drawn, distant Comparisons form'd, accurate Relations examin'd, and general Facts fix'd and ascertain'd. Some Species of Beauty, especially the natural Kinds, on their first Appearance, command our Affection, and Approbation; and where they fail of this Effect, 'tis impossible for any

Reasoning to redress their Influence, or adapt them better to our Taste and Sentiment. But in many Orders of Beauty, particularly those of the finer Arts, 'tis requisite to employ much Reasoning, in order to feel the proper Sentiment; and a false Relish may frequently be corrected by Argument and Reflection. There are just Grounds to conclude, that moral Beauty partakes much of this latter Species, and demands the Assistance of our intellectual Faculties, in order to give it a suitable Influence on the human Mind.

BUT tho' this Question, concerning the general Principle of Morals, be extremely curious and important; 'tis needless for us, at present, to employ farther Care in our Enquiries concerning it. For if we can be so happy, in the Course of this Enquiry, as to fix the just Origin of Morals, 'twill then easily appear how far Sentiment or Reason enters into all Determinations of this Nature^[1]. Mean while, it will scarce be possible for us, 'ere this Controversy is fully decided, to proceed in that accurate Manner, requir'd in the Sciences; by beginning with exact Definitions of VIRTUE and VICE, which are the Objects of our present Enquiry. But we shall do what may justly be esteem'd as satisfactory. We shall consider the Matter as an Object of Experience. We shall call *every Quality or Action of the Mind, virtuous, which is attended with the general Approbation of Mankind*: And we shall denominate vicious, *every Quality, which is the Object of general Blame or Censure*. These Qualities we shall endeavour to collect; and after examining, on both Sides, the several Circumstances, in which they agree, 'tis hop'd we may, at last, reach the Foundation of Ethics, and find those universal Principles, from which all moral Blame or Approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a Question of Fact, not of abstract Science, we can only expect Success, by following this experimental Method, and deducing general Maxims from a Comparison of particular Instances. The other scientific Method; where a general abstract Principle is first establish'd, and is afterwards branch'd out into a Variety of Inferences and Conclusions, may be more perfect in itself, but suits less the Imperfection of human Nature, and is a common Source of Illusion and Mistake, in this as well as in other Subjects. Men are

now cured of their Passion for Hypotheses and Systems in natural Philosophy, and will hearken to no Arguments but those deriv'd from Experience. 'Tis full Time they should begin a like Reformation in all moral Disquisitions; and reject every System of Ethics, however subtle or ingenious, that is not founded on Fact and Observation.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

1. [↑](#) See Appendix First.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION II

***OF* BENEVOLENCE**

PART I

There is a Principle, suppos'd to prevail amongst many, which is utterly incompatible with all Virtue or moral Sentiment; and as it can proceed from nothing but the most deprav'd Disposition, so in its Turn it tends still farther to foster and encourage that Depravity. This Principle is, that all Benevolence is mere Hypocrisy, Friendship a Cheat, Public Spirit a Farce, Fidelity a Snare to procure Trust and Confidence; and while all of us, at the Bottom, pursue only our private Interest, we wear these fair Disguises, in order to put others off their Guard, and expose them the more to our Wiles and Machinations. What Heart one must be possess'd of, who professes such Principles, and who feels no internal Sentiment to belye so pernicious a Theory, 'tis easy to imagine: And also, what Degree of Affection and Benevolence he can bear to a Species, whom he

represents under such odious Colours, and supposes so little susceptible of Gratitude or any Return of Affection. Or if we will not ascribe these Principles altogether to a corrupted Heart, we must, at least, account for them from the most careless and precipitate Examination. Superficial Reasoners, indeed, observing many false Pretences amongst Mankind, and feeling, perhaps, no very strong Restraint in their own Disposition, might draw a general and a hasty Conclusion, that all is equally corrupted, and that Men, different from all other Animals, and indeed from all other Species of Existence, admit of no Degrees of Good or Bad, but are, in every Instance, the same Creatures, under different Disguises and Appearances.

THERE is another Principle, somewhat resembling, the former; which has been much insisted on by Philosophers, and has been the Foundation of many a fair System; that whatever Affection one may feel, or imagine he feels for others, no Passion is, or can be disinterested; that the most generous Friendship, however sincere, is a Modification of Self-love; and, that even unknown to Ourselves, we seek **our own Gratification**^[errata 1], while we appear the most deeply engag'd in Schemes for the Liberty and Happiness of Mankind. By a Turn of Imagination, by a Refinement of Reflection, by an Enthusiasm of Passion, we seem to take Part in the Interests of others, and imagine Ourselves divested of all selfish Views and Considerations: But at the Bottom, the most generous Patriot and most niggardly Miser, the bravest Hero and most abject Coward, have, in every Action, an equal Regard to their own Happiness and Welfare.

WHOEVER concludes, from the seeming Tendency of this Opinion, that those, who make Profession of it, cannot possibly feel the true Sentiments of Benevolence, or have any Regard for genuine Virtue, will often find himself, in Practice, very much mistaken. Probity and Honour were no Strangers to [Epicurus](#) and his Sect. [Atticus](#) and [Horace](#) seem to have enjoy'd from Nature, and cultivated by Reflection, as generous and friendly Dispositions as any Disciple of the austerer Schools. And amongst the Moderns, [Hobbes](#) and [Locke](#), who maintain'd the selfish System of Morals, liv'd most

irreproachable Lives; tho' the former lay not under any Restraints of Religion, which might supply the Defects of his Philosophy.

AN *Epicurean* or a *Hobbist* readily allows, that there is such a Thing as Friendship in the World, without Hypocrisy or Disguise; tho' he may attempt, by a philosophical Chymistry, to resolve the Elements of this Passion, if I may so speak, into those of another, and explain every Affection to be Self-love, twisted and moulded into a Variety of Shapes and Appearances. But as the same Turn of Imagination prevails not in every Man, nor gives the same Direction to the original Passion; this is sufficient, even according to the selfish System, to make the widest Difference in human Characters, and denominate one Man virtuous and humane, another vicious and meanly interested. I esteem the Man, whose Self-love, by whatever Means, is so directed as to give him a Concern for others, and render him serviceable to Society: As I hate or despise him, who has no Regard to any Thing beyond his own pitiful Gratifications and Enjoyments. In vain would you suggest, that these Characters, tho' seemingly opposite, are, at the Bottom, the same, and that a very inconsiderable Turn of Imagination forms the whole Difference betwixt them. Each Character, notwithstanding these inconsiderable Differences, appears to me, in Practice, pretty durable and untransmutable. And I find not, in this, more than in other Subjects, that the natural Sentiments, arising from the general Appearances of Things, are easily destroy'd by resin'd Reflections concerning the minute Origin of these Appearances. Does not the lively, cheerful Colour of a Countenance inspire me with Complacency and Pleasure; even tho' I learn from Philosophy, that all Difference of Complexion arises from the most minute Differences of Thickness, in the most minute Parts of the Skin; by which Differences a [\[errata 2\]](#) Superficies is qualify'd to reflect one of the original Colours of Light, and absorb the others?

BUT tho' the Question, concerning the universal or partial Selfishness of Man, be not so material, as is usually imagin'd, to Morality and Practice, it is certainly of great Consequence in the speculative Science of human Nature, and is a proper Object of

Curiosity and Enquiry. It may not, therefore, be improper, in this Place, to bestow a few Reflections upon it^[1].

THE most obvious Objection to the selfish Hypothesis, is, that being contrary to common Feeling and our most unprejudic'd Notions and Opinions; there is requir'd the highest Stretch of Philosophy to establish so extraordinary a Paradox. To the most careless Observer, there appear to be such Dispositions as Benevolence and Generosity; such Affections as Love, Friendship, Compassion, Gratitude. These Sentiments have their Causes, Effects, Objects, and Operations, markt by common Language and Observation, and plainly distinguish'd from the selfish Passions. And as this is the obvious Appearance of Things, it must be admitted; till some Hypothesis be discover'd, which, by penetrating deeper into human Nature, may prove the former Affections to be Nothing but Modifications of the latter. All Attempts of this Kind have hitherto prov'd fruitless, and seem to have proceeded entirely from that Love of *Simplicity*, which has been the Source of much false Reasoning in Philosophy. I shall not here enter into any Detail on the present Subject. Many able Philosophers have shown the Insufficiency of these Systems. And I shall take for granted what, I believe, the smallest Reflection will make evident to every impartial Enquirer.

BUT the Nature of the Subject furnishes the strongest Presumption, that no better System will ever, for the future, be invented, to account for the Origin of the benevolent from the selfish Affections, and reduce all the various Emotions of the human Mind to a perfect Simplicity and Uniformity. The Case is not the same in this Species of Philosophy as in Physics. Many an Hypothesis in Nature, contrary to first Appearances, has been found, on more accurate Scrutiny, solid and satisfactory. Instances of this Kind are so frequent, that a judicious, as well as witty Philosopher^[2] has ventur'd to affirm, if there be more than one Way, in which any Phænomenon may be produc'd, that there is a general Presumption for its arising from the Causes, which are the least obvious and familiar. But the Presumption always lies on the other Side, in all Enquiries

concerning the Origin of our Passions, and the internal Operations of the human Mind. The simplest and most obvious Cause, that can there be assign'd for any Phænomenon, is probably the true one. When a Philosopher, in the Explication of his System, is oblig'd to have Recourse to some very intricate and refin'd Reflections, and to suppose them essential to the Production of any Passion or Emotion, we have Reason to be extremely on our Guard against so fallacious an Hypothesis. The Affections are not susceptible of any Impression from the Refinements of Reason or Imagination; and 'tis always found, that a vigorous Exertion of the latter Faculties, from the narrow Capacity of the human Mind, destroys all Energy and Activity in the former. Our predominant Motive or Intention is, indeed, frequently conceal'd from Ourselves, when it is mingled and confounded with **other Motives**^[errata 3], which the Mind, from Vanity or Self-conceit, is desirous of supposing of greater Force and Influence: But there is no Instance, that a Concealment of this Nature has ever arisen from the Abstruseness and Intricacy of the Motive. A Man, who has lost a Friend and Patron, may flatter himself, that all his Grief arises from generous Sentiments, without any Mixture of narrow or interested Considerations: But a Man, who grieves for a valuable Friend, that needed his Patronage and Protection; how can we suppose, that his passionate Tenderness arises from some metaphysical Regards to a Self-interest, which has no Foundation or Reality? We may as well imagine, that minute Wheels and Springs, like those of a Watch, give Motion to a loaded Waggon, as account for the Origin of Passion from such abstruse Reflections.

ANIMALS are found susceptible of Kindness, both to their own Species and to ours; nor is there, in this Case, the least Suspicion of Disguise or Artifice. Shall we account for all *their* Sentiments too, from refin'd Deductions of Self-interest? Or if we admit a disinterested Benevolence in the inferior Species, by what Rule of Analogy can we refuse it in the Superior?

LOVE betwixt the Sexes begets a Complacency and Good-will, very distinct from the Gratification of an Appetite. Tenderness to their

Offspring, in all sensible Beings, is commonly able alone to counterballance the strongest Motives of Self-love, and has no Manner of Dependence on that Affection. What Interest can a fond Mother have in View, who loses her Health by assiduous Attendance on her sick Child, and afterwards languishes, and dies of [\[errata 4\]](#) Grief, when freed, by its Death, from the Slavery of that Attendance?

Is Gratitude no Affection of the human Breast, or is that a Word merely, without any Meaning or Reality? Have we no Complacency or Satisfaction in one Man's Company above another's, and no Desire of the Welfare of our Friend, even tho' Absence or Death should prevent us from all Participation in it? Or what is it commonly, that gives us any Participation in it, even while alive and present, but our Affection and Regard to him?

THESE and a thousand other Instances are Marks of a generous Benevolence in human Nature, where no *real* Interest binds us to the Object. And how an *imaginary* Interest, known and avow'd for such, can be the Origin of any Passion or Emotion, seems difficult to explain. No satisfactory Hypothesis of this Kind has yet been discover'd; nor is there the smallest Probability, that the future Industry of Men will ever be attended with more favourable Success.

BUT farther, if we consider rightly of the Matter, we shall find, that the Hypothesis, which allows of a disinterested Benevolence, distinct from Self-love, has really more *Simplicity* in it, and is more conformable to the Analogy of Nature, than that which pretends to resolve all Friendship and Humanity into this latter Principle. There are bodily Wants or Appetites, acknowledged by every one, which necessarily precede all sensual Enjoyment, and carry us directly to seek Possession of the Object. Thus, Hunger and Thirst have eating and drinking for their End; and from the Gratification of these primary Appetites arises a Pleasure, which may become the Object of another Species of Desire or Inclination, that is secondary and interested. In the same Manner, there are mental Passions, by which we are impell'd immediately to seek particular Objects, such as Fame or Power or Vengeance, without any Regard to Interest; and when

these Objects are attain'd, a pleasing Enjoyment ensues, as the Consequence of our indulg'd Affections. Nature must, by the internal Frame and Constitution of the Mind, give an original Propensity to Fame, 'ere we can reap any Pleasure **from Fame**^[errata 5], or pursue it from Motives of Self-love, and a Desire of Happiness. If I have no Vanity, I take no Delight in Praise: If I be void of Ambition, Power gives no Enjoyment: If I be not angry, the Punishment of an Adversary is totally indifferent to me. In all these Cases, there is a Passion, which points immediately to the Object, and constitutes it our Good or Happiness; as there are other secondary Passions, which afterwards arise, and pursue it as a Part of our Happiness, when once it is constituted such, by our original Affections. Were there no Appetites of any Kind, antecedent to Self-love, that Propensity could scarce ever exert itself; because we should, in that Case, have felt few and slender Pains or Pleasures, and have little Misery or Happiness, to avoid or to pursue.

Now where is the Difficulty of conceiving, that this may likewise be the Case with Benevolence and Friendship, and that, from the original Frame of our Temper, we may feel a Desire of another's Happiness or Good, which, by Means of that Affection, becomes our own Good, and is afterwards pursued, from the conjoin'd Motives of Benevolence and Self-enjoyment? Who sees not that Vengeance, from the Force alone of Passion, may be so eagerly pursued, as to make us knowingly neglect every Consideration of Ease, Interest, or Safety; and, like some vindictive Animals, infuse our very Souls into the Wounds we give an Enemy^[3]? And what a malignant Philosophy must it be, that will not allow, to Humanity and Friendship, the same Privileges, which are indisputably granted to the darker Passions of Enmity and Resentment? Such a Philosophy is more like a Satyr, than a true Delineation or Description, of human Nature; and may be a good Foundation for paradoxical Wit and Raillery, but is a very bad one for any serious Argument or Reasoning.

PART II.

It may be esteem'd, perhaps, a superfluous Task to prove, that the benevolent or softer Affections are VIRTUOUS; and wherever they appear, attract the Esteem, Approbation, and Good-will of Mankind. The Epithets *sociable, good-natur'd, humane, merciful, grateful, friendly, generous, beneficent*, are known in all Languages, and universally express the highest Merit, which *human Nature* is capable of attaining: Where these amiable Qualities are attended with Birth and Power and eminent Abilities, and display themselves in the good Government or useful Instruction of Mankind, they seem even to raise the Possessors of them above the Rank of *human Nature*, and approach them, in some Measure, to the Divine. Exalted Capacity, undaunted Courage, prosperous Success; these may only expose a Hero or Politician to the Envy and Malignity of the Public: But as soon as the Praises are added of humane and beneficent; when Instances are display'd of Lenity, Tenderness, or Friendship; Envy itself is silent, or joins the general Voice of Applause and Acclamation.

WHEN *Pericles*, the great *Athenian* Statesman and General, was on his Death-bed, his surrounding Friends, esteeming him now insensible, began to indulge their Sorrow for their expiring Patron, by enumerating his great Qualities and Successes, his Conquests and Victories, the unusual Length of his Administration, and his nine Trophies, erected over the Enemies of the Republic. *You forget*, cries the dying Hero, who had heard all, *you forget the most eminent of my Praises, while you dwell so much on those vulgar Advantages, in which Fortune had a principal Share. You have not observ'd, that no Citizen has ever yet wore Mourning on my Account*^[4].

IN Men of more ordinary Talents and Capacity, the social Virtues become, if possible, still more essentially requisite; there being nothing eminent, in that Case, to compensate for the Want of them, or preserve the Person from our severest Hatred, as well as Contempt. A high Ambition, an elevated Courage is apt, says [*Cicero*](#), in less perfect Characters, to degenerate into a turbulent Ferocity.

The more social and softer Virtues are there chiefly to be regarded. These are always good and amiable^[5].

THE principal Advantage, which *Juvenal* discovers in the extensive Capacity of the human Species, is, that it renders our Benevolence also more extensive, and gives us larger Opportunities of spreading our kindly Influence than what are indulg'd to the inferior Creation^[6]. It must, indeed, be confest, that by doing Good only, can a Man truly enjoy the Advantages of being eminent. His exalted Station, of itself, but the more exposes him to Tempest and Thunder. His sole Prerogative is to afford Shelter to Inferiors, who repose themselves under his Cover and Protection.

BUT I forget, that it is not my present Business to recommend Generosity and Benevolence, or to paint, in their true Colours, all the genuine Charms of the social Virtues. These, indeed, sufficiently engage every Heart, on the first Apprehension of them; and 'tis difficult to abstain from some Sally of Panegyric, as often as they occur in Discourse or Reasoning. But our Object here being more the speculative, than the practical Part of Morals, 'twill suffice to remark, what will readily, I believe, be allow'd, that no Qualities are more entitled to the general Good-will and Approbation of Mankind, than Beneficence and Humanity, Friendship and Gratitude, Natural Affection and Public Spirit, or whatever proceeds from a tender Sympathy with others, and a generous Concern for our Kind and Species. These, where-ever they appear, seem to transfuse themselves, in a Manner, into each Beholder, and to call forth, in their own Behalf, the same favourable and affectionate Sentiments, which they exert on all around them.

PART III.

We may observe, that, in displaying the Praises of any humane, beneficent Man, there is one Circumstance, which never fails to be amply insisted on, *viz.* the Happiness and Satisfaction, deriv'd to Society from his Intercourse and Good-offices. To his Parents, we are apt to say, he endears himself, by his pious Attachment and

duteous Care, still more than by the Connexions of Nature. His Children never feel his Authority, but when employ'd for their Advantage. With him, the Ties of Love are consolidated by Beneficence and Friendship. The Ties of Friendship approach, in a fond Observance of each obliging Office, to those of Love and Inclination. His Domestics and Dependants have in him a sure Resource; and no longer dread the Power of Fortune, but so far as she exercises it over him. From him, the hungry receive Food, the naked Cloathing, the ignorant and slothful Skill and Industry. Like the Sun, an inferior Minister of Providence, he cheers, invigorates, and sustains the surrounding World.

If confin'd to private Life, the Sphere of his Activity is narrower; but his Influence is all benign and gentle. If exalted into a higher Station, Mankind and Posterity reap the Fruit of his Labours.

As these Topics of Praise never fail to be employ'd, and with Success, where we would inspire Esteem for any one; may we not thence conclude, that the UTILITY, resulting from the social Virtues, forms, at least, a *Part* of their Merit, and is *one* Source of that Approbation and Regard so universally pay'd them?

WHEN we recommend even an Animal or Plant as *useful* and *beneficial*, we give it an Applause and Recommendation suited to its Nature. As on the other Hand, Reflection on the baneful Influence of any of these inferior Beings always inspires us with the Sentiments of Aversion. The Eye is pleas'd with the Prospect of Corn-fields and loaded Vineyards; Horses grazing, and Flocks pasturing: But flies the View of Bryars and Brambles, affording Shelter to Wolves and Serpents.

A Machine, a Piece of Furniture, a Garment, a House, well contriv'd for Use and Conveniency, is so far beautiful, and is contemplated with Pleasure and Approbation. An experienc'd Eye is here sensible to many Excellencies, which escape Persons ignorant and uninstructed.

CAN any Thing stronger be said in Praise of a Profession, such as Merchandize or Manufactory, than to observe the Advantages, which it procures to Society? And is not a Monk and Inquisitor enrag'd, when we treat his Rank and Order as useless or pernicious to Mankind?

THE Historian exults in displaying the Benefit arising from his Labours. The Writer of Romances alleviates or denies the bad Consequences ascrib'd to his Manner of Composition.

IN general, what Praise is imply'd in the simple Epithet, *useful!* What Reproach in the contrary!

YOUR Gods, says *Cicero*^[7], in Opposition to the *Epicureans*, cannot justly claim any Worship or Adoration, with whatever imaginary Perfections you may suppose them endow'd. They are totally useless and inactive. And even the *Egyptians*, whom you so much ridicule, never consecrated any Animal but on Account of its Utility.

THE Sceptics assert^[8], tho' absurdly, that the Origin of all religious Worship was deriv'd from the Utility of inanimate Objects, as the Sun and Moon, to the Support and Well-being of Mankind. This is also the common Reason, assign'd by Historians, for the Deification of eminent Heroes and Legislators^[9].

To plant a Tree, to cultivate a Field, to beget Children; meritorious Acts, according to the Religion of *Zoroaster*.

IN all Determinations of Morality, this Circumstance of public Utility is ever principally in View; and wherever Disputes arise, whether in Philosophy or common Life, concerning the Bounds of Duty, the Question cannot, by any Means, be decided with greater Certainty, than by ascertaining, on any Side, the true Interests of Mankind. If any false Opinion, embrac'd from Appearances, has been found to prevail; as soon as farther Experience, and sounder Reasoning have given us juster Notions of human Affairs; we retract our first Sentiments, and adjust a-new the Boundaries of moral Good and Evil.

ALMS to common Beggars is naturally prais'd; because it seems to carry Relief to the distress and indigent: But when we observe the Encouragement thence arising to Idleness and Debauchery, we regard that Species of Charity rather as a Weakness than a Virtue.

Tyrannicide or the Assassination of Usurpers and oppressive Princes was highly prais'd in antient Times; because it both freed Mankind from many of these Monsters, and seem'd to keep the others in Awe, whom the Poinard or the Poison could not reach. But History and Experience having since convinc'd us, that this Practice encreases the Jealousy and Cruelty of Princes; a *Timoleon* and a *Brutus*, tho' treated with Indulgence on Account of the Prejudices of their Times, are now consider'd as very improper Models for Imitation.

LIBERATIVITY in Princes is regarded as a Mark of Beneficence: But when it occurs, that the homely Bread of the Honest and Industrious is often thereby converted into delicious Cates for the Idle and the Prodigal, we soon retract our heedless Praises. The Regrets of a Prince, for having lost a Day, were noble and generous: But had he intended to have spent it in Acts of Generosity to his greedy Courtiers, 'twas better lost than misemploy'd after that Manner.

LUXURY, or a Refinement on the Pleasures and Conveniencies of Life, had long been suppos'd the Source of every Corruption and Disorder in Government, and the immediate Cause of Faction, Sedition, civil Wars, and the total Loss of Liberty. It was, therefore, universally regarded as a Vice, and was an Object of Declamation to all Satyrists and severe Moralists. Those, who prove, or attempt to prove, that such Refinements rather tend to the Encrease of Industry, Civility, and Arts, regulate a-new our *moral* as well as *political* Sentiments, and represent as laudable and innocent, what had formerly been regarded as pernicious and blameable.

UPON the Whole, then, it seems undeniable, that there is such a Sentiment in human Nature as disinterested Benevolence; *that* nothing can bestow more Merit on any human Creature than the Possession of it in an eminent Degree; and *that* a *Part*, at least, of its

Merit arises from its Tendency to promote the Interests of our Species, and bestow Happiness on human Society. We carry our View into the salutary Consequences of such a Character and Disposition; and whatever has so benign an Influence, and forwards so desirable an End is beheld with Complacency and Pleasure. The social Virtues are never regarded without their beneficial Tendencies, nor view'd as barren and unfruitful. The Happiness of Mankind, the Order of Society, the Harmony of Families, the mutual Support of Friends are always consider'd as the Result of their gentle Dominion over the Breasts of Men.

How considerable a *Part* of their Merit we ought to ascribe to their Utility, will better appear from future Disquisitions^[10]; as well as the Reason, why this Circumstance has such a Command over our Esteem and Approbation.^[11]

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

1. [↑] Benevolence naturally divides into two Kinds, the *general* and *particular*. The first is, where we have no Friendship or Connexion or Esteem for the Person, but feel only a general Sympathy with him or a Compassion for his Pains, and a Congratulation with his Pleasures. The other Species of Benevolence is founded on an Opinion of Virtue, on Services done us, or on some particular Connexions. Both these Sentiments must be allow'd real in human Nature; but whether they will resolve into some nice Considerations of Self-love, is a Question more curious than important. The former Sentiment, *viz.* that of general Benevolence or Humanity or Sympathy, we shall have Occasion frequently to treat of in the Course of this Enquiry; and I assume it as real, from general Experience, without any other Proof.
2. [↑] [Monsr. Fontenelle](#).
3. [↑] Animasque in vulnere ponunt. [VIRG.](#)

Dum alteri noceat, sui negligens, says [Seneca](#) of Anger. De Ira. L. I.

4. [↑](#) [Plut.](#) in Pericle.
5. [↑](#) Cic. de Officiis, Lib. I.
6. [↑](#) Sat. xv., 139, & seq.
7. [↑](#) De Nat. Deor. Lib. 7.
8. [↑](#) Sext. Emp. adversus Math. Lib. 8.
9. [↑](#) Diod. Sic. passim.
10. [↑](#) Sect. 3d and 4th.
11. [↑](#) Sect. 5th.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION III

OF JUSTICE

PART I

That JUSTICE is useful to Society, and consequently that *Part* of its Merit, at least, must arise from that Consideration; 'twould be a superfluous Undertaking to prove. That public Utility is the *sole* Origin of Justice, and that Reflections on the beneficial Consequences of this Virtue are the *sole* Foundation of its Merit; this Proposition, being more curious and important, will better deserve our Examination and Enquiry.

LET us suppose, that Nature has bestow'd on human Race such profuse *Abundance* of all *external* Conveniencies, that, without any Uncertainty in the Event, without any Care or Industry on our Part, every Individual finds himself fully provided of whatever his most voracious Appetites can want, or luxurious Imagination wish or desire. His natural Beauty, we shall suppose, surpasses all acquir'd

Ornaments: The perpetual Clemency of the Seasons renders useless all Cloaths or Covering: The raw Herbage affords him the most delicious Fare; the clear Fountain, the richest Beverage. No laborious Occupation requir'd: No Tillage: No Navigation. Music, Poetry, and Contemplation form his sole Business: Conversation, Mirth, and Friendship his sole Amusement.

IT seems evident, that, in such a happy State, every other social Virtue would flourish, and receive a tenfold Encrease; but the cautious, jealous Virtue of Justice would never once have been dreamt of. For what Purpose make a Partition of Goods, where every one has already more than enough? Why give Rise to Property, where there cannot possibly be any Injury? Why call this Object *mine*, when, upon the Seizure of it by another, I need but stretch out my Hand to possess myself of what is equally valuable? Justice, in that Case, being totally USELESS, would be an idle Ceremonial, and could never possibly have Place amongst the Catalogue of Virtues.

WE see, even in the present necessitous Condition of Mankind, that, wherever any Benefit is bestow'd by Nature in an unlimited Abundance, we leave it always in common amongst the whole human Race, and make no Subdivisions of Right and Property. Water and Air, tho' the most necessary of all Objects, are not challeng'd by Individuals; nor can any one commit Injustice by the most lavish Use and Enjoyment of these Blessings. In fertile, extensive Countries, with few Inhabitants, Land is regarded on the same Footing. And no Topic is so much insisted on by those, who defend the Liberty of the Seas, as the unexhausted Use of them in Navigation. Were the Advantages, procur'd by Navigation, as inexhaustible, these Reasoners never had had any Adversaries to refute; nor had any Claims been ever advanc'd of a separate, exclusive Dominion over the Ocean.

IT may happen in some Countries, at some Periods, that there be establish'd a Property in Water, none in Land^[1]; if the latter be in greater Abundance than can be us'd by the Inhabitants, and the former be found, with Difficulty, and in very small Quantities.

AGAIN; suppose, that, tho' the Necessities of human Race continue the same as at present, yet the Mind is so enlarg'd, and so replete with Friendship and Generosity, that every Man has the utmost Tenderness for every Man, and feels no more Concern for his own Interest than for that of his **Fellows**[\[errata 1\]](#): It seems evident, that the USE of Justice would, in this Case, be suspended by such an extensive Benevolence, nor would the Divisions and Barriers of Property and Obligation have ever been thought of. Why should I bind another, by a Deed or Promise, to do me any Good-office, when I know he is before-hand prompted, by the strongest Inclination, to seek my Happiness, and would, of himself, perform the desir'd Service; except the Hurt, he thereby receives, be greater than the Benefit accruing to me: In which Case, he knows, that, from my innate Humanity and Friendship, I should be the first to oppose myself to his imprudent Generosity? Why raise Land-marks betwixt my Neighbour's Field and mine, when my Heart has made no Division betwixt our Interests; but shares all his Joys and Sorrows with equal Force and Vivacity as if originally my own? Every Man, upon this Supposition, being a Second-self to another, would trust all his Interests to the Discretion of every Man, without Jealousy, without Partition, without Distinction. And the whole Race of Mankind would form only one Family; where all lay in common, and was us'd, freely, without Regard to Property; but cautiously too, with as entire Regard to the Necessities of each Individual, as if our own Interests were most intimately concern'd.

IN the present Disposition of the human Heart, 'twould, perhaps, be difficult to find compleat Instances of such enlarg'd Affections; but still we may observe, that the Case of Families approaches towards it; and the stronger is the mutual Benevolence amongst the Individuals, the nearer it approaches; till all Distinction of Property be, in a great Measure, lost and confounded amongst them. Betwixt marry'd Persons, the Cement of Friendship is by the Laws suppos'd so strong as to abolish all Division of Possessions; and has often, in Reality, the Force ascribed to it. And 'tis observable, that, during the Ardour of new Enthusiasms, where every Principle is inflam'd into

Extravagance, the Community of Goods has frequently been attempted; and nothing but Experience of its Inconveniencies, from the returning or disguis'd Selfishness of Men, could make the imprudent Fanatics adopt a-new the Ideas of Justice and of separate Property. So true is it, that that Virtue derives its Existence altogether from its necessary *Use* to the Intercourse and Society of Mankind.

To make this Truth more evident, let us reverse the foregoing Suppositions; and carrying every Thing to the opposite Extreme, consider what would be the Effect of these new Situations. Suppose a Society to fall into such Want of all common Necessaries, that the utmost Frugality and Industry cannot preserve the greatest Number from perishing, and the whole from extreme Sufferance: It will readily, I believe, be admitted, that the strict Laws of Justice are suspended, in such a pressing Emergence, and give Place to the stronger Motives of Necessity and Self-preservation. Is it any Crime, after a Shipwreck, to seize whatever Means or Instrument of Safety one can lay hold of, without Regard to former Limitations of Property? Or if a City besieg'd were starving with Hunger; can we imagine, that Men will see any Means of Life before them, and perish, from a scrupulous Regard to what, in other Situations, would be the Rules of Equity and Justice? The *USE* and *TENDENCY* of that Virtue is to procure Happiness and Security, by preserving Order in Society: But where the Society is ready to perish from extreme Necessity, no greater Evil can be dreaded from Violence and Injustice; and every Man may now provide for himself, by all Means, which Prudence can dictate, or Humanity permit. The Public, even in less urgent Necessities, open Granaries, without the Consent of Proprietors; as justly supposing, that the Authority of Magistracy may, consistent with Equity, extend so far: But were any Number of Men to assemble, without the Tye of Laws or civil Jurisdiction; would an equal Partition of Bread in a Famine, even without the Proprietor's Consent, be regarded as criminal or injurious?

SUPPOSE also, that it should be a virtuous Man's Fate to fall into the Society of Ruffians, remote from the Protection of Laws and

Government; what Conduct must he embrace in that melancholy Situation? He sees such a desperate Rapaciousness prevail; such a Disregard to Equity, such Contempt of Order, such stupid Blindness to future Consequences, as must immediately have the most tragical Conclusion, and must terminate in Destruction to the greater Number, and in a total Dissolution of Society to the rest. He, mean while, can have no other Expedient, than to arm himself, to whomever the Sword he seizes, or the Buckler may belong: Make Provision of all Means of Defence and Security: And his particular Regard to Justice being no longer of USE to his own Safety or that of others, he must consult alone the Dictates of Self-preservation, without Concern for those, who no longer merit his Care and Attention.

WHEN any Man, even in political Society, renders himself, by his Crimes, obnoxious to the Public, he is punish'd by the Laws in his Goods and Person; that is, the ordinary Rules of Justice are, with Regard to him, suspended for a Moment, and it becomes equitable to inflict on him, for the *Benefit* of Society, what, otherwise, he could not suffer without Wrong or Injury.

THE Rage and Violence of public War; what is it but a Suspension of Justice amongst the warring. Parties, who perceive, that that Virtue is now no longer of any *Use* or *Advantage* to them? The Laws of War, which then succeed to those of Equity and Justice, are Rules calculated for the *Advantage* and *Utility* of that particular State, in which Men are now plac'd. And were a civiliz'd Nation engag'd with Barbarians, who observ'd no Rules even of War; the former must also suspend their Observance of them, where they no longer serve to any Purpose; and must render every Action or Rencontre as bloody and pernicious as possible to the first Aggressors.

THUS the Rules of Equity or Justice depend entirely on the particular State and Condition, in which Men are plac'd, and owe their Origin and Existence to that UTILITY, which results to the Public from their strict and regular Observance. Reverse, in any considerable Circumstance, the Condition of Men: Produce extreme

Abundance or extreme Necessity: Implant in the human Breast perfect Moderation and Humanity, or perfect Rapaciousness and Malice: By rendering Justice totally *useless*, you thereby totally destroy its Essence, and suspend its Obligation upon Mankind.

THE common Situation of Society is a Medium amidst all these Extremes. We are naturally partial to Ourselves, and to our Friends; but are capable of learning the Advantage, resulting from a more equal Conduct. Few Enjoyments are given us from the open and liberal Hand of Nature; but by Art, Labour, and Industry, we can extract them in great Abundance. Hence the Ideas of Property become necessary in all civil Society: Hence Justice derives its Usefulness to the Public: And hence alone arises its Merit and moral Obligation.

THESE Conclusions are so natural and obvious, that they have not escap'd even the Poets, in their Descriptions of the Felicity, attending the Golden Age or the Reign of *Saturn*. The Seasons, in that first Period of Nature, were so temperate, if we credit these agreeable Fictions, that there was no Necessity for Men to provide themselves with Cloaths and Houses, as a Security against the Violence of Heat and Cold: The Rivers flow'd with Wine and Milk: The Oaks yielded Honey; and Nature spontaneously produc'd her greatest Delicacies. Nor were these the chief Advantages of that happy Age. The Storms and Tempests were not alone remov'd from Nature; but those more furious Tempests were unknown to human Breasts, which now cause such Uproar, and engender such Confusion. Avarice, Ambition, Cruelty, Selfishness were never heard of: Cordial Affection, Compassion, Sympathy were the only Movements, with which the Mind was yet acquainted. Even the punctilious Distinction of *Mine* and *Thine* was banish'd from amongst that happy Race of Mortals, and carry'd with it the very Notion of Property and Obligation, Justice and Injustice.

THIS *poetical* Fiction of the *Golden Age* is, in some Respects, of a Piece with the *philosophical* Fiction of the *State of Nature*; only that the former is represented as the most charming and most peaceable

Condition, that can possibly be imagin'd; whereas the latter is painted^[errata 2] out as a State of mutual War and Violence, attended with the most extreme Necessity. On the first Origin of Mankind, as we are told, their Ignorance and savage Nature were so prevalent, that they could give no mutual Trust, but must each depend upon himself, and his own Force or Cunning for Protection and Security. No Law was heard of: No Rule of Justice known: No Distinction of Property regarded: Power was the only Measure of Right; and a perpetual War of All against All was the Result of their untam'd Selfishness and Barbarity^[2].

WHETHER such a Condition of human Nature could ever exist, or if it did, could continue so long as to merit the Appellation of a *State*, may justly be doubted. Men are necessarily born in a Family-society, at least; and are train'd up by their Parents to some Rule of Conduct and Behaviour. But this must be admitted, that if such a State of mutual War and Violence was ever real, the Suspension of all Laws of Justice, from their absolute Inutility, is a necessary and infallible Consequence.

THE more we vary our Views of human Life, and the newer and more unusual the Lights are, in which we survey it, the more shall we be convinc'd, that the Origin here assign'd for the Virtue of Justice is real and satisfactory.

WERE there a Species of Creatures, intermingled with Men, which, tho' rational, were possest of such inferior Strength, both of Body and Mind, that they were incapable of all Resistance, and could never, upon the highest Provocation, make us feel the Effects of their Resentment; the necessary Consequence, I think, is, that we should be bound, by the Laws of Humanity, to give gentle Usage to these Creatures, but should not, properly speaking, lie under any Restraint of Justice with Regard to them, nor could they possess any Right or Property, exclusive of such arbitrary Lords. Our Intercourse with them could not be call'd Society, which supposes a Degree of Equality; but absolute Command on the one Side, and servile Obedience on the other. Whatever we covet, they must instantly

resign: Our Permission is the only Tenure, by which they hold their Possessions: Our Compassion and Kindness the only Check, by which they curb our lawless Will: And as no Inconvenience ever results from the Exercise of a Power, so firmly establish'd in Nature, the Restraints of Justice and Property, being totally *useless*, would never have Place, in so unequal a Confederacy.

THIS is plainly the Situation of Men with regard to Animals; and how far these may be said to possess Reason, I leave it to others to determine. The great Superiority of civiliz'd *Europeans* above barbarous *Indians*, tempted us to imagine ourselves on the same Footing with regard to them, and made us throw off all Restraints of Justice, and even of Humanity, in our Treatment of them. In many Nations, the female Sex are reduc'd to like Slavery, and are render'd incapable of all Property, in Opposition to their lordly Masters. But tho' the Males, when united, have, in all Countries, brute Force sufficient to maintain this severe Tyranny; yet such are the Insinuation, Address, and Charms of their fair Companions, that they are commonly able to break the Confederacy, and share with the superior Sex in all the Rights and Privileges of Society.

WERE the human Species so fram'd by Nature as that each Individual possess within himself every Faculty, requisite both for his own Preservation and for the Propagation of his Kind: Were all Society and Intercourse cut off betwixt Man and Man, by the primary Intention of the supreme Creator: It seems evident, that so solitary a Being would be as much incapable of Justice, as of social Discourse and Conversation. Where mutual Regards and Forbearance **serve to no Manner**^[errata 3] of Purpose, they would never direct the Conduct of any reasonable Man. The headlong Course of the Passions would be check'd by no Reflection on future Consequences. And as each Man is here suppos'd to love himself alone, and to depend only on himself and his own Activity for Safety and Happiness, he would, on every Occasion, to the utmost of his Power, challenge the Preference above every other Being, **to none of which he is bound**^[errata 4], either of Nature or of Interest.

BUT suppose the Conjunction of the Sexes to be establish'd in Nature, a Family immediately arises; and particular Rules being found requisite for its Subsistence, these are immediately embrac'd; tho' without comprehending the rest of Mankind within their Prescriptions. Suppose, that several Families unite together into one Society, which is totally disjoin'd from all others, the Rules, which preserve Peace and Order, enlarge themselves to the utmost Extent of that Society; but, being entirely useless, lose their Force when carry'd one Step farther. But again suppose, that several distinct Societies maintain a Kind of Entercourse for mutual Convenience and Advantage, the Boundaries of Justice still grow larger and larger, in Proportion to the Largeness of Men's Views, and the Force of their mutual Connexions. History, Experience, Reason sufficiently instruct us in this natural Progress of human Sentiments, and the gradual Encrease of our Regards to Property and Justice in Proportion as we become acquainted with the extensive *Utility* of that Virtue.

PART II.

If we examine all the *particular* Laws, by which Justice is directed, and Property determin'd; we shall still be presented with the same Conclusion. The Good of Mankind is the only Object of all these Laws and Regulations. Not only 'tis requisite, for the Peace and Interest of Society, that Men's Possessions should be separated; but the Rules, which we follow in making the Separation, are such as can best be contriv'd to serve farther the Interests of Society.

WE shall suppose, that a Creature, possest of Reason, but unacquainted with human Nature, deliberates with himself what RULES of Justice or Property would best promote public Interest, and establish Peace and Security amongst Mankind: His most obvious Thought would be, to assign the largest Possessions to the most extensive Virtue, and give every one the Power of doing Good, proportion'd to his Inclination. In a perfect Theocracy, where a Being, infinitely intelligent, governs by particular Volitions, this Rule would certainly have Place, and might serve the wisest Purposes: But were Mankind to execute such a Law; (so great is the

Uncertainty of Merit, both from its natural Obscurity, and from the Self-conceit of each Individual) that no determinate Rule of Conduct would ever result from it; and the total Dissolution of Society must be the immediate Consequence. Fanatics may suppose, *that Dominion is founded in Grace, and that Saints alone inherit the Earth*; but the civil Magistrate very justly puts these sublime Theorists on the same Footing with common Robbers, and teaches them, by the severest Discipline, that a Rule, which, in Speculation, may seem the most advantageous to Society, may yet be found, in Practice, totally pernicious and destructive.

THAT there were *religious* Fanatics of this kind in *England*, during the civil Wars, we learn from History; tho' 'tis probable, that the obvious *Tendency* of these Principles excited such Horrour in Mankind, as soon oblig'd the dangerous Enthusiasts to renounce, or at least conceal their Tenets. Perhaps, the *Levellers*, who claim'd an equal Distribution of Property, were a Kind of *political* Fanatics, which arose from the religious Species, and more openly avow'd their Pretensions, as carrying a more plausible Appearance, of being practicable, as well as useful to human Society.

IT must, indeed, be confest, that Nature is so liberal to Mankind, that were all her Presents equally divided amongst the Species, and improv'd by Art and Industry, every Individual would enjoy all the Necessaries, and even most of the Comforts of Life; nor would ever be liable to any Ills, but such as might accidentally arise from the sickly Frame and Constitution of his Body. It must also be confest, that, wherever we depart from this Equality, we rob the Poor of more Satisfaction than we add to the Rich, and that the slight Gratification of a frivolous Vanity, in one Individual, frequently costs more than Bread to many Families, and even Provinces. It may appear withal, that the Rule of Equality, as it would be highly *useful*, is not altogether *impracticable*; but has taken Place, at least, in an imperfect Degree, in some Republics; particularly, that of *Sparta*; where it was attended, as 'tis said, with the most beneficial Consequences. Not to mention, that the *Agrarian* Laws, so frequently claim'd in *Rome*, and carry'd to Execution in many *Greek*

Cities, proceeded, all of them, from a general Idea of the Utility of this Principle.

BUT Historians, and even common Sense, may inform us, that, however specious these Ideas of *perfect* Equality may seem, they are really, at the Bottom, *impracticable*; and were they not so, would be extremely *pernicious* to human Society.

Render Possessions ever so equal, Men's different [\[errata 5\]](#) Degrees of Art, Care, and Industry will immediately break that Equality. Or if you check these Virtues, you reduce Society to the extremest Indigence; and instead of preventing Want and Beggary in a few, render it unavoidable to the whole Community. The most rigorous Inquisition too, is requisite to watch every Inequality on its first Appearance; and the most severe Jurisdiction, to punish and redress it. But besides, that so much Authority must soon degenerate into Tyranny, and be exerted with great Partialities; who can possibly be possest of it, in such a Situation as is here suppos'd? Perfect Equality of Possessions, destroying all Subordination, weakens extremely the Authority of Magistracy, and must reduce all Power nearly to a Level, as well as Property.

WE may conclude, therefore, that, in order to establish Laws for the Regulation of Property, we must be acquainted with the Nature and Situation of Man, must reject Appearances, which may be false, tho' specious, and must search for those Rules, which are, on the whole, most *useful*, and *beneficial*, Vulgar Sense and slight Experience are sufficient for this Purpose; where Men give not way to too selfish Avidity, or too extensive Enthusiasm.

WHO sees not, for Instance, that whatever is produc'd or improv'd by a Man's Art or Industry ought, for ever, to be secur'd to him, in order to give Encouragement to such *useful* Habits and Accomplishments? That the Property ought also to descend to Children and Relations, for the same *useful* Purpose? That it may be alienated by Consent, in order to beget that Commerce and Intercourse, which is so *beneficial* to human Society? And that all Contracts and Promises ought carefully to be fulfill'd, in order to

secure mutual Trust and Confidence, by which the general *Interest* of Mankind is so much promoted?

EXAMINE the Writers on the Laws of Nature; and you will always find, that, whatever Principles they set out with, they are sure to terminate here at last, and to assign, as the ultimate Reason for every Rule they establish, the Convenience and Necessities of Mankind. A Concession thus extorted, in Opposition to Systems, has more Authority, than if it had been made, in Prosecution of them.

WHAT other Reason, indeed, could Writers ever give, why this must be mine and that yours; since uninstructed Nature, surely, never made any such Distinction? These Objects are, of themselves, foreign to us; they are totally disjoin'd and separate; and nothing but the general Interests of Society can form the Connection.

SOMETIMES, the Interests of Society may require a Rule of Justice in a particular Case; but may not determine any particular Rule, amongst several, which are all equally beneficial. In that Case, the slightest *Analogies* are laid hold of, in order to prevent that Indifference and Ambiguity, which would be the Source of perpetual Quarrels and Dissentions. Thus Possession alone, and first Possession, is suppos'd to convey Property, where no-body else has any precedent Claim and Pretension. Many of the Reasonings of Lawyers are of this analogical Nature, and depend on very slight Connexions of the Imagination.

Is it ever scrupled, in extraordinary Cases, to violate all Regard to the private Property of Individuals, and sacrifice to public Interest a Distinction, which had been establish'd for the Sake of that Interest? The Safety of the People is the supreme Law: All other particular Laws are subordinate to it, and dependant on it: And if, in the common Course of Things, they be followed and regarded; 'tis only because the public Safety and Interest, *commonly* demand so equal and impartial an Administration.

SOMETIMES both *Utility* and *Analogy* fail, and leave the Laws of Justice in total Uncertainty. Thus, 'tis highly requisite, that

Prescription or long Possession should convey Property; but what Number of Days or Months or Years should be sufficient for that Purpose, 'tis impossible for Reason alone to determine. *Civil Laws* here supply the Place of the natural *Code*, and assign different Terms for Prescription, according to the different *Utilities*, propos'd by the Legislator. Bills of Exchange and promissory Notes, by the Laws of most Countries, prescribe sooner than Bonds and Mortgages, and Contracts of a more formal Nature.

IN general we may observe, that all Questions of Property are subordinate to the Authority of civil Laws, which extend, restrain, modify, and alter the Rules of natural Justice, according to the particular *Convenience* of each Community. The Laws have, or ought to have, a constant Reference to the Constitution of Government, the Manners, the Climate, the Religion, the Commerce, the Situation of each Society. A late Author of great Genius, as well as extensive Learning, has prosecuted this Subject at large, and has establish'd, from these Principles, the best System of political Knowledge, that, perhaps, has ever yet been communicated to the World^[3].

WHAT is a Man's Property? Any Thing, which it is lawful for him and for him alone, to use. *But what Rule have we, by which we can distinguish these Objects?* Here we must have Recourse to Statutes, Customs, Precedents, Analogies, and a hundred other Circumstances; some of which are constant and inflexible, some variable and arbitrary. But the ultimate Point, in which they all professedly terminate, is, the Interest and Happiness of human Society. Where this enters not into Consideration, nothing can appear more whimsical, unnatural, and even superstitious than all or most of the Laws of Justice and of Property.

THOSE, who ridicule vulgar Superstitions, and expose the Folly of particular Regards to Meats, Days, Places, Postures, Apparel, have an easy Task; while they consider all the Qualities and Relations of the Objects, and discover no adequate Cause for that Affection or Antipathy, Veneration or Horrour, which have so mighty an Influence over a considerable Part of Mankind. A *Syrian* would have starv'd

rather than taste Pigeon; an *Egyptian* would not have approach'd Bacon: But if these Species of Food be examin'd by the Senses of Sight, Smell or Taste, or scrutiniz'd by the Sciences of Chymistry, Medicine, or Physics; no Difference is ever found betwixt them and any other Species, nor can that precise Circumstance be pitch'd on, which may afford a just Foundation for the religious Passion. A Fowl on Thursday is lawful Food; on Friday, abominable: Eggs in this House, and in this Diocese are permitted during Lent; a hundred Paces farther, to eat them is a damnable Sin. This Earth or Building yesterday, was prophane; to-day, by the muttering of certain Words, it has become holy and sacred. Such Reflections, as these, in the Mouth of a Philosopher, one may safely say, are too obvious to have any Influence; because they must always, to every Man, occur at first Sight; and where they prevail not, of themselves, they are surely obstructed by Education, Prejudice and Passion, not by Ignorance or Mistake.

It may appear, to a careless View; or rather, a too abstracted Reflection; that there enters a like Superstition into all the Regards of Justice; and that, if a Man subjects its Objects, or what we call Property, to the same Scrutiny of Sense and Science, he will not, by the most accurate Enquiry, find any Foundation for the Difference made by moral Sentiment. I may lawfully nourish myself from this Tree; but the Fruit of another of the same Species, ten Paces off, 'tis criminal for me to touch. Had I wore this Apparel an Hour ago, I had merited the severest Punishment; but a Man, by pronouncing a few magical Syllables, has now render'd it fit for my Use and Service. Were this House plac'd in the neighbouring Territory, it had been immoral for me to dwell in it; but being built on this Side the River, it is subject to a different municipal Law, and I incur no Blame or Censure. The same Species of Reasoning, it may be thought, which so successfully exposes Superstition, is also applicable to Justice; nor is it possible, in the one Case more than in the other, to point out, in the Object, that precise Quality or Circumstance, which is the Foundation of the Sentiment.

BUT there is this material Difference betwixt *Superstition* and *Justice*, that the former is frivolous, useless, and burthensome; the latter is absolutely requisite to the Well-being of Mankind and Existence of Society. When we abstract from this Circumstance (for 'tis too apparent ever to be overlookt) it must be confest, that all Regards to Right and Property, seem entirely without Foundation, as much as the grossest and most vulgar Superstition. Were the Interests of Society no way concern'd, 'tis as unintelligible, why another's articulating certain Sounds, implying Consent, should change the Nature of my Actions with regard to a particular Object, as why the reciting of a Liturgy by a Priest, in a certain Habit and Posture, should dedicate a Heap of Brick and Timber, and render it, thenceforth and for ever, sacred. [\[4\]](#)

THESE Reflections are far from weakening the Obligations of Justice, or diminishing any Thing from the most sacred Attention to Property. On the contrary, such Sentiments must acquire new Force from the present Reasoning. For what stronger Foundation can be desir'd or conceiv'd for any Duty than to observe, that human Society, or even human Nature could not subsist, without the Establishment of it, and will still arrive at greater Degrees of Happiness and Perfection, the more inviolable the Regard is, which is pay'd to that Duty?

THUS we seem, upon the Whole, to have attain'd a Knowledge of the Force of that Principle here insisted on, and can determine what Degree of Esteem or moral Approbation may result from Reflections on public Interest and Utility. The Necessity of Justice to the Support of Society is the SOLE Foundation of that Virtue; and since no moral Excellence is more highly esteem'd, we may conclude, that this Circumstance of Usefulness has, in general, the strongest Energy, and most entire Command over our Sentiments. It must, therefore, be the Source of a considerable Part of the Merit, ascrib'd to Humanity, Benevolence, Friendship, public Spirit, and other social Virtues of that Stamp; as it is the SOLE Source of the moral Approbation pay'd to Fidelity, Justice, Veracity, Integrity, and those other estimable and useful Qualities and Principles. 'Tis entirely

agreeable to the Rules of Philosophy, and even of common Reason; where any Principle has been found to have a great Force and Energy in one Instance, to ascribe to it a like Energy in all similar Instances^[5].

1. [↑] *Genesis*, chap. xiii, and xxi.
2. [↑] This Fiction of a State of Nature, as a State of War, was not first started by [Mr. Hobbes](#), as is commonly imagin'd. [Plato](#) endeavours to refute an Hypothesis very like it in the 2d, 3d and 4th Books de Republica. [Cicero](#), on the contrary, supposes it certain and universally acknowledged in the following beautiful Passage, which is the only Authority I shall cite for these Reasonings: Not imitating in this the Example of [Puffendorf](#), nor even that of [Grotius](#), who think a Verse from [Ovid](#) or [Plautus](#) or [Petronius](#) a necessary Warrant for every moral Truth; or the Example of [Mr. Woolaston](#), who has constant Recourse to *Hebrew* and *Arabic* Authors for the same Purpose. *Quis enim vestrûm, judices, ignorat, ita naturam rerum tuliffe, ut quodam tempore homines, nondum neque naturali, neque civili jure descripto, fusi per agros, ac dispersi vagarentur, tantumque haberent quantum manu ac viribus, per cædem ac vulnera, aut eripere, aut retinere potuissent? Qui igitur primi virtute & consilio præstanti extiterunt, ii perspecto genere humanæ docilitatis atque ingenii, dissipatos, unum in locum congregarunt, cosque ex feritate illa ad justitiam ac mansuetudinem transduxerunt. Tum res ad communem utilitatem, quas publicas appellamus, tum conventicula bominum; quæ postea civitates nominatæ sunt, tum domicilia conjuncta, quas urbes dicamus, invente & divino & humano jure, mænibus sepserunt. Atque inter hanc vitam; perpolitam humanitate, & illam immanem, nihil tam interest quam JUS atque VIS. Horum utro uti nolimus, altero est utendum; Vim volumus extinguere? Jus valeat necesse est, id est, judicia, quibus omne jus continetur. Judicia displicent, aut nulla sunt? vis dominetur necesse est ? Hæc vident omnes. Pro Sext. I. 42.*

3. ↑ The Author of *L'Esprit des Loix*. This illustrious Writer, however, sets out with a different Theory, and supposes all Right to be founded on certain *Rapports* or Relations; which is a System, that, in my Opinion, never will reconcile with true Philosophy. [Father Malebranche](#), as far as I can learn, was the first, that started this abstract Theory of Morals, which was afterwards adopted by [Dr. Clarke](#) and others; and as it excludes all Sentiment, and pretends to found every Thing on Reason, it has not wanted Followers in this philosophic Age. See *Section* 1.. and *Appendix* 1.. With regard to Justice, the Virtue here treated of, the Inference against this Theory seems short and conclusive. Property is allow'd to be dependant on civil Laws: Civil Laws are allow'd to have no Object but the Interest of Society: This therefore must be allow'd to be the sole Foundation of Property and Justice. Not to mention, that our Obligation itself to obey the Magistrate and his Laws is founded on nothing but the Interests of Society.

If the Ideas of Justice, sometimes, do not follow the Dispositions of civil Law; we shall find, that these Cases, instead of Objections, are Confirmations of the Theory deliver'd above. Where a civil Law is so perverse as to cross all the Interests of Society, it loses all its Authority, and Men judge by the Ideas of natural Justice, which are conformable to those Interests. Sometimes also civil Laws, for useful Purposes, require a Ceremony or Form; and where that is wanting, their Decrees run contrary to the usual Tenor of Justice; but one, who takes Advantage of such Chicanes, is not regarded as an honest Man. Thus, the Interests of Society require, that Contracts be fulfill'd; and there is not a more material Article either of natural or civil Justice: But the Omission of a trifling Circumstance will often, by Law, invalidate a Contract, *in foro humano*, but not *in foro conscientiae*, as Divines express themselves. In these Cases, the Magistrate is suppos'd only to withdraw his Power of enforcing the Right, not to have alter'd the Right. Where his Intention extends to the Right, and is conformable to the Interests of

Society; it never fails to alter the Right; a clear Proof of the Origin of Justice and of Property, as assign'd above.

4. ↑ 'Tis evident, that the Will or Consent alone never transfers Property, nor causes the Obligation of a Promise (for the same Reasoning extends to both) but the will must be exprest by Words or Signs, in order to impose a Tye upon any Man. The Expression, being once brought in as subservient to the Will, soon becomes the principal Part of the Promise; nor will a Man be less bound by his Word, tho' he secretly give a different Direction to his Intention, and withhold the Assent of his Mind. But tho' the Expression makes, on most Occasions, the whole of the Promise, yet it does not always so; and one, who should make use of any Expression, of which he knows not the Meaning, and which he uses without any Sense of the Consequences, would not certainly be bound by it. Nay, tho' he know its Meaning, yet if he uses it in Jest only, and with such Signs as show evidently, he has no serious Intention of binding himself, he would not lie under any Obligation of Performance; but 'tis necessary, that the Words be a perfect Expression of the Will, without any contrary Signs. Nay, even this we must not carry so far as to imagine, that one, whom, by our Quickness of Understanding, we conjecture, from certain Signs, to have an Intention of deceiving us, is not bound by his Expression or verbal Promise, if we accept of it; but must limit this Conclusion to those Cases, where the Signs are of a different Nature from those of Deceit. All those Contradictions are easily accounted for, if Justice arises entirely from its Usefulness to Society; but will never be explain'd on any other Hypothesis.

'Tis remarkable, that the moral Decisions of the *Jesuits* and other relax'd Casuists, were commonly form'd in Prosecution of some such Subtilties of Reasoning as are here pointed at, and proceeded as much from the Habit of scholastic Refinement as from any Corrruption of the Heart, if we may follow the Authority of Monsr. *Bayle*. See his Dictionary, Article *Loyola*. And why has the Indignation of Mankind rose so strong against

these Casuists; but because every one perceiv'd, that human Society could not subsist were such Practices authoriz'd, and that Morals must always be handled with a View to public Interest, more than philosophical Regularity? If the secret Direction of the Intention, said every Man of Sense, could invalidate a Contract; where is our Security? And yet a metaphysical Schoolman might think, that where an Intention was suppos'd to be requisite, if that Intention really had not Place, no Consequence ought to follow, and no Obligation be impos'd. The casuistical Subtilties may not be greater than the Subtilties of Lawyers, hinted at above; but as the former are *pernicious*, and the latter *innocent* and even *necessary*, this is the Reason of the very different Reception they meet with from the World.

5. [↑] This is [Sir Isaac Newton's](#) second Rule of philosophising. *Principia*, Lib. 3.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION IV

OF POLITICAL SOCIETY

Had every Man sufficient *Sagacity* to perceive, at all Times, the strong Interest, which binds him to the Observance of Justice and Equity, and *Strength of Mind* sufficient to persevere in a steady Adherence to a general and a distant Interest, in Opposition to the Allurements of present Pleasure and Advantage: There had never, in that Case, been any such Thing as Government or political Society, but each Man following his natural Liberty, had liv'd in entire Peace and Harmony with all others. What Need of positive Laws, where natural Justice is, of itself, a sufficient Restraint? Why create Magistrates, where there never arises any Disorder or Iniquity? Why abridge our native Freedom, when, in every Instance, the utmost Exertion of it is found innocent and beneficial? 'Tis evident, that, if Government were totally useless, it never could have Place, and that the SOLE Foundation of the Duty of ALLEGIANCE is the *Advantage* which it procures to Society, by preserving Peace and Order amongst Mankind.

WHEN a Number of political Societies are erected, and maintain a great Entercourse together; a new Set of Rules are immediately discover'd to be *useful* in that particular Situation; and accordingly take place, under the Title of LAWS of NATIONS. Of this Kind are,

the Sacredness of the Persons of Ambassadors, abstaining from poison'd Arms, Quarter in War, with others of that Kind; which are plainly calculated for the *Advantage* of States and Kingdoms, in their Entercourse with each other.

THE Rules of Justice, such as prevail amongst Individuals, are not altogether suspended amongst political Societies. All Princes pretend a Regard to the Rights of others; and some, no doubt, without Hypocrisy. Alliances and Treaties are every Day made betwixt independent States, which would only be so much Waste of Parchment, if they were not found, by Experience, to have *some* Influence and Authority. But here is the Difference betwixt Kingdoms and Individuals. Human Nature cannot, by any Means, subsist, without the Association of Individuals; and that Association never could have Place, were no Regard pay'd to the Laws of Equity and Justice. Disorder, Confusion, the War of All against All are the necessary Consequences of such a licentious Conduct. But Nations can flourish without Entercourse. They may even subsist, in some Degree, under a general War. The Observance of Justice, tho' useful among them, is not guarded by so strong a Necessity as among Individuals; and the *moral Obligation* holds Proportion with the *Usefulness*. All Politicians will allow, and most Philosophers, that REASONS of STATE may, in particular Emergencies, dispence with the Rules of Justice, and invalidate any Treaty or Alliance, where the strict Observance of it would be prejudicial, in a considerable Degree, to either of the contracting Parties. But nothing less than the extremest Necessity, 'tis confest, can justify Individuals in a Breach of Promise, or an Invasion of the Properties of others.

IN a confederated Commonwealth, such as the *Achæan* Republic of old, or the *Swiss* Cantons and United Provinces in modern Times; as the League has here a peculiar *Utility*, the Conditions of Union have a peculiar Sacredness and Authority, and a Violation of them would be equally criminal, or even more criminal, than any private Injury or Injustice.

THE long and helpless Infancy of Man requires the Combination of Parents for the Subsistence of their Young; and that Combination requires the Virtue of CHASTITY or Fidelity to the Marriage-bed. Without such an *Utility*, 'twill readily be own'd, such a Virtue would never have been thought of^[1].

AN Infidelity of this Nature is much more *pernicious* in *Women* than in *Men*. Hence the Laws of Chastity are much stricter over the one Sex than over the other^[2].

THOSE who live in the same Family have so many Opportunities of Licences of this Kind, that nothing could preserve Purity of Manners, were Marriage allow'd amongst the nearest Relations, or any Intercourse of Love betwixt them ratify'd by Law and Custom. INCEST, therefore, being *pernicious* in a superior Degree, has also a superior Turpitude and moral Deformity, annex'd to it.

WHAT is the Reason, why, by the *Greek* Laws, one might marry a Half-sister by the Father, but not by the Mother? Plainly this. The Manners of the *Greeks* were so reserv'd, that a Man was never permitted to approach the Women's Apartment, even in the same Family, unless where he visited his own Mother. His Step-mother and her Children were as much shut up from him as the Women of any other Family, and there was as little Danger of any criminal Intercourse betwixt them: Uncles and Nieces, for a like Reason, might marry at *Athens*; but neither these nor Half-brothers and Sisters could contract that Alliance at *Rome*, where the Intercourse was more open betwixt the Sexes. Public Utility is the Cause of all these Variations.

To repeat, to a Man's Prejudice, any Thing that escap'd him in private Conversation, or to make any such Use of his private Letters, is highly blam'd. The free and social Intercourse of Minds must be extremely checkt, where no such Rules of Fidelity are establish'd.

EVEN in repeating Stories, whence we can see no ill Consequences to result, the giving one's Authors is regarded as a Piece of Indiscretion, if not of Immorality. These Stories, in passing from

Hand to Hand, and receiving all the usual Variations, frequently come about to the Persons concern'd, and produce Animosities and Quarrels among People, whose Intentions are the most innocent and inoffensive.

To pry into Secrets, to open or even read the Letters of others, to play the Spy upon their Words and Looks and Actions: What Habits more inconvenient in Society? What Habits, of consequence, more blameable?

THIS Principle is also the Foundation of most of the Laws of Good-manners; a Kind of lesser Morality calculated for the Ease of Company and Conversation. Too much or too little Ceremony are both blam'd, and every Thing, that promotes Ease, without an indecent Familiarity, is useful and laudable.

CONSTANCY in Friendships, Attachments, and Familiarities is commonly very laudable, and is requisite to support Trust and good Correspondence in Society. But in Places of general, tho' casual Concourse, **where the Search for Health or Pleasure brings**^[errata 1] People promiscuously together, public Conveniency has dispens'd with this Maxim; and Custom there promotes an unreserv'd Conversation for the Time, by indulging the Privilege of dropping afterwards every indifferent Acquaintance, without Breach of Civility or Good-manners.

EVEN in Societies, that are establish'd on Principles the most immoral, and the most destructive to the Interests of the general Society, there are requir'd certain Rules and Maxims, which a Species of false Honour, as well as private Interest, engages the Members to observe. Robbers and Pyrates, it has often been remark'd, could not maintain their pernicious Confederacy, did they not establish a new distributive Justice amongst themselves, and recall those Laws of Equity, which they have violated with the rest of Mankind.

I HATE a drinking Companion, says the *Greek* Proverb, who never forgets. The Follies of the last Debauch should be buried in eternal Oblivion, in order to give full Scope to the Follies of the next.

AMONGST Nations, where an immoral Gallantry, if cover'd with a thin Veil of Mystery, is, in some Degree, authoriz'd by Custom, there immediately arise a Set of Rules, calculated for the Conveniency of that Attachment. The famous Court or Parliament of Love in *Provence* decided formally all difficult Cases of this Nature.

IN Societies for Play, there are Laws requir'd for the Conduct of the Game, and these Laws are different in each Game. The Foundation, I own, of such Societies is frivolous; and the Laws are, in a great Measure, tho' not altogether, capricious and arbitrary. So far is there a material Difference betwixt them and the Rules of Justice, Fidelity and Loyalty. The general Societies of Men are absolutely requisite for the Subsistence of the Species; and the public Conveniency, which regulates Morals, is inviolably establish'd in the Nature of Man, and of the World, in which he lives. The Comparison, therefore, in these Respects, is very imperfect. We may only learn from it the Necessity of Rules, where-ever Men have any Intercourse with each other.

THEY cannot even pass each other on the Road without Rules. Waggoners, Coachmen, and Postilions have Principles, by which they give way; and these are chiefly founded on mutual Ease and Convenience. Sometimes also they are arbitrary, or at best dependant on a Kind of capricious Analogy, like many of the Reasonings of Lawyers^[3].

To carry the Matter farther, we may observe, that 'tis impossible for Men so much as to murder each other without Statutes and Maxims, and an Idea of Justice and Honour. War has its Laws as well as Peace; and even that sportive Kind of War carried on amongst Wrestlers, Boxers, Cudgel-players, Gladiators, is supported by fixt Principles and Regulations. Common Interest and Utility beget infallibly a Standard of Right and Wrong amongst the Parties concern'd.

1. ↑ The only Solution, which [Plato](#) gives to all the Objections, that might be rais'd against the Community of Women, establish'd in his imaginary Common-wealth, is, Καλλιστα γαρ δη τουτο και λεγεται και λελεζεται, οτι το μεν ωφελιμον καλον. Το δε βλασσοερων αισχρον. Scite enim istud & dicitur dicetur, Id quod utile sit bonestum ele, quod autem inutile sit turpe ele. De Rep. Lib. 5. P. 457. Ex edit. Serr. And this Maxim will admit of no Doubt, where public Utility is concern'd; which is Plato's Meaning And indeed to what other Purpose do all the Ideas of Chastity and Modesty serve? Nisi utile est quod facimus, frustra est gloria, says Phædrus. Καλον των βλασσοερων ουδεν, says Plutarch *de vitioso pudore*. Nihil eorum quæ damnosa sunt, pulchrum est. The same was the Opinion of the Stoics. Φασιν ουν οι Στωικοι αγαθον ειναι ωφελειαν η ουκ ετεραν ωφελειας, ωφελειαν μεν λεγοντες την αρετην και την σπουδαιαν πραξιν. Sext. Emp. Lib. 3. Cap. 20.
2. ↑ THESE Rules have all a Reference to Generation; and yet Women past Child-bearing are no more suppos'd to be exempted from them than those twin the Flower of their Youth and Beauty. *General Rules* are often extended beyond the Principle, whence they first arise; and this in all Matters of Taste and Sentiment. 'Tis a vulgar Story at *Paris*, that during the Rage of the *Mississippi*, a hump-back'd Fellow went every Day into the *Ruë de Quincempoix*, where the Stock-jobbers met in great Crowds, and was well pay'd for allowing them to make use of his Hump as a Desk, in order to sign their Contracts upon it. Would the Fortune he rais'd by this Invention make him a handsome Fellow; tho' it be confest, that personal Beauty arises very much from Ideas of Utility? The Imagination is influenced by Associations of Ideas; which, tho' they arise, at first, from the Judgment, are not easily alter'd by every particular Exception, that occurs to us. To which we may add, in the present Case of Chastity, that the Example of the Old would be pernicious to the Young; and that Women continually thinking, that a certain Time would bring them the Liberty of Indulgence,

would naturally advance that Period, and think more lightly of this whole Duty, so requisite to Society.

3. [↑](#) That the lighter Machine yields to the heavier, and in Machines of the same Kind, that the empty yield to the loaded; this Rule is founded on Convenience. That those who are going to the Capital take place of those who are coming from it; this seems to be founded on some Idea of the Dignity of the great City, and of the Preference of the future to the past. From like Reasons amongst Foot-walkers, the Right-hand entitles a Man to the Wall, and prevents jostling, which peaceable People find very disagreeable and inconvenient.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION V

WHY UTILITY PLEASES

PART I

It seems so natural a Thought to ascribe to their Utility the Praise which we bestow on the social Virtues, that one would expect to meet with this Principle every-where in moral Writers, as the chief Foundation of their Reasoning and Inquiry. In common Life, we may observe, that the Circumstance of Utility is always appeal'd to; nor is it suppos'd, that a greater Elogy can be given to any Man, than to display his Usefulness to the Public, and enumerate the Services he has perform'd to Mankind and Society. What Praise, even of an inanimate Form, if the Regularity and Elegance of its Parts destroy not its Fitness for any useful Purpose! And how satisfactory an Apology for any Disproportion of seeming Deformity, if we can show the Necessity of that particular Construction for the Use intended! A Ship appears infinitely more beautiful to an Artist, or one moderately

skill'd in Navigation; where its Prow is wide and swelling beyond its Poop, than if it were fram'd with a precise geometrical Regularity, in Contradiction to all the Laws of Mechanics. A Building, whose Doors and Windows were exact Squares, would hurt the Eye by that very Proportion; as ill adapted to the human Figure, for whose Service the Fabric was intended What Wonder then, that a Man, whose Habits and Conduct are hurtful to Society, and dangerous or pernicious to every one, that has an Intercourse with him, should, on that Account, be an Object of Disapprobation, and communicate to every Spectator the strongest Sentiments of Disgust and Hatred^[1]?

BUT perhaps the Difficulty of accounting for these Effects of Usefulness, or its contrary, has kept Philosophers from admitting them into their Systems of Ethics, and has induc'd them rather to employ any other Principle, in explaining the Origin of moral Good and Evil. But 'tis no just Reason for rejecting any Principle, confirm'd by Experience, that we can give no satisfactory Account of its Origin, nor are able to resolve it into other more general Principles. And if we would employ a little Thought on the present Subject, we need be at no Loss to account for the Influence of Utility, and to deduce it from Principles, the most known and avow'd in human Nature.

FROM the apparent Usefulness of the social Virtues, it has readily been inferr'd by Sceptics, both antient and modern, that all moral Distinctions arise from Education, and were, at first, invented, and afterwards encourag'd, by the Arts of Politicians, in order to render Men tractable, and subdue their natural Ferocity and Selfishness, which incapacitated them for Society. This Principle, indeed, of Precept and Education must be so far own'd to have a powerful Influence, that it may frequently encrease or diminish, beyond their natural Standard, the Sentiments of Approbation or Dislike; and may even, in particular Instances, create, without any natural Principle, a new Sentiment of this Kind; as is evident in all superstitious Practices and Observances: But that *all* moral Affection or Dislike arises from this Origin will never surely be allow'd by any judicious Enquirer. Had Nature made no such Distinction, founded on the original Frame and

Constitution of the Mind, the Words, *honourable* and *shameful*, *lovely* and *odious*, *noble* and *despicable*, never had had place in any Language; nor could Politicians, had they invented these Terms, ever have been able to render them intelligible, or make them convey any Idea to the Audience. So that nothing can be more superficial than this Paradox of the Sceptics; and 'twere well, if, in the abstruser Studies of Logics and Metaphysics, we could as easily get rid of the Cavils of that Sect, as in the more practical and intelligible Sciences of Politics and Morals.

THE social Virtues must, therefore, be allow'd to have a natural Beauty and Amiableness, which, at first, antecedent to all Precept or Education, recommends them to the Esteem of uninstructed Mankind, and engages their Affections. And as the Utility of these Virtues is the chief Circumstance, whence they derive their Merit, it follows, that the End, which they have a Tendency to promote, must be some way agreeable to us, and take hold of some natural Affection. It must please, either from Considerations of Self-interest, or from more generous Motives and Regards.

IT has often been asserted, that, as every Man has a strong Connexion with Society, and perceives the Impossibility of his solitary Subsistence, he becomes, on that Account, favourable to all those Habits or Principles, which promote Order in Society, and ensure to him the quiet Possession of so inestimable a Blessing. As much as we value our own Happiness and Welfare, as much must we value the Practice of Justice and Humanity, by which alone the social Confederacy can be maintain'd, and every Man reap the Fruits of mutual Protection and Assistance.

THIS Deduction of Morals from Self-love or a Regard to private Interest, is a very obvious Thought, and has not arisen altogether from the wanton Sallies and sportive Assaults of the Sceptics. To mention no others, *Polybius*, one of the gravest, and most judicious, as well as most moral Writers of Antiquity, has assign'd this selfish Origin to all our Sentiments of Virtue.^[2] But tho' the solid, practical Sense of that Author, and his Aversion to all vain Subtilties render his

Authority on the present Subject very considerable; yet this is not an Affair to be decided by Authority; and the Voice of Nature and Experience seems plainly to oppose the selfish Theory.

WE frequently bestow Praises on virtuous Actions, perform'd in very distant Ages and remote Countries; where the utmost Subtlety of Imagination would not discover any Appearance of Self-interest, or find any Connexion of our present Happiness and Security with Events so widely separated from us.

A generous, a brave, a noble Deed, perform'd by an Adversary, commands our Approbation; while in its Consequences it may be acknowledged prejudicial to our particular Interests.

WHERE private Advantage concurs with general Affection for Virtue, we readily perceive and avow the Mixture of these distinct Sentiments, which have a very different Feeling and Influence on the Mind. We praise, perhaps, with more Alacrity, where the generous, humane Action contributes to our particular Interest: But the Topics of Praise we insist on are very wide of this Circumstance. And we may attempt to bring over others to our Sentiments, without endeavouring to convince them, that they reap any Advantage from the Actions, which we recommend to their Approbation and Applause.

FRAME the Model of a praise-worthy Character, consisting of all the most amiable moral Virtues: Give Instances, in which these display themselves, after an eminent and extraordinary Manner: You readily engage the Esteem and Approbation of all your Audience, who never so much as enquir'd in what Age and Country the Person liv'd, who possess these noble Qualities: A Circumstance, however, of all others, the most material to Self-love, or a Concern for our own individual Happiness.

ONCE on a Time, a Statesman, in the Shock and Concurrence of Parties, prevail'd so far as to procure, by his Eloquence, the Banishment of an able Adversary; whom he secretly follow'd, offering him. Money for his Support during his Exile, and soothing

him with Topics of Consolation on his Misfortunes. *Alas!* cries the banish'd Statesman, *with what Regret must I leave my Friends in this City, where even Enemies are so generous!* Virtue, tho' in an Enemy, here pleas'd him: And we also give it the just Tribute of Praise and Approbation; nor do we retract these Sentiments, when we hear, that the Action past at *Athens*, about two thousand Years ago, and that the Persons Names were *Eschines* and *Demosthenes*.

WHAT is that to me? There are few Occasions, when this Question is not pertinent: And had it that universal, infallible Influence suppos'd, it would turn into Ridicule every Composition, and almost every Conversation, which contain any Praise or Censure of Men and Manners.

'Tis but a weak Subterfuge, when press'd by these Facts and Arguments, to say, that we transport ourselves, by the Force of Imagination, into distant Ages and Countries, and consider the Advantage, which we should have reapt from these Characters, had we been Contemporaries, and had any Commerce with the Persons. 'Tis not conceivable, how a *real* Sentiment or Passion can ever arise from a known *imaginary* Interest; especially when our *real* Interest is still kept in View, and is often acknowledg'd to be entirely distinct from the imaginary, and even sometimes opposite to it.

A Man, brought to the Brink of a Precipice, cannot look down without trembling; and the Sentiment of *imaginary* Danger actuates him, in Opposition to the Opinion and Belief of *real* Safety. But the Imagination is here assisted by the Presence of a striking Object; and yet prevails not, except it be also aided by Novelty, and the unusual Appearance of the Object. Custom soon reconciles us to Heights and Precipices, and wears off these false and delusive Terrors. The Reverse is observable in the Estimates we form of Characters and Manners; and the more we habituate ourselves to an accurate Scrutiny of the moral Species, the more delicate Feeling do we acquire of the most minute Distinctions betwixt Vice and Virtue. Such frequent Occasion, indeed, have we, in common Life, to pronounce all Kinds of moral Determinations, that no Object of this

Kind can be new or unusual to us; nor could any *false* Views or Prepossessions maintain their Ground against an Experience, so common and familiar. Experience and Custom being chiefly what form the Associations of Ideas, 'tis impossible, that any Association could establish and support itself, in direct Opposition to these Principles.

USEFULNESS is agreeable, and engages our Approbation. This is a Matter of Fact, confirm'd by daily Observation. But, *useful*? For what? For some Body's Interest, surely. Whose Interest then? Not our own only: For our Approbation frequently extends farther. It must, therefore, be the Interest of those, who are serv'd by the Character or Action approv'd of; and **these**^[errata 1] we may conclude, however remote, are not totally indifferent to us. By opening up this Principle, we shall discover the great Secret of moral Distinctions.

PART II.

Self-love is a Principle in human Nature of such extensive Energy, and the Interest of each Individual is, in general, so closely connected with **that of the Community**^[errata 2], that those Philosophers were excusable, who fancy'd, that all our Concern for the Public might, perhaps, be resolv'd into a Concern for our own Happiness and Preservation. They saw, every Moment, Instances of Approbation or Blame, Satisfaction or Displeasure towards Characters and Actions; they denominated the Objects of these Sentiments, *Virtues* or *Vices*; they observ'd, that the former had a Tendency to encrease the Happiness, and the latter the Misery of Society; they ask'd, if it was possible we could have any general Concern for Society, or any disinterested Resentment of the Welfare or Injury of others; they found it simpler to consider all these Sentiments as Modifications of Self-love; and they discover'd a Pretext, at least, for this Unity of Principle, in that close Union of Interest, which is so observable betwixt the Public and each Individual.

BUT notwithstanding this frequent Confusion of Interests, 'tis easy to attain what natural Philosophers, after my [Lord Bacon](#), have affected to call the *Experimentum crucis*, or that Experiment, which points out the Way we should follow, in any Doubt or Ambiguity. We have found Instances, wherein private Interest was separate from public; wherein it was even contrary: And yet we observ'd the moral Sentiment to continue, notwithstanding this Disjunction of Interests. And wherever these distinct Interests sensibly concur'd, we always found a sensible Encrease of the Sentiment, and a more warm Affection to Virtue, and Detestation of Vice, or what we properly call, *Gratitude* and *Revenge*. Compell'd by these Instances, we must renounce the Theory, which accounts for every moral Sentiment by the Principle of Self-love. We must adopt a more public Affection, and allow, that the Interests of Society are not, even on their own Account, altogether indifferent to us. Usefulness is only a Tendency to a certain End; and 'tis a Contradiction in Terms, that any Thing pleases as Means to an End, where the End itself does no way affect us. If therefore Usefulness be a Source of moral Sentiment, and if this Usefulness be not always consider'd with a Reference to Self; it follows, that every Thing, which contributes to the Happiness of Society, recommends itself directly to our Approbation and Good-will. Here is a Principle, which accounts, in great Part, for the Origin of Morality: And what need we seek for abstruse and remote Systems, when there occurs one so obvious and natural^[3]?

HAVE we any Difficulty to comprehend the Force of Humanity and Benevolence? Or to conceive, that the very Aspect of Happiness, Joy, Prosperity, gives Pleasure; that of Pain, Sufferance, Sorrow, communicates Uneasiness? The human Countenance, says *Horace*^[4], borrows Smiles or Tears from the human Countenance. Reduce a Person to Solitude, and he loses all Enjoyment, except merely of the speculative Kind; and that because the Movements of his Heart are not forwarded by correspondent Movements in his Fellow-creatures. The Signs of Sorrow and Mourning, tho' arbitrary, affect us with Melancholy; but the natural Symptoms, Tears, and Cries, and Groans, never fail to infuse Compassion and Uneasiness.

And if the Effects of Misery touch us in so lively a Manner; can we be suppos'd altogether insensible or indifferent towards its Causes; when a malicious or treacherous Character and Behaviour is presented to us?

WE enter, I shall suppose, into a convenient, warm, well-contriv'd Apartment: We necessarily receive a Pleasure from its very Survey; because it presents us with the pleasing Ideas of Ease, Satisfaction, and Enjoyment. The hospitable, good-humour'd, humane Landlord appears. This Circumstance^[errata 3] surely must embellish the whole; nor can we easily forbear reflecting, with Pleasure, on the Satisfaction and Enjoyment, which results to every one from his Intercourse and Good-offices.

HIS whole Family, by the Freedom, Ease, Confidence, and calm Satisfaction, diffus'd over their Countenances, sufficiently express their Happiness. I have a pleasing Sympathy in the Prospect of so much Joy, and can never consider the Source of it, without the most agreeable Emotions.

HE tells me, that an oppressive and powerful Neighbour had attempted to dispossess him of his Inheritance, and had long disturb'd all his innocent and social Enjoyments. I feel an immediate Indignation arise in me against such Violence and Injury.

BUT 'tis no Wonder, he adds, that a private Wrong should proceed from a Man, who had enslav'd Provinces, depopulated Cities, and made the Field and Scaffold stream with human Blood. I am struck with Horror at the Prospect of so much Misery and am actuated by the strongest Antipathy against its Author.

IN general, 'tis certain, that wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or converse about; every Thing still presents us with the View of human Happiness or Misery, and excites in our Breasts a sympathetic Movement of Pleasure or Uneasiness. In our serious Occupations, in our careless Amusements, this Principle still exerts its active Energy.

A MAN, who enters the Theatre, is immediately struck with the View of so great a Multitude, participating of one common Amusement; and experiences, from their very Aspect, a superior Sensibility or Disposition of being affected with every Sentiment, which he shares with his Fellow-creatures.

HE observes the Actors to be animated by the Appearance of a full Audience; and rais'd to a Degree of Enthusiasm, which they cannot command in any solitary or calm Moment.

EVERY Movement of the Theatre, by a skillful Poet, is communicated, as it were by Magic, to the Spectators, who weep, tremble, resent, rejoice, and are inflam'd with all the Variety of Passions, which actuate the several Personages of the Drama.

WHERE any Event crosses our Wishes, and interrupts the Happiness of the favourite Personages, we feel a sensible Anxiety and Concern. But where their Sufferings proceed from the Treachery, Cruelty or Tyranny of an Enemy, our Breasts are affected with the liveliest Resentment against the Author of these Calamities.

'TIS here esteem'd contrary to the Rules of Art to represent any Thing cool and indifferent. A distant Friend, or a Confident, who has no immediate Interest in the Catastrophe, ought, if possible, to be avoided by the Poet; as communicating a like Indifference to the Audience, and checking the Progress of the Passions.

No Species of Poetry is more entertaining than Pastoral; and every one is sensible, that the chief Source of its Pleasure arises from those Images of a gentle and tender Tranquillity, which it represents in its Personages, and of which it communicates a like Sentiment to the Readers. Sannazarius, who transfer'd the Scene to the Sea-shore, tho' he presented the most magnificent Object in Nature, is confest to have err'd in his Choice. The Idea of Toil, Labour, and Danger, suffer'd by the Fishermen, is painful, by an unavoidable Sympathy, which attends every Conception of human Happiness or Misery.

WHEN I was twenty, says a *French* Poet, [Ovid](#) was my Choice: Now I am forty, I declare for *Horace*. We enter, to be sure, more readily into Sentiments, that resemble those we feel every Moment: But no Passion, when well represented, can be altogether indifferent to us; because there is none, of which every Man has not within him, at least, the Seeds and first Principles. 'Tis the Business of Poetry to approach every Object by lively Imagery and Description, and make it look like Truth and Reality: A certain Proof, that wherever that Reality is found, our Minds are dispos'd to be strongly affected by it.

ANY recent Event or Piece of News, by which the Fortunes of States, Provinces or many Individuals, are affected, is extremely interesting even to those whose Welfare is not immediately engag'd. Such Intelligence is propagated with Celerity, heard with Avidity, and enquir'd into with Attention and Concern. The Interests of Society appear, on this Occasion, to be, in some Degree, the Interests of each Individual. The Imagination is sure to be affected; tho' the Passions excited may not always be so strong and steady as to have great Influence on the Conduct and Behaviour.

THE Perusal of a History seems a calm Entertainment; but would be no Entertainment at all, did not our Hearts beat with correspondent Movements to those described by the Historian.

[Thucydides](#) and [Guicciardin](#) support with Difficulty our Attention, while the former describes the trivial Rencounters of the small Cities of *Greece*, and the latter the harmless Wars of *Pisa*. The few Persons interested, and the small Interest fill not the Imagination, and engage not the Affections. The deep Distress of the numerous *Athenian* Army before *Syracuse*; the Danger, which so nearly threaten'd [\[errata 4\]](#) *Venice*; these excite Compassion; these move Terror and Anxiety.

THE indifferent, uninteresting Stile of [Suetonius](#), equally with the masterly Pencil of [Tacitus](#), may convince us of the cruel Depravity of *Nero* or *Tiberius*: But what a Difference of Sentiment! While the former coldly relates the Facts; and the latter sets before our Eyes the venerable Figures of a *Soranus* and a *Thræsea*, intrepid in their

Fate, and only mov'd by the melting Sorrows of their Friends and Kindred. What Sympathy then touches every human Heart! What Indignation against the inhuman Tyrant, whose causeless Fear or unprovok'd Malice, gave rise to such detestable Barbarity!

IF we bring these Subjects nearer: If we remove all Suspicion of Fiction and Deceit: What powerful Concern is excited, and how much superior, in many Instances, to the narrow Attachments of Self-love and private Interest! Popular Sedition, Party Zeal, a devoted Obedience to factious Leaders; these are some of the most visible, tho' less laudable Effects of this social Sympathy in human Nature.

THE Frivolousness of the Subject too, we may observe, is not able to detach us entirely from what carries an Image of human Sentiment and Affection.

WHEN a Person stutters, and pronounces with Difficulty, we even sympathize with this trivial Uneasiness, and suffer for him. And 'tis a Rule in Criticism, that every Combination of Syllables or Letters, which gives Pain to the Organs of Speech in the Recital, appears also, from a Species of Sympathy, harsh and disagreeable to the Ear. Nay, when we run over a Book with our Eye, we are sensible of such unharmonious Composition; because we still imagine, that a Person recites it to us, and suffers from the Pronunciation of these jarring Sounds. So delicate is our Sympathy!

EASY and unconstrain'd Postures and Motions are always beautiful: An Air of Health and Vigour is agreeable: Cloaths, that warm, without burthening the Body; that cover, without imprisoning the Limbs, are well-fashion'd. In every Judgment of Beauty, the Sentiments are Feelings of the Persons affected enter into Consideration, and communicate to the Spectators similar Touches of Pain or Pleasure^[5]. What Wonder, then, if we can pronounce no Sentence concerning the Characters and Conduct of Men without considering the Tendencies of their Actions, and the Happiness or Misery, which thence arises to Society? What Association of Ideas would ever operate, were that Principle here totally inactive^[6]?

IF any Man, from a cold Insensibility, or narrow Selfishness of Temper, is unaffected with the Images of human Happiness or Misery, he must be equally indifferent to the Images of Vice and Virtue: As on the other Hand, 'tis always found, that a warm Concern for the Interests of our Species is attended with a delicate Feeling of all moral Distinctions; a strong Resentment of Injury done to Men; a lively Approbation of their Welfare. In this Particular, tho' great Superiority is observable of one Man above another; yet none are so entirely indifferent to the Interest of their Fellow-creatures, as to perceive no Distinctions of moral Good and Evil, in consequence of the different Tendencies of Actions and Principles. How, indeed, can we suppose it possible of any one, who wears a human Heart, that, if there be subjected to his Censure, one Character or System of Conduct, which is beneficial, and another, which is pernicious, to his Species or Community, he will not so much as give a cool Preference to the former, or ascribe to it the smallest Merit or Regard? Let us suppose such a Person ever so selfish; let private Interest have ingrostrd ever so much his Attention; yet in Instances, where that is not concern'd, he must unavoidably feel some Propensity to the Good of Mankind, and make it an Object of Choice, if every Thing else be equal. Would any Man, that is walking [along](#) [\[errata 5\]](#), tread just as willingly on another's gouty Toes, whom he has no Quarrel with, as on the hard Flint and Pavement? There is here surely a Difference in the Case. We surely take into Consideration the Happiness and Misery of others, in weighing the several Motives of Action, and incline to the former, where no private Regards draw us to seek our own Promotion or Advantage by the Injury of our Fellow-Creatures. And if the Principles of Humanity are capable, in many Instances, of influencing our Actions, they must, at all Times, have *some* Authority over our Sentiments, and give us a general Approbation of what is useful to Society, and Blame of what is dangerous or pernicious. The Degrees of these Sentiments may be the Subject of Controversy, but the Reality of their Existence, one should think, must be admitted, in every Theory or System.

A CREATURE, absolutely malicious and spiteful, were there any such in Nature, must be worse than indifferent to the Images of Vice and Virtue. All his Sentiments must be inverted, and directly opposite to those, which prevail in the human Species. Whatever contributes to the Good of Mankind, as it crosses the constant Bent of his Wishes and Desires, must produce Uneasiness and Disapprobation; and on the contrary, whatever is the Source of Disorder order and Misery in Society, must, for the same Reason, be regarded with Pleasure and Complacency. Timon, who probably from his affected Spleen, more than any inveterate Malice, was denominated the Man-hater, embrac'd *Alcibiades*, 'tis said, with great Fondness. *Go on, my Boy!* cries he, *Acquire the Confidence of the People: You will one Day, I foresee, be the Cause of great Calamities to them*^[7]. Could we admit the two Principles of the *Manichæans*, 'tis an infallible Consequence, that their Sentiments of human Actions, as well as of every Thing else, must be totally opposite; and that every Instance of Justice and Humanity, from its necessary Tendency, must please the one Deity, and displease the other. All Mankind so far resemble the good Principle, that where Interest or Revenge or Envy perverts not our Disposition, we are always inclin'd, from our natural Philanthropy, to give the Preference to the Happiness of Society, and consequently to Virtue, above its opposite. Absolute, unprovok'd, disinterested Malice has never, perhaps, Place in any human Breast; or if it had, must there pervert all the Sentiments of Morals, as well as the Feelings of Humanity. If the Cruelty of *Nero* be allow'd altogether voluntary, and not rather the Effect of constant Fear and Resentment; 'tis evident, that *Tigellinus*, preferably to [Seneca](#) or [Burrhus](#), must have possess'd his steady and uniform Approbation.

A STATESMAN or Patriot, that serves our own Country, in our own Time, has always a more passionate Regard paid him, than one whose beneficial Influence operated on distant Ages or remote Nations; where the Good, resulting from his generous Humanity, being less connected with us, seems more obscure, and affects us with a less lively Sympathy. We may own the Merit to be equally great, tho' our Sentiments are not rais'd to an equal Height, in both

Cases. The Judgment here corrects the Inequalities of our internal Emotions and Perceptions; in like Manner, as it preserves us from Error, in the several Variations of Images, presented to our external Senses. The same Object, at a double Distance, really throws on the Eye a Picture of but half the Bulk; and yet we imagine it appears of the same Size in both Situations; because we know, that, on our Approach to it, its Image would expand on the Senses, and that the Difference consists not in the Object itself, but in our Position with regard to it. And, indeed, without such Correction of Appearances, both in internal and external Sentiment, Men could never think or talk steadily on any Subject; while their fluctuating Situations produce a continual Variation on Objects, and throw them into such different and contrary Lights and Positions^[8].

THE more we converse with Mankind, and the greater social Entercourse we maintain, the more shall^[errata 6] we be familiariz'd to these general Preferences and Distinctions, without which our Conversation and Discourse could scarcely be render'd intelligible to each other. Every Man's Interest is peculiar to himself, and the Aversions and Desires, which result from it, cannot be suppos'd to affect others in a like Degree. General Language, therefore, being form'd for general Use, must be moulded on some more general Views, and must affix the Epithets of Praise or Blame, in Conformity to Sentiments, which arise from the general Interests of the Community. And if these Sentiments, in most Men, be not so strong as those, which have a Reference to private Good; yet still they must make some Distinction, even in Persons the most deprav'd and selfish; and must attach the Notion of Good to a beneficent Conduct, and of Evil to the contrary. Sympathy, we shall allow, is much fainter than our Concern for Ourselves, and Sympathy with Persons, remote from us, much fainter than that with Persons, near and contiguous; but for this very Reason, 'tis necessary for us, in our calm Judgments and Discourse concerning the Characters of Men, to neglect all these Differences, and render our Sentiments more public and social. Besides, that we Ourselves often change our Situation in this Particular, we every Day meet with Persons, who are in a different

Situation from us, and who could never converse with us on any reasonable Terms, were we to remain constantly in that Position and Point of View, which is peculiar to Ourselves. The Entercourse of Sentiments, therefore, in Society and Conversation makes us form some general, inalterable Standard, by which we may approve or disapprove of Characters and Manners. And tho' the Heart takes not part entirely with those general Notions, nor regulates all its Love and Hatred, by the universal, abstract Differences of Vice and Virtue, without regard to Self or the Persons, with whom we are more immediately connected; yet have these moral Differences a considerable Influence, and being sufficient, at least, for Discourse, serve all our Purposes in Company, in the Pulpit, on the Theatre, and in the Schools^[9].

THUS, in whatever Light we take this Subject, the Merit, ascrib'd to the social Virtues, appears still uniform, and arises chiefly from that Regard, which the natural Sentiment of Benevolence engages us to pay to the Interests of Mankind and Society. If we consider the Principles of the human Make; such as they appear to daily Experience and Observation we must, *a priori*, conclude it impossible for such a Creature as Man to be totally indifferent to the Well or Ill-being of his Fellow-creatures, and not readily, of himself, to pronounce, where nothing gives him any particular Bias, that what promotes their Happiness is good, what tends to their Misery is evil, without any farther Regard or Consideration. Here then are the faint Rudiments, at least, or Outlines, of a *general* Distinction betwixt Actions; and in Proportion as the Humanity of the Person is suppos'd to encrease, his Connexion to those injur'd or benefited, and his lively Conception of their Misery or Happiness; his consequent Censure or Approbation acquires proportionable Force and Vigour. There is no Necessity, that a generous Action, barely mention'd in an old History or remote Gazette, should communicate any strong Feelings of Applause and Admiration. Virtue, plac'd at such a Distance, is like a fixt Star, which, tho', to the Eye of Reason, it may appear as luminous as the Sun in his Meridian, is so infinitely remov'd, as to affect the Senses, neither with Light nor Heat. Bring

this Virtue nearer, by our Acquaintance or Connexion with the Persons, or even by an eloquent Narration and Recital of the Case; our Hearts are immediately caught, our Sympathy enliven'd, and our cool Approbation converted into the warmest Sentiments of Friendship and Regard. These seem necessary and infallible Consequences of the general Principles of human Nature, as discover'd in common Life and Practice.

AGAIN; reverse these Views and Reasonings: Consider the Matter *a posteriori*; and weighing the Consequences, enquire, if the Merit of all social Virtue is not deriv'd from the Feelings of Humanity, with which it affects the Spectators. It appears to be Matter of Fact, that the Circumstance of *Utility*, in all Subjects, is a Source of Praise and Approbation: That it is constantly appeal'd to in all moral Decisions concerning the Merit and Demerit of Actions: That it is the *sole* Source of that high Regard paid to Justice, Fidelity, Honour, Allegiance and Chastity: That it is inseperable from all the other social Virtues of Humanity, Generosity, Charity, Affability, Lenity, Mercy and Moderation: And in a Word, that it is the Foundation of the chief Part of Morals, which has a Reference to Mankind and Society.

It appears also, in our general Approbation or Judgment of Characters and Manners, that the useful Tendency of the social Virtues moves us not by any Regards to Self-interest, but has an Influence much more universal and extensive. It appears, that a Tendency to public Good, and to the promoting of Peace, Harmony, and Concord in Society, by affecting the benevolent Principles of our Frame, engages us on the Side of the social Virtues. And it appears, as an additional Confirmation, that these Principles of Humanity and Sympathy enter so deep into all our Sentiments, and have so powerful an Influence, as may enable them to excite the strongest Censure and Applause. The present Theory is the simple Result of all these Inferences, each of which seems founded on uniform Experience and Observation.

WERE it doubtful, whether there was any such Principle in our Nature as Humanity or a Concern for others, yet when we see, in numberless Instances, that, whatever has a Tendency to promote the Interests of Society, is so highly approv'd of, we ought thence to learn the Force of the benevolent Principle; since 'tis impossible for any Thing to please as Means to an End, where the End itself is totally indifferent: On the other Hand, were it doubtful, whether there was, implanted in our Natures, any general Principle of moral Blame and Approbation, yet when we see, in numberless Instances, the Influence of Humanity, we ought thence to conclude, that 'tis impossible, but that every Thing, which promotes the Interests of Society, must communicate Pleasure, and what is pernicious give Uneasiness. But when these different Reflections and Observations concur in establishing the same Conclusion, must they not bestow an undisputed Evidence upon it?

'TIS however hop'd, that the Progress of this Argument will bring a farther Confirmation of the present Theory, by showing the Rise of other Sentiments of Esteem and Regard from the same or like Principles.

1. [!\[\]\(f9c2f0279f1ed67440afe88c128db2d8_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(53488aa40711d079aa3cc3de2f45edd9_img.jpg\)](#) We ought not to imagine, because an inanimate Object may be useful as well as a Man, that therefore it ought also, according to this System, to merit the Appellation of *virtuous*. The Sentiments, excited by Utility, are, in the two Cases, very different; and the one is mixt with Affection, Esteem, Approbation, &c, and not the other. In like Manner, an inanimate Object may have good Colour and Proportions as well as a human Figure. But can we ever be in Love with the former? There are a numerous Set of Passions and Sentiments, of which thinking rational Beings are, by the original Constitution of Nature, the only proper Objects: And tho' the very same Qualities be transferr'd to an insensible, inanimate Being, they will not excite the same Sentiments. The beneficial Qualities of

Herbs and Minerals are, indeed, sometimes call'd their *Virtues*; but this is an Effect of the Caprice of Language, which ought not to be regarded in Reasoning. For tho' there be a Species of Approbation, attending even inanimate Objects, when beneficial, yet this Sentiment is so weak, and so different from what is directed to beneficent Magistrates or Statesmen, that they ought not to be rank'd under the same Class or Appellation.

A very small Variation of the Object, even where the same Qualities are preserv'd, will destroy a Sentiment. Thus; the same Beauty, transferr'd to a different Sex, excites no amorous Passion, where Nature is not extremely perverted.

2. [↑](#) Undutifulness to Parents, is disapprov'd of by Mankind, προορωμενους το ελλον, και συλλογιζομενους οτι το παραπλησιον εκαστοις αυτων συγκυρησει. Ingratitude for a like reason (tho' he seems there to mix a more generous Regard) συναγανακτουντας μεν τω πελας, αναφεροντας δ' επ' αυτους το παραπλησιον εξ ων υπογιγνεται τις εννοια παρεκαστω του καθηκοντος δυναμεως και θεωριας. Lib. 6. cap. 4. Perhaps the Historian only meant, that our Sympathy and Humanity was more enlivened, by our considering the Similarity of our case with that of the Person suffering; which is a just Sentiment.
3. [↑](#) 'Tis needless to push our Researches so far as to ask, why we have Humanity or a Fellow-feeling with others. 'Tis sufficient, that this is experienc'd to be a Principle in human Nature. We must stop somewhere in our Examination of Causes; and there are, in every Science, some general Principles, beyond which we cannot hope to find any Principle more general. No Man is absolutely indifferent to the Happiness and Misery of others. The first has a natural Tendency to give Pleasure; the second, Pain. This every one may find in himself. It is not probable, that these Principles can be resolv'd into Principles more simple and universal, whatever Attempts may have been made to that Purpose. But if it were possible, it belongs not to the present Subject; and we may here safely consider these Principles as

original: Happy, if we can render all the Consequences sufficiently plain and perspicuous.

4. [↑](#)
Uti ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflentHOR. Humani vultus.
5. [↑](#) *Decentior equus cujus astricta sunt ilia; sed idem velocior. Pulcher aspectu sit athleta, cujus lacertos excitatio expressit; idem certamini paratior. Nunquam enim species ab utilitate dividitur. Sed hoc quidem discernere modici judicii est."*
[Quintilian](#), Inst. lib. 8. cap. 3.
6. [↑](#) In proportion to the Station which a Man possesses, according to the Relations in which he is plac'd; we always expect from him a greater or less Degree of Good, and when disappointed, blame his Inutility; and much more, do we blame him, if any Ill or Prejudice arise from his Conduct and Behaviour. When the Interests of one Country interfere with those of another, we estimate the Merits of a Statesman by the Good or Ill, which results to his own Country from his Measures and Councils, without Regard to the Prejudice which he brings on its Enemies and Rivals. His Fellow-citizens are the Objects, which lie nearest the Eye, while we determine his Character. And as Nature has implanted in every one a superior Affection to his own Country, we never expect any Regard to distant Nations, where the smallest Competition arises. Not to mention, that while every Man consults the Good of his own Community, we are sensible, that the general Interest of Mankind is better promoted, than any loose indeterminate Views to the Good of a Species, whence no beneficial Action could ever result, for want of a duly limited Object, on which they could exert themselves.
7. [↑](#) [Plutarch](#) in vita Alc.
8. [↑](#) For a like Reason, the Tendencies of Actions and Characters, not their real accidental Consequences, are alone regarded in our moral Determinations or general Judgments; tho' in our real Feeling or Sentiment, we cannot help paying greater Regard to one whose Station, join'd to Virtue, renders him really useful to Society, then to one, who exerts the social Virtues only in good

Intentions and benevolent Affections. Separating the Character from the Fortune, by an easy and necessary Effort of Thought, we pronounce these Persons alike, and give them the same general Praise. The Judgment corrects or endeavours to correct the Appearance: But is not able entirely to prevail over Sentiment.

Why is this Peach-tree said to be better than that other; but because it produces more or better Fruit? And would not the same Praise be given it, tho' Snails or Vermin had destroy'd the Fruit, before it came to full Maturity? In Morals too, is not *the Tree known by the Fruit*? And cannot we easily distinguish betwixt Nature and Accident, in the one Case as well as in the other?

9. [↑](#) 'Tis wisely ordained by Nature, that private Connexions should commonly prevail over universal Views and Considerations; otherwise our Affections and Actions would be dissipated and lost, for Want of a proper limited Object. Thus a small Benefit done to Ourselves, or our near Friends, excites more lively Sentiments of Love and Approbation than a great Benefit done to a distant Common-wealth: But still we know here, as in all the Senses, to correct these Inequalities by Reflection, and retain a general Standard of Vice and Virtue, founded chiefly on a general Usefulness.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no

corresponding <references group="errata"/> tag was found

SECTION VI

OF QUALITIES USEFUL TO OURSELVES

PART I

Nothing is more usual, than for Philosophers to encroach upon the Province of Grammarians; and to engage in Disputes of Words, while they imagine, that they are handling Controversies of the deepest Importance and Concern. Thus, were we here to assert or to deny, *that all laudable Qualities of the Mind were to be consider'd as Virtues or moral Attributes*, many would imagine, that we had enter'd upon one of the profoundest Speculations of Ethics; tho' 'tis probable, all the while, that the greatest Part of the Dispute would be found entirely verbal. To avoid, therefore, all frivolous Subtilties and Altercations, as much as possible, we shall content Ourselves with observing, *first*, that, in common Life, the Sentiments of Censure or Approbation, produc'd by mental Qualities of every Kind, are very similar; and *secondly*, that all antient Moralists, (the best

Models) in treating of them, make little or no Difference amongst them.

FIRST. It seems certain, that the *Sentiment* of conscious Worth, the Self-satisfaction, proceeding from a Review of a Man's own Conduct and Character; it seems certain, I say, that this Sentiment, which, tho' the most common of all others, has no proper Name in our Language^[1] arises from the Endowments of Courage and Capacity, Industry and Ingenuity, as well as from any other mental Excellencies. Who, on the other Hand, is not deeply mortify'd with reflecting on his own Folly or Dissoluteness, and feels not a secret Sting or Compunction, whenever his Memory presents any past Occurrence, where he behav'd with Stupidity or Ill-manners? No Time can efface the cruel Ideas of a Man's own Ill-conduct, or of Affronts, which Cowardice or Impudence have brought upon him. They still haunt his solitary Hours, damp his most aspiring Thoughts, and show him, even to himself, in the most contemptible and most odious Colours imaginable.

WHAT is there too we are more anxious to conceal from others than such Blunders, Infirmities, and Meannesses, or more dread to have expos'd by Raillery and Satyre? And is not the chief Object of Vanity, our Bravery or Learning, our Wit or Breeding, our Eloquence or Address, our Taste or Ability? These we display with Care, if not with Ostentation; and commonly show more Ambition of excelling in them, than even in the social Virtues themselves, which are, in Reality, of such superior Excellence. Good-nature and Honesty, especially the latter, are so indispensibly requir'd, that, tho' the greatest Censure attends any Violation of these Duties, no eminent Praise follows such common Instances of them, as seem essential to the Support of human Society. And hence the Reason, in my Opinion, why, tho' Men often praise so liberally the Qualities of their Heart, they are shy of commending the Endowments of their Head; because the latter Virtues, being suppos'd more rare and extraordinary, are observ'd to be the more usual Objects of Pride and Self-conceit; and when boasted of, beget a strong Suspicion of these Sentiments.

'Tis hard to tell, whether you hurt a Man's Character most by calling him a Knave or a Coward, and whether a beastly Glutton or Drunkard be not as odious and contemptible as a selfish, ungenerous Miser. Give me my Choice; and I would rather, for my own Happiness and Self-enjoyment, have a friendly, humane Heart than possess all the other Virtues of [Demosthenes](#) and *Philip* united: But I would rather pass with the World for one endow'd with extensive Genius and intrepid Courage, and should thence expect stronger Instances of general Applause and Admiration. The Figure a Man makes in Life, the Reception he meets with in Company, the Esteem paid him by his Acquaintance; all these Advantages depend as much upon his good Sense and Judgment as upon any other Part of his Character. Had a Man the best Intentions in the World, and were the farthest remov'd from all Injustice and Violence, he would never be able to make himself be much regarded, without a moderate Share, at least, of Parts and Understanding.

WHAT is it then we can here dispute about? If Sense and Courage, Temperance and Industry, Wit and Knowledge confessedly form a considerable Part of *personal Merit*; if a Man possess of them is both better satisfy'd with himself, and better entitled to the Good-will, Esteem, and Services of others, than one entirely devoid of them; if, in short, the *Sentiments* be similar, that arise from these Endowments and from the social Virtues; is there any Reason for being so extremely scrupulous about a *Word*, or doubting whether they are entitled to the Denomination of Virtue^[2]? It may, indeed, be pretended, that the Sentiment of Approbation, which those Accomplishments produce, besides its being *inferior*, is also somewhat *different* from that, which attends the Virtues of Justice and Humanity. But this seems not a sufficient Reason for ranking them entirely under different Classes and Appellations. The Character of *Cæsar* and that of *Cato*, as drawn by *Salust*, are both of them virtuous, in the strictest Sense of the Word; but in a different Way: Nor are the Sentiments entirely the same, which arise from them. The one produces Love; the other, Esteem: The one is amiable; the other awful: We could wish to meet the one Character

in a Friend; the other we should be ambitious of in Ourselves. In like Manner the Approbation, which attends natural Abilities or Temperance or Industry, may be somewhat different from that which is paid to the social Virtues, without making them entirely of a different Species. And indeed, we may observe, that the natural Abilities, no more than the other Virtues, produce not, all of them, the same Kind of Approbation. Good Sense and Genius beget Esteem and Regard: Wit and Humour excite Love and Affection^[3].

MOST People, I believe, will naturally, without Premeditation, assent to the Definition of the elegant and judicious Poet.

Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a Fool) Is Sense and Spirit, with Humanity^[4].

WHAT Pretensions has a Man to our generous Assistance or Good-offices, who has dissipated his Wealth in profuse Expences, idle Vanities, chimerical Projects, dissolute Pleasures, or extravagant Gaming? These Vices (for we scruple not to call them such) bring Misery unpity'd, and Contempt on every one addicted to them.

ACHÆUS, a wise and prudent Prince, fell into a fatal Snare, which cost him his Crown and Life, after having us'd every reasonable Precaution to guard himself against it. On that Account, says the Historian, he is a just Object of Regard and Compassion: His Betrayers alone of Hatred and Contempt^[5].

THE precipitate Flight and improvident Negligence of *Pompey*, at the Beginning of the civil Wars, appear'd such notorious Blunders to Cicero, as quite pall'd his Friendship towards that great Man. *In the same Manner, says he, as Want of Cleanliness, Decency, or Discretion in a Mistress are found to alienate our Affections.* For so he expresses himself, where he talks, not in the Character of a Philosopher, but in that of a Statesman and Man of the World, to his Friend *Atticus*^[6].

BUT *secondly*, the same *Cicero*, in Imitation of all the antient Moralists, when he reasons as a Philosopher, enlarges very much his Ideas of Virtue, and comprehends every laudable Quality or

Endowment of the Mind, under that honourable Appellation. The *Prudence*, explain'd in his *Offices*^[7], is that Sagacity, which leads to the Discovery of Truth, and preserves us from Error and Mistake. *Magnanimity, Temperance, Decency* are there also at large discours'd of. And as that eloquent Moralist follow'd the common receiv'd Division of the four cardinal Virtues, our social Duties form but one Head, in the general Distribution of his Subject.

WE need only peruse the Titles of Chapters in *Aristotle's Ethics* to be convinc'd, that he ranks Courage, Temperance, Magnificence, Magnanimity, Modesty, Prudence, and a manly Freedom amongst the Virtues, as well as Justice and Friendship.

To *sustain* and to *abstain*, that is, to be patient and continent, appear'd to some of the Antients, a summary Comprehension of all Morals.

[EPICTETUS](#) has scarce ever mentioned the Sentiment of Humanity and Compassion, but in order to put his Disciples on their Guard against it. The Virtue of the *Stoics* seems to consist chiefly in a firm Temper and a sound Understanding. With them, as with *Solomon* and the Eastern Moralists, Folly and Wisdom are equivalent to Vice and Virtue.

[MEN will praise thee](#), says *David*^[8], when thou dost well unto thyself. I hate a wise Man, says the *Greek Poet*, who is not wise to himself^[9].

[PLUTARCH](#) is no more cramp'd by Systems in his Philosophy than in his History. Where he compares the great Men of *Greece* and *Rome*, he fairly sets in Opposition all their Blemishes and Accomplishments of whatever Kind, and omits nothing considerable, that can either depress or exalt their Characters. His moral Discourses contain the same free and natural Censure of Men and Manners.

THE Character of *Hannibal*, as drawn by [Livy](#)^[10], is esteem'd partial, but allows him many eminent Virtues. Never was there a Genius, says the Historian, more equally sitted for those opposite Offices of Command and Obedience; and 'twere, therefore, difficult

to determine whether he render'd himself *dearer* to the General or to the Army: To none, would *Hasdrubal* entrust more willingly the Conduct of any dangerous Enterprize; under none, did the Soldiers discover more Courage and Confidence. Great Boldness in affronting Danger; great Prudence in the Midst of it. No Labour could fatigue his Body or subdue his Mind. Cold and Heat were indifferent to him: Meat and Drink he sought as Supplies to the Necessities of Nature, not as Gratifications of his voluptuous Appetites: Waking or Rest he us'd indiscriminately, by Night or by Day—These great VIRTUES were ballanc'd by great VICES: Inhuman Cruelty; Perfidy more than *Punic*; no Truth, no Faith, no Regard to Oaths, Promises or Religion.

THE Character of *Alexander* the Sixth, to be found in *Guicciardin*^[11], is pretty similar, but juster; and is a Proof, that even the Moderns, where they speak naturally, hold the same Language with the Antients. In this Pope, says he, there was a singular Capacity and Judgment: Admirable Prudence; a wonderful Talent of Persuasion; and in all momentuous Enterprizes, a Diligence and Dexterity incredible But these *Virtues* were infinitely overballanc'd by his *Vices*; no Faith, no Religion, insatiable Avarice, exorbitant Ambition, and a more than barbarous Cruelty.

POLYBIUS^[12], reprehending *Timæus* for his Partiality against *Agathocles*, whom he himself allows to be the most cruel and impious of all Tyrants, says: If he took Refuge in *Syracuse*, as asserted by that Historian, flying the Dirt and Smoke and Toil of his former Profession of a Potter; and if, proceeding from such slender Beginnings, he became Master, in a little Time, of all *Sicily*; brought the *Carthaginian* State into the utmost Danger; and at last dy'd in Old-age, and in Possession of kingly Dignity: Must he not be allow'd something prodigious and extraordinary, and to have possest great Talents and Capacity for Business and Action? His Historian, therefore, ought not to have alone related what tended to his Reproach and Infamy; but also what might redound to his PRAISE and HONOUR.

IN general, we may observe, that the Distinction of voluntary or involuntary was little regarded by the Antients in their moral Reasonings; where they frequently treated the Question as very doubtful, *whether Virtue could be taught or not*^[13]? They justly consider'd, that Cowardice, Meanness, Levity, Anxiety, Impatience, Folly, and many other Qualities of the Mind, might appear ridiculous, and deform'd, contemptible and odious, tho' independant of the Will. Nor could it be suppos'd, at all Times, in every Man's Power to attain every Kind of mental, more than exterior Beauty.

BUT modern Philosophers, treating all Morals, as on a like Footing with civil Laws, guarded by the Sanctions of Reward and Punishment, were necessarily led to render this Circumstance, of *voluntary* or *involuntary*, the Foundation of their whole Theory. Every one may employ *Terms* in what Sense he pleases: But this, in the mean Time, must be allow'd, that *Sentiments* are every Day experienc'd of Blame and Praise, which have Objects beyond the Dominion of the Will or Choice, and of which it behoves us, if not as Moralists, as speculative Philosophers at least, to give some satisfactory Theory and Explication.

A BLEMISH, a Fault, a Vice, a Crime; these Expressions seem to denote different Degrees of Censure and Disapprobation; which are, however, all of them, at the Bottom, pretty nearly of the same Kind or Species^[errata 1]. The Explication of one will lead us easily into a just Conception of the others.

PART II.

It seems evident, that where a Quality or Habit is subjected to our Examination, if it appear, in any respect, prejudicial to the Person, possess of it, or such as incapacitates him for Business and Action, it is instantly blam'd, and rank'd amongst his Faults and Imperfections. Indolence, Negligence, Want of Order and Method, Obstinacy, Fickleness, Rashness, Credulity; no one ever esteem'd these Qualities, indifferent to a Character; much less, extoll'd them as

Accomplishments or Virtues. The Prejudice, resulting from them, immediately strikes our Eye, and gives us the Sentiment of Pain and Disapprobation.

No Quality, 'tis allow'd, is absolutely either blameable or praiseworthy. 'Tis all according to its Degrees. A due Medium, say the *Peripatetics*, is the Characteristic of Virtue. But this Medium is chiefly determin'd by Utility. A proper Celerity, for Instance, and Dispatch in Business is commendable. When defective, no Progress is ever made in the Execution of any Purpose: When excessive, it engages us in precipitate, and ill-concerted Measures and Enterprizes. By such Reasonings as these we fix the proper and commendable Mediocrity in all moral and prudential Disquisitions; and never lose View of the Advantages, which result from any Character or Habit.

Now as these Advantages are enjoy'd by the Person, possess'd of the Character, it can never be *Self-love*, which renders the Prospect of them agreeable to us, the Spectators, and prompts our Esteem and Approbation. No Force of Imagination can convert us into another Person, and make us fancy, that we being that Person, reap Benefit from those valuable Qualities, which belong to him. Or if it did, no Celerity of Imagination could immediately transport us back, into ourselves, and make us love and esteem the Person, as different from us. Views and Sentiments, so opposite to known Truth, and to each other, could never have place, at the same Time, in the same Person. All Suspicion, therefore, of selfish Regards are here totally excluded. 'Tis a quite different Principle, which actuates our Bosom, and interests us in the Felicity of the Person we contemplate. Where his natural Talents and acquir'd Abilities give us the Prospect of Elevation, Advancement, a Figure in Life, prosperous Success, a steady Command over Fortune, and the Execution of great or advantageous Undertakings; we are struck with such agreeable Images, and feel a Complacency and Regard immediately arise towards him. The Ideas of Happiness, Joy, Triumph, Prosperity are connected with every Circumstance of his Character, and diffuse over our Minds a pleasing Sentiment of Sympathy and Humanity^[14].

LET us suppose a Person originally so fram'd as to have no Manner of Concern for his Fellow creatures, but to regard the Happiness and Misery of all sensible Beings with greater Indifference even than two contiguous Shades of the same Colour. Let us suppose, if the Prosperity of Nations were lay'd on the one hand and their Ruin on the other, and he were desir'd to choose; that he would stand, like the Schoolman's Ass, irresolute and undetermin'd, betwixt equal Motives; or rather, like the same Ass betwixt two Pieces of Wood or Marble, without any Inclination or Propensity on either Side. The Consequence, I believe, must be allow'd just, that such a Person, being absolutely unconcern'd, either as to the public Good of a Community or the private Utility of others, would look on every Quality, however pernicious, or however beneficial, to Society or to its Possessor, with the same Indifference as on the most common and uninteresting Object.

BUT if, instead of this fancy'd Monster, we suppose a *Man* to form a Judgment or Determination in the Case; there is to him a plain Foundation of Preference, where every Thing else is equal; and however cool his Choice may be, if his Heart be selfish, or if the Persons interested be remote from him; there must still be a Choice, and a Distinction betwixt what is useful, and what is pernicious. Now this Distinction is the same in all its Parts, with the *moral Distinction*, whose Foundation has been so osten, and so much in vain, enquir'd after. The same Endowments of the Mind, in every Circumstance, are agreeable to the Sentiment of Morals and to that of Humanity; the same Temper is susceptible of high Degrees of the one Sentiment and of the other; and the same Alteration in the Objects, by their nearer Approach or by Connexions, enlivens the one and the other. By all the Rules of Philosophy, therefore, we must conclude, that these Sentiments are originally the same; since, in each particular, even the most minute, they are govern'd by the same Laws, and are mov'd by the same Objects.

WHY do Philosophers infer, with the greatest Certainty, that the Moon is kept in its Orbit by the same Force of Gravity, which makes Bodies fall near the Surface of the Earth, but because these Effects

are, upon Computation, found similar and equal? And must not this Argument bring equal Conviction, in moral as in natural Disquisitions?

To prove, by any long Detail, that all the Qualities, useful to the Possessor, are approv'd, and the contrary censur'd, would be superfluous. The least Reflection, on what is every Day experienc'd in Life, will be sufficient. We shall only mention a few Instances, in order to remove, if possible, all Doubt and Hesitation.

THE Quality, the most necessary for the Execution of any useful Enterprize, is DISCRETION; by which we carry on a safe Intercourse with others, give due Attention to our own and to their Character, weigh each Circumstance of the Business we undertake, and employ the surest and safest Means for the Attainment of any End or Purpose. To a *Cromwell*, perhaps, or a *De Retz*, Discretion may appear an Alderman-like Virtue, as [Dr. Swift](#) calls it; and being incompatible with those vast Designs, to which their Courage and Ambition prompted them, it might really, in them, be a Fault or Imperfection. But in the Conduct of ordinary Life, no Virtue is more requisite, not only to obtain Success, but to avoid the most fatal Miscarriages and Disappointments. The greatest Parts without it, as observ'd by an elegant Writer, may be fatal to their Owner; as *Polyphemus* depriv'd of his Eye was only the more expos'd, on Account of his enormous Strength and Stature.

THE best Character, indeed, were it not rather too perfect for human Nature, is that which gives nothing to Temper of any Kind; but alternately employs Enterprize and Caution, as each is *useful* to the particular Purpose intended. Such is the Excellence, which St. *Evremond* ascribes to Mareschal *Turenne*, who display'd every Campaign, as he grew older, more Temerity in his military Enterprizes; and being now, from long Experience, perfectly acquainted with every Incident in War, he advanc'd with greater Firmness and Boldness, in a Road so well known to him. *Fabius*, says [Machiavel](#), was cautious; *Scipio* enterprizing: And both succeeded, because the Situation of the *Roman* Affairs, during the Command of

each, was peculiarly adapted to his Genius; but both would have fail'd, had these Situations been inverted. He is happy, whose Circumstances suit his Temper; but he is more excellent, who can suit his Temper to any Circumstances.

WHAT need is there to display the Praises of INDUSTRY, and to extol its Advantages, in the Acquisition of Power and Riches, or in raising what we call a *Fortune* in the World? The Tortoise, according to the Fable, by his Assiduity, gain'd the Race of the Hare, tho' possess'd of much superior Swiftmess. A Man's Time, when well husbanded, is like a cultivated Field, of which a few Acres produce more of what is useful to Life, than extensive Provinces, even of the richest Soil, when over-run with Weeds and Brambles.

BUT all Prospect of Success in Life, or even of tolerable Subsistence, must fail, where a reasonable FRUGALITY is wanting. The Heap, instead of encreasing, diminishes daily, and leaves its Possessor so much more unhappy, that not having been able to confine his Expences to a larger Revenue, he will still less be able to live contentedly on a smaller. The Souls of Men, according to [*Plato*^{\[15\]}](#), inflam'd with impure Appetites, and losing the Body, which alone afforded Means of Satisfaction, hover about the Earth, and haunt the Places, where their Bodies are reposit'd; possess'd with a longing Desire to recover the lost Organs of Sensation So may we see worthless Prodigals, having consum'd their Fortunes in wild Debauches, thrusting themselves into every plentiful Table, and every Party of Pleasure, hated even by the vicious, and despis'd even by Fools.

THE one Extreme of Frugality is *Avarice*, which, as it both deprives a Man of all Use of his Riches, and checks Hospitality and every social Enjoyment, is justly censur'd on a double Account: *Prodigality*, the other Extreme, is commonly more hurtful to a Man himself; and each of these Extremes is blam'd above the other, according to the Temper of the Person who censures, and according to his greater or less Sensibility to Pleasure, either social or sensual.

ALL Men, 'tis allow'd, are equally desirous of Happiness; but all Men are not equally successful in the Pursuit: Of which one chief Cause is the common Want of STRENGTH of MIND, which might enable us to resist the Temptation of present Ease or Pleasure, and carry us forward in the Search of more distant Profit and Enjoyment. Our Affections, on a general Prospect of their Objects, form certain Rules of Conduct, and certain Measures of Preference of one above another: And these Decisions, tho' really the Result of our calm Passions, and Propensities, (for what else can pronounce any Object eligible or the contrary?) are yet said, by a natural Abuse of Terms, to be the Determinations of pure *Reason* and Reflection. But when some of these Objects approach nearer us, or acquire the Advantages of favourable Lights and Positions, which catch the Heart or Imagination; our general Resolutions are frequently confounded, a small Enjoyment preferr'd, and lasting Shame and Sorrow entail'd upon us. And however Poets may employ their Wit and Eloquence, in celebrating present Pleasure, and rejecting all distant Views to Fame, Health, or Fortune; 'tis obvious, that this Practice is the Source of all Dissoluteness and Debauchery, Repentance and Misery. A Man of a strong and determin'd Temper adheres tenaciously to his general Resolutions, and is neither seduc'd by the Allurements of Pleasure, nor terrify'd by the Menaces of Pain; but keeps still in View those distant Pursuits, by which he, at once, ensures his Happiness and his Honour.

SELF-SATISFACTION, at least in some Degree, is an Advantage, that equally attends the FOOL and the WISE-MAN: But 'tis the only one; nor is there any other Circumstance in the Conduct of Life, where they are upon an equal Footing. Business, Books, Conversation; for all of these, a Fool is totally incapacitated, and except condemn'd by his Station to the coarsest Drudgery, remains a *useless* Burthen upon the Earth. Accordingly, 'tis found, that Men are infinitely jealous of their Character in this Particular; and many Instances are seen of Profligacy and Treachery, the most avow'd, and unreserved; none of bearing patiently the Imputation of Ignorance and Stupidity. Dicæarchus, the *Macedonian* General, who, as *Polybius*^[16] tells us,

openly erected one Altar to Impiety, and another to Injustice, in order to bid Defiance to Mankind; even he, I am well assur'd, would have started at the Epithet of *Fool*, and have meditated Revenge for so injurious an Appellation. Except the Affection of Parents, the strongest and most indissoluble Bond in Nature, no Connexion has Strength sufficient to support the Disgust arising from this Character. Love itself, which can subsist under Treachery, Ingratitude, Malice, and Infidelity, is immediately extinguish'd by it, when perceiv'd and acknowledg'd; nor are Deformity and Old-age more fatal to the Dominion of that Passion. So dreadful are the Ideas of an utter Incapacity for any Purpose or Undertaking, and of continu'd Error and Misconduct in Life!

WHEN 'tis ask'd, whether a quick or a slow Apprehension be most valuable? Whether one, that, at first View, penetrates far into a Subject, but can perform nothing upon Study; or a contrary Character, which must work out every Thing by Dint of Application? Whether a clear Head or a copious Invention? Whether a profound Genius or a sure Judgment? In short, what Character, or peculiar Turn of Understanding is more excellent than another? 'Tis evident, we can answer none of these Questions, without considering which of those Qualities capacitates a Man best for the World, and carries him farthest in any of his Undertakings.

IF refin'd Sense and exalted Sense be not so useful as common Sense, their Rarity, their Novelty, and the Nobleness of their Objects make some Compensation, and render them the Admiration of Mankind: As Gold, tho' less serviceable than Iron, acquires, from its Scarcity, a Value, which is much superior.

THE Defects of Judgment can be supply'd by no Art or Invention; but those of MEMORY frequently may, both in Business and in Study, by Method and Industry, and by Diligence in committing every Thing to Paper; and we scarce ever hear a short Memory given as a Reason for a Man's Want of Success in any Undertaking. But in antient Times, when no Man could make a Figure without the Talent of speaking, and when the Audience were too delicate to bear such

crude, undigested Harangues as our extemporary Orators offer to public Assemblies; the Faculty of Memory was then of the utmost Consequence, and was accordingly much more valued than at present. Scarce any great Genius is mention'd in Antiquity, who is not celebrated for this Talent; and *Cicero* enumerates it amongst the other sublime Qualities of *Cæsar* himself^[17].

PARTICULAR Customs and Manners alter the Usefulness of Qualities: they also alter their Merit. Particular Situations and Accidents have, in some Degree, the same Influence. He will always be more esteem'd, who possesses^[errata 2] those Talents and Accomplishments, which suit his Station and Profession, than the whom Fortune has misplac'd in the Part she has assign'd him. The private or selfish Virtues are, in this respect, more arbitrary than the public and social. In other respects, they are, perhaps, less liable to Doubt and Controversy.

IN this Kingdom, such continu'd Ostentation, of late Years, has been display'd among Men in *active* Life, with regard to *public Spirit*, and among those in *speculative* with regard to *Benevolence*; and so many false Pretensions to each have been, no doubt, detected, that Men of the World are apt, without any bad Intention, to discover a sullen Incredulity on the head of these moral Endowments, and even sometimes absolutely to deny their Existence and Reality. In like Manner, I find, that, of old, the perpetual Cant of the *Stoics* and *Cynics* concerning *Virtue*, their magnificent Professions and slender Performances, bred a Disgust in Mankind; and *Lucian*, who, tho' licentious on the Article of Pleasure, is yet, in other respects, a very moral Writer, cannot, sometimes, talk of Virtue, so much boasted, without betraying Symptoms of Spleen and Irony^[18]. But surely, this peevish Delicacy, whence-ever it arises, can never be carry'd so far as to make us deny the Existence of every Species of Virtue, and all Distinction of Manners and Behaviour. Besides *Discretion*, *Caution*, *Enterprize*, *Industry*, *Assiduity*, *Fragality*, *OEconomy*, *Good-sense*, *Prudence*, *Discernment*; besides these Virtues, I say, whose very Names force an Avowal of their Merit, there are many others, to

which the most determin'd Scepticism cannot, for a Moment, refuse the Tribute of Praise and Approbation: *Temperance, Sobriety, Patience, Constancy, Perseverance, Forethought, Considerateness, Secrecy, Order, Insinuation, Address, Presence of Mind, Quickness of Conception, Facility of Expression*; these and a thousand more of the same Kind, no Man will ever deny to be Excellencies and Endowments. As their Merit consists in their Tendency to serve the Person, possess of them, without any magnificent Claims of public and social Desert, we are the less jealous of their Pretensions, and readily admit them into the Catalogue of Virtues. We are not sensible, that, by this Concession, we have pav'd the Way for all the other moral Excellencies, and cannot consistently hesitate any longer, with regard to disinterested Benevolence, Patriotism, and Humanity.

It seems, indeed, certain, that first Appearances are here, as usual, extremely deceitful, and that 'tis more difficult, in a speculative Way, to resolve into Self-love the Merit we ascribe to the selfish Virtues above-mention'd, than that even of the social Virtues of Justice and Beneficence. For this latter Purpose, we need but say, that whatever Conduct and Behaviour promotes the Good of the Community, is lov'd, prais'd, and esteem'd by the Community, on Account of that Utility and Interest, of which every one partakes: And tho' this Affection and Regard be, in Reality, Gratitude, not Self-love, yet a Distinction, even of this obvious Nature, may not readily be made by superficial Reasoners; and there is Room, at least, to support the Cavil and Dispute for a Moment. But as Qualities, which tend only to the Utility of their Possessor, without any Reference to us, or to the Community, are yet esteem'd and valu'd; by what Theory or System can we account for this Sentiment from Self-love, or deduce it from that favourite Origin? There seems here a Necessity of confessing that the Happiness and Misery of others are not Spectacles altogether indifferent to us, but that the View of the former, whether in its Causes or Effects, like Sun-shine or the Prospect of well-cultivated Plains (to carry our Pretensions no higher) communicates a secret Joy and Satisfaction; the Appearance

of the latter, like a lowering Cloud or barren Landskip, throws a melancholy Damp over the Imagination. And this Concession being once made, the Difficulty is over; and a natural, unforc'd Interpretation of the Phænomena of human Life will afterwards, we may hope, prevail, amongst all speculative Enquirers.

PART III.

It may not be improper, in this Place, to examine the Influence of bodily Endowments and of the Goods of Fortune, over our Sentiments of Regard and Esteem, and to consider whether these Phænomena strengthen or weaken the present Theory.

'TIS evident, that one considerable Source of *Beauty* in all Animals is the Advantage they reap from the particular Fabric or Structure of their Limbs and Members, suitable to the particular Manner of Life, to which they are by Nature destin'd. The just Proportions of a Horse, describ'd by [Xenophon](#) and [Virgil](#), are the same, which are receiv'd at this Day by our modern Jockeys; because the Foundation of them is the same, viz. Experience of what is detrimental or useful in the Animal.

BROAD Shoulders, a lank Belly, firm Joints, taper Legs; all these are beautiful in our Species, because Signs of Force and Vigour. Ideas of Utility and its contrary, tho' they do not altogether determine what is handsome or deform'd, are evidently the Source of a considerable Part of Approbation or Dislike.

IN ancient Times, bodily Strength and Dexterity, being of greater Use and Importance in War, was also much more esteem'd and valu'd, than at present. Not to insist on [Homer](#) and the Poets, we may observe, that Historians scruple not to mention *Force of Body* among the other Accomplishments even of *Epaminondas*, whom they acknowledge to be the greatest Hero, Statesman, and General of all the *Greeks*^[19]. A like Praise is given to *Pompey*, one of the

greatest of the *Romans*^[20]. This Instance is similar to what we observ'd above with regard to Memory.

WHAT Derision and Contempt, with both Sexes, attend *Impotence*; while the unhappy Object is regarded as one depriv'd of so capital a Pleasure in Life, and at the same Time, as disabled from communicating it to others. *Barrenness* in Women, being also a Species of *Inutility*, is a Reproach, but not in the same Degree: Of which the Reason is very obvious, according to the present Theory^[21].

THERE is no Rule in Painting or Statuary more indispensable than that of ballancing the Figures, and placing them with the greatest Exactness on their proper Center of Gravity. A Figure, which is not justly ballanc'd is ugly; because it conveys the disagreeable Ideas of Fall, Harm and Pain^[22].

A DISPOSITION or Turn of Mind, which qualifies a Man to rise in the World, and advance his Fortune, is entitled to Esteem and Regard, as has been already explain'd. It may, therefore, naturally be suppos'd, that the actual Possession of Riches and Authority will have a considerable Influence over these Sentiments.

LET us examine any Hypothesis, by which we can account for the Regard, pay'd the Rich and Powerful: We shall find none satisfactory but that which derives it from the Enjoyment, communicated by the Images of Prosperity, Happiness, Ease, Plenty, Command, and the Gratification of every Appetite. Self-love, for Instance, which some affect so much to consider as the Source of every Sentiment, is plainly insufficient to this Purpose. Where no Goodwill or Friendship appears, 'tis difficult to conceive on what we can found our Hope of Advantage from the Riches of others; tho' we naturally esteem and respect the Rich, even before they discover any such favourable Disposition towards us.

WE are affected with the same Sentiments, when we lie so much out of the Sphere of their Activity, that they cannot even be suppos'd to possess the Power of serving us. A Prisoner of War, in all civiliz'd

Nations, is treated with a Regard, suited to his Condition; and Riches, 'tis evident, go far towards fixing the Condition of any Person. If Birth and Quality enter for a Share, this still affords us an Argument to our present Purpose. For what is it we call a Man of Birth, but one, who is descended from a long Succession of rich and powerful Ancestors, and who acquires our Esteem by his Connexion with Persons, whom we esteem? His Ancestors, therefore, tho' dead, are respected, in some Measure, on Account of their Riches; and consequently, without any Kind of Expectation.

BUT not to go so far as Prisoners of War or the Dead, to find Instances of this disinterested Regard for Riches; we may only observe, with a little Attention, those Phænomena, that occur in common Life and Conversation. A Man, who is himself, we shall suppose, of a competent Fortune, and of no Profession, coming into a Company of Strangers, naturally treats them with different Degrees of Respect and Deference, as he is inform'd of their different Fortunes and Conditions; tho' 'tis impossible he can so suddenly propose, and perhaps would not accept of, any pecuniary Advantage from them. A Traveller is always admitted into Company, and meets with Civility, in Proportion as his Train and Equipage speak him a Man of great or moderate Fortune. In short, the different Ranks of Man are, in a great Measure, regulated by Riches; and that with regard to Superiors as well as Inferiors, Strangers as well as Acquaintance.

WHAT remains, therefore, but to conclude, that as Riches are desir'd for ourself only as the Means of gratifying our Appetites, either at present or in some imaginary future Period; they beget Esteem in others merely from their having that Influence. This indeed is their very Nature or Essence: They have a direct Reference to the Commodities, Conveniencies, and Pleasures of Life: A Banker's Bill, who is broke, or Gold in a desert Island, would otherwise be full as valuable. When we approach a Man, who is, as we say, at his Ease, we are presented with the pleasing Ideas of Plenty, Satisfaction, Cleanliness, Warmth; a chearful House, elegant Furniture, ready Service, and whatever is desirable in Meat, Drink, or

Apparel. On the contrary, when a poor Man appears, the disagreeable Images of Want, Penury, hard Labour, dirty Furniture, coarse or ragged Cloaths, nauseous Meat and distasteful Liquor, immediately strike our Fancy. What else do we mean by saying the one is rich, the other poor? And as Regard or Contempt is the natural Consequence of these different Situations in Life; 'tis easily seen what additional Light and Evidence this throws on our preceding Theory, with Regard to all moral Distinctions^[23].

A MAN, who has cur'd himself of all ridiculous Prepossessions, and is fully, sincerely, and steddily convinc'd, from Experience as well as Philosophy, that the Differences of Fortune make less Difference in Happiness than is vulgarly imagin'd; such a one measures not out Degrees of Esteem according to the Rent-rolls of his Acquaintance. He may, indeed, externally pay a superior Deference to the great Lord above the Vassal; because Riches are the most convenient, being the most fixt and determinate, Source of Distinction: But his internal Sentiments are more regulated by the personal Characters of Men, than by the accidental and capricious Favours of Fortune.

IN most Countries of *Europe*, Family, that is, hereditary Riches, mark'd with Titles and Symbols from the Sovereign, is the chief Source of Distinction. In *England*, more Regard is paid to present Opulence and Plenty. Each Practice has its Advantages and Disadvantages. Where Birth is respected, unactive spiritless Minds remain in haughty Indolence, and dream of nothing but Pedigrees and Genealogies: The generous and ambitious seek Honour and Command and Reputation and Favour. Where Riches are the chief Idol, Corruption, Venality, Rapine prevail: Arts, Manufactures, Commerce, Agriculture flourish. The former Prejudice, being favourable to military Virtue, is more suited to Monarchies. The other being the chief Spur to Industry, agrees better with a republican Government. And we accordingly find, that each of these Forms of Government, by varying the Utility of those Customs, has commonly a proportionable Effect on the Sentiments of Mankind.

1. [↑](#) The Term, Pride, is commonly taken in a bad Sense; but this Sentiment seems indifferent, and may be either good or bad, according as it is well or ill founded, and according to the other Circumstances, that accompany it. The *French* express this Sentiment by the Term, *amour propre*, but as they also express Self-love as well as Vanity, by the same Term, there arises thence a great Confusion in [Rochefoucault](#), and many of their moral Writers.
2. [↑](#) It seems to me, that in our Language, Courage, Temperance, Industry, Frugality, &c. according to popular Stile, are call'd *Virtues*; but when a Man is said to be *virtuous*, or is denominated a Man of Virtue, we chiefly regard his social Qualities. 'Tis needless for a moral, philosophical Discourse to enter into all these Caprices of Language, which are so variable in different Dialects, and in different Ages of the same Dialect. The *Sentiments* of Men, being more uniform, as well as more important, are a fitter Subject of Speculation: Tho' at the same Time, we just observe, that whatever the social Virtues are talk'd of, 'tis plainly imploy'd, by this Distinction, that there are also, other Virtues of a different Nature.
3. [↑](#) Love and Esteem are nearly the same Passion, and arise from similar Causes. The Qualities, which produce both, are such as communicate Pleasure. But where this Pleasure is severe and serious; or where its Object is great and makes a strong Impression, or where it produces any Degree of Humility and Awe: In all these Cases, the Passion, which arises from the Pleasure, is more properly denominated Esteem than Love. Benevolence attends both: But is connected with Love in a more eminent Degree. There seems to be still a stronger Mixture of Pride in Contempt than of Humility in Esteem; and the Reason would not be difficult to one, who study'd accurately the Passions. All these various Mixtures and Compositions and Appearances of Sentiment form a very curious Subject of

Speculation, but are wide of our present Purpose. Thro'out these Essays, we always consider in general, what Qualities are a Subject of Praise or of Censure, without entering into all the minute Differences of Sentiment, which they excite. 'Tis evident, that whatever is contemn'd, is also dislik'd, as well as what is hated; and we here endeavour to take Objects, according to their most simple Views and Appearances. These Sciences are but too apt to appear abstract to common Readers, even with all the Precautions we can take to clear them from superfluous Speculations, and bring them down to every Capacity.

4. [↑. The Art of preserving Health](#), Book 4:
5. [↑. Polybius](#), Lib. 8. Cap. 2.
6. [↑. Lib. 9. Epist. 10.](#)
7. [↑. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.](#)
8. [↑. Psalm 49th.](#)
9. [↑. Μισω σοφιστην οσις ουκ αυτω σοφος.](#) Incert. apud Lucianum, *Apologia pro mercede conductis*.
10. [↑. Lib. 21. Cap. 4.](#)
11. [↑. Lib. 1.](#)
12. [↑. Lib. 12.](#)
13. [↑. Vid. Plato in Menone, Seneca de otio sap. Cap. 31. So also Horace, Virtutem doctrina paret, naturane donet.](#) Epist. Lib. 1. Ep. 18.
14. [↑.](#) One may venture to affirm, that there is no human Creature, to whom the Appearance of Happiness, (where Envy or Revenge has no Place) does not give Pleasure, that of Misery, Uneasiness. This seems inseperable from our Make and Constitution. But they are only the more generous Minds, that are thence prompted to seek zealously the Good of others, and to have a real Passion for their Welfare. With Men of narrow and ungenerous Spirits, this Sympathy goes not beyond a slight Feeling of the Imagination, which serves only to excite Sentiments of Complacency or Censure, and make them apply to the Object either honourable or dishonourable Appellations. A griping Miser, for Instance, praises extremely *Industry* and *Frugality*, even in others, and sets them, in his Estimation,

above all the other Virtues. He knows the Good, that results from them, and feels that Species of Happiness with a more lively Sympathy, than any other you could represent to him; tho' perhaps he would not part with a Shilling to make the Fortune of the industrious Man, whom he praises so highly.

15. ↑ [Phædo](#).
16. ↑ Lib. 17. Cap. 35.
17. ↑ Fuit in illo ingenium, ratio, memoria, literæ, cura, cogitatio, diligentia, &c. Phillip. 2.
18. ↑ Αρετην τινα και ασωματα και ληρους μεγαλη τη φωνη ξυνειροντων. Luc. Timon. Again, Και συναγαγοντες (οι φιλοσοφοι) ενεξαπατητα μειρακια τηντε πολυθρυλλητον αρετην τραγωδουσι. Icu-ro-men. In another place, Ηπου γαρ εστιν η πολυθρυλλητος αρετη, και φυσις, και ειμαρμενη, και τυχη, ανυποστατα και κενα πραγματων ονοματα. Deor. Concil.
19. ↑ [Diodorus Siculus](#), lib. xv. It may not be improper to give the Character of *Epaminondas*, as drawn by the Historian, in order to show the Ideas of perfect Merit, which prevailed in those Ages. In other illustrious Men, says he, you will observe, that each possessed some one shining Quality, which was the Foundation of his Fame: In *Epaminondas* all the *Virtues* are found united; Force of Body, Eloquence of Expression, Vigour of Mind, Contempt of Riches, Gentleness of Disposition, and *what is chiefly to be regarded*, Courage and Conduct in War.
20. ↑ *Cum alacribus, saltu; cum velocibus, cursu; cum validis recte certabat.* [Sallust](#) apud Veget.
21. ↑ To the same Purpose, we may observe a Phænomenon, which might appear somewhat trivial and ludicrous; if any Thing could be trivial, which fortify'd Conclusions of such Importance; or ludicrous, which was employ'd in a philosophical Reasoning. 'Tis a general Remark, that those we call good *Women's Men*, who have either signaliz'd themselves by their amorous Exploits, or whose Make of Body or other Symptoms promise any extraordinary Vigour of that Kind, are well receiv'd by the fair Sex, and naturally engage the Affections even of those whose Virtue or Situation prevents any Design of ever giving

Employment to those Talents. The Imagination is pleas'd with these Conceptions, and entering with Satisfaction into the Ideas of so favourite an Enjoyment, feels a Complacency and Good-will towards the Person. A like Principle operating more extensively, is the general Source of moral Affection and Approbation.

22. ↑. All Men are equally liable to Pain and Disease and Sickness; and may again recover Health and Ease. These Circumstances, as they make no Distinction betwixt one Man and another, are no Source of Pride or Humility, Regard or Contempt. But comparing our own Species to superior ones, 'tis a very mortifying Consideration, that we should be so liable to all Diseases and Infirmities; and Divines accordingly employ this Topic, in order to depress Self-conceit and Vanity. They would have more Success, if the common Bent of our Thoughts were not perpetually turn'd to compare ourselves with each other. The Infirmities of old Age are mortifying; because a Comparison with the Young may take place. The King's Evil is industriously conceal'd, because it affects others, and is transmitted to Posterity. The Case is nearly the same with such Diseases as convey any nauseous or frightful Images; the Epilepsy, for Instance, Ulcers, Sores, Scabs, &c.
23. ↑. There is something very extraordinary, and seemingly unaccountable in the Operation of our Passions, when we consider the Fortune and Situation of others. Very often another's Advancement and Prosperity produces Envy, which has a strong Mixture of Hatred, and arises chiefly from the Comparison of ourselves with the Person. At the very same Time, or at least, in very short Intervals, we may feel the Passion of Respect, which is a Species of Affection or Good-will, with a Mixture of Humility. On the other hand, the Misfortunes of our Fellows often cause Pity, which has a strong Mixture of Good-will. This Sentiment of Pity is nearly ally'd to Contempt, which is a Species of Dislike, along with a Mixture of Pride. I only point out these Phænomena, as a Subject of Speculation to such as are curious with regard to moral Enquiries. 'Tis sufficient

for the present Purpose to observe in general, that Power and Riches commonly cause Respect, Poverty and Meanness Contempt, tho' particular Views and Incidents may sometimes raise the Passions of Envy and of Pity.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION VII

OF QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE TO OURSELVES

Whoever has past an Evening with serious melancholy People, and has observ'd how suddenly the Conversation was animated, and what Sprightliness diffus'd itself over the Countenance, Discourse, and Behaviour of every one, on the Accession of a good-humour'd, lively Companion; such a one, I say, will easily allow, that CHEERFULNESS carries great Merit with it, and naturally conciliates the Affection and Goodwill of Mankind. No Quality, indeed, more readily communicates itself to all around; because none has a greater Propensity to display itself, in jovial Talk and pleasant Entertainment. The Flame spreads thro' the whole Circle; and the most sullen and morose are often caught by it. That the melancholy hate the merry, even tho' [Horace](#) says it, I have some Difficulty to allow; because I have always observ'd, that, where the Jollity is moderate and decent, serious People are so much the more delighted, that it dissipates the Gloom, with which they are

commonly oppress; and gives them an unusual Satisfaction and Enjoyment.

FROM this Influence of Cheerfulness, both to communicate itself, and to engage Approbation, we may perceive, that there are another Set of Virtues, which, without any Utility or any Tendency to farther Good, either of the Community or of the Possessor, diffuse a Satisfaction on the Beholders, and conciliate Friendship and Regard. Their immediate Sensation, to the Person possess of them, is agreeable: Others enter into the same Humour, and catch the Sentiment, by a Contagion or natural Sympathy: And as we cannot forbear loving whatever pleases, a kindly Emotion arises towards the Person, who communicates so much Delight and Satisfaction. He is a more animating Spectacle: His Presence diffuses over us more serene Complacency and Enjoyment: Our Imagination, entering into his Feelings and Disposition, is affected in a more agreeable Manner, than if a melancholy, dejected, sullen, anxious Temper were presented to our Notice and Observation. Hence the Affection and Approbation, which attends the former: The Aversion and Disgust, with which we regard the latter^[1].

FEW Men would envy the Character, which *Cæsar* gives *Cassius*.

He loves no Play, As thou do'st, *Anthony*: He hears no Music: Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a Sort, As if he mockt himself, and scorn'd his Spirit That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.

Not only such Men, as *Cæsar* adds, are commonly dangerous, but also, having little Enjoyment within themselves, they can never become agreeable to others, or contribute any Thing to social Pleasure and Entertainment. In all polite Nations and Ages, a Relish of Pleasure, if accompany'd with Temperance and Decency, is esteem'd a considerable Merit, even in the greatest Men; and becomes still more requisite in those of inferior Rank and Character. 'Tis an agreeable Representation. Which a *French* Writer gives of the Situation of his own Mind in this Passage^[errata 1]. *Virtue I love*, says

he, *without Austerity: Pleasure, without Effeminacy: And Life, without securing its End*^[2].

WHO is not struck with any signal Instance of GREATNESS of MIND or Dignity of Character; with Elevation of Sentiments, Disdain of Slavery, and with that noble Pride and Spirit, which arises from conscious Worth and Virtue? The Sublime, says [Longinus](#), is often nothing but the Echo or Image of Magnanimity; and where this Quality appears in any one, even without uttering a Syllable, it excites our Applause and Admiration; as may be observ'd of the famous Silence of *Ajax* in the [Odyssey](#), which expresses more noble Disdain and resolute Indignation, than any Language can convey^[3].

Were I Alexander, say'd Parmenio, I would accept of these Offers made by Darius. So would I too, reply'd Alexander, were I Parmenio. This Saying is admirable, says *Longinus*, from a like Principle^[4]. *GO!* cries the same Hero to his Soldiers, when they refus'd to follow him to the *Indies, go tell your Countrymen, you left Alexander compleating the Conquest of the World.* "Alexander," said the Prince of *Condé*, who always admir'd the Passage, "abandon'd by his Soldiers, amongst Barbarians, not yet fully subdu'd, felt in himself such a Dignity and Right of Empire, that he could not believe it possible any one would refuse to obey him. Whether in *Europe* or in *Asia*, amongst *Greeks* or *Persians*, all was indifferent to him: Wherever he found Men, he fancy'd he would find Subjects."

THE Confident of *Medea* in the Tragedy recommends Caution and Submission; and enumerating all the Distresses of that unfortunate Heroine, asks her, what she has to support her against so many Enemies. *Myself*, replies she; *Myself, I say; and it is enough.* [Boileau](#) justly recommends this Passage as an Instance of true Sublime^[5].

WHEN *Phocion*, the modest, the gentle *Phocion*, was led to Execution, he turn'd about to one of his Fellow-sufferers, who was lamenting his own hard Fate. *Is it not Glory enough for you, says he, that you die along with Phocion*^[6]?

PLACE in Opposition the Picture which Tacitus draws of *Vitellius*, fallen from Empire, prolonging his Ignominy from a wretched Love of Life, deliver'd over to the merciless Rabble; tost, buffeted, and kickt about; and constrain'd, by their holding a Poynard under his Chin, to raise his Head, and expose himself to every Contumely. What abject Infamy! What low Humiliation! Yet even here, says the Historian, he discover'd some Symptoms of a Mind not altogether degenerate. To a Tribune, who insulted him, he reply'd, *I am still your Emperor*^[7].

WE never excuse the absolute Want of Spirit and Dignity of Character, or a proper Sense of what is due to one's self, in Society and the common Intercourse of Life. This Vice constitutes what we properly call *Meanness*; when a Man can submit to the basest Slavery, in order to gain his Ends; fawn upon those, who abuse him; and degrade himself by Intimacies and Familiarities with undeserving Inferiors. A certain Degree of generous Pride or Self-value is so requisite, that the Absence of it in the Mind displeases after the same Manner, as the Want of a Nose, Eye, or any of the most material Features of the Face or Members of the Body^[8].

THE Utility of COURAGE, both to the Public and to the Person possess of it, is an obvious Foundation of Merit: But to any one, who considers the Matter justly, it will appear, that this Quality has a peculiar Lustre, which it derives altogether from itself, and from that noble Elevation inseperable from it. Its Figure, drawn by Painters and by Poets, displays, in each Feature, a Sublimity and daring Confidence; which catches the Eye, engages the Affections, and diffuses, by Sympathy, a like Sublimity of Sentiment over every Spectator.

UNDER what glorious Colours does [*Demosthenes*](#)^[9] represent *Philip*; where the Orator apologizes for his own Administration, and justifies that pertinacious Love of Liberty, with which he had inspir'd the *Athenians*. "I beheld *Philip*," says he, "he, with whom was your Contest, resolutely, while in Pursuit of Empire and Dominion, exposing himself to every Wound; his Eye goar'd, his Neck wrested, his Arm, his Thigh pierc'd, whatever Part of his Body Fortune should

seize on, that cheerfully relinquishing, provided that, with what remain'd, he might live in Honour and Renown. And shall it be said, that he, born in *Pella*, a Place heretofore mean and ignoble, should be inspir'd with so high an Ambition and Thirst of Fame: While you, *Athenians*, &c." These Praises excite the highest Admiration; but the Views presented by the Orator, carry us not, we see, beyond the Hero himself, nor **ever**^[errata 2] regard the future advantageous Consequences of his Valour.

THE martial Temper of the *Romans*, inflam'd by continued Wars, had rais'd their Esteem of Courage so high, that, in their Language, it was call'd *Virtue*, by way of Excellence and Distinction from all other moral Qualities. *The Suevi*, in the Opinion of [Tacitus](#)^[10], *drest their Hair with a laudable Intent: Not for the Purposes of loving or being belov'd: They adorn'd themselves only for their Enemies, and in order to appear more terrible*. A Sentiment of the Historian, which would sound a little oddly, in other Nations and other Ages.

THE *Scythians*, according to [Herodotus](#)^[11], after fleaing the Skin from the Heads of their Enemies, whom they have slain, dress it like Leather, and use it as a Towel; and whoever has most of these Towels is most esteem'd amongst them. So much had martial Bravery, in that Nation, as well as in many others, destroy'd the Sentiments of Humanity; a Virtue surely much more useful and engaging.

'TIS indeed observable, that, amongst all uncultivated Nations, which have not, as yet, had full Experience of the Advantages, attending Beneficence, Justice, and the social Virtues, Courage is the predominant Excellence; what is most celebrated by Poets, recommended by Parents and Instructors, and admir'd by the Public in general. The Ethics of [Homer](#) are, in this Particular, very different from those of [Fenelon](#), his elegant Imitator; and such as are well suited to an Age, wherein one Hero, as remarkt by [Thucydides](#)^[12], could ask another, without Offence, if he was a Robber or not. Such also, very lately, was the System of Ethics, that prevail'd in many

barbarous Parts of *Ireland*; if we may credit [Spenser](#), in his judicious Account of the State of that Kingdom^[13].

OF the same Class of Virtues with Courage is that undisturb'd, philosophical TRANQUILLITY, superior to Pain, Sorrow, Anxiety, and each Assault of adverse Fortune. Conscious of his own Virtue, say the Philosophers, the Sage elevates himself above every Accident of Life; and securely plac'd in the Temple of Wisdom, looks down on inferior Mortals, engag'd in Pursuit of Honours, Riches, Reputation, and each frivolous Enjoyment. These Pretensions, no doubt, when stretch'd to the utmost, are much too magnificent for human Nature. They carry, however, a Grandeur, with them, which seizes the Spectator, and strikes him with Admiration. And the nearer we can approach, in Practice, to this sublime Tranquillity and Indifference (for we must distinguish it from a stupid Insensibility) the more secure Enjoyment shall we attain within ourselves, and the more Greatness of Mind shall we discover to the World. The philosophical Tranquillity may, indeed, be consider'd only as a Branch of Magnanimity.

WHO admires not *Socrates*; his perpetual Serenity and Contentment, amidst the greatest Poverty and domestic Vexations; his resolute Contempt of Riches, and magnanimous Care of preserving Liberty, while he refused all Assistance from his Friends and Disciples, and avoided even the Dependence of an Obligation? [Epictetus](#) had not so much as a Door to his little House or Hovel; and therefore, soon lost his Iron Lamp, the only Furniture he had worth taking. But resolving to disappoint all Robbers for the future, he supply'd its Place with an earthen Lamp, which he very peaceably kept Possession of ever after.

IN Antiquity, the Heroes of Philosophy, as well as those of War and Patriotism, have a Grandeur and Force of Sentiment, which astonishes our narrow Souls, and is rashly rejected as extravagant and supernatural. They, in their Turn, I allow, would have had equal Reason to consider, as romantic and incredible, the Degree of Humanity, Clemency, Order, Tranquillity, and other social Virtues, to

which, in the Administration of Government, we have attain'd in modern Times, had any one been then able to have made a fair Representation of them. Such is the Compensation, which Nature, or rather Education has made, in the Distribution of Excellencies and Virtues, in these different Ages.

THE Merit of BENEVOLENCE, arising from its Utility, and its Tendency to the Good of Mankind, has been already explain'd, and is, no doubt, the Source of a *considerable* Part of that Esteem, which is so universally pay'd it But it will also be allow'd, that the very Softness and Tenderness of the Sentiment, its engaging Endearments, its fond Expressions, its delicate Attentions, and all that Flow of mutual Confidence and Regard, which enter into a warm Attachment of Love and Friendship: It will be allow'd, I say, that these Feelings being delightful in themselves, are necessarily communicated to the Spectators, and melt them into the same Fondness and Delicacy. The Tears naturally start in our Eyes on the Observation of a warm Sentiment of this Nature: Our Breast heaves, our Heart is agitated, and every humane tender Principle of our Frame, is set in Motion, and gives us the purest and most satisfactory Enjoyment.

WHEN Poets form Descriptions of *Elyzian* Fields, where the blessed Inhabitants stand in no Need of each other's Assistance, they yet represent them, as maintaining a constant Entercourse of Love and Friendship, and sooth our Fancy with the pleasing Image of these soft and gentle Passions. The Idea of tender Tranquillity in a pastoral *Arcadia* is agreeable from a like Principle, as has been observ'd above^[14].

WHO would live amidst perpetual Wrangling, and Scolding, and mutual Reproaches? The Roughness and Harshness of these Emotions disturb and displease us: We suffer by Contagion and Sympathy; nor can we remain indifferent Spectators, even tho' certain, that no pernicious Consequences would ever follow from such angry Passions.

As a certain Proof, that the whole Merit of Benevolence is not deriv'd from its Usefulness, we may observe, that, in a kind Way of Blame, we say, a Person is too good; when he exceeds his Part in Society, and carries his Attention for others beyond the proper Bounds and Measure. In like Manner, we say a Man is *too high-spirited, too intrepid, too indifferent about Fortune*: Reproaches, which really, at the bottom, imply more Regard and Esteem than many Panegyrics. Being accustom'd to rate the Merit and Demerit of Characters chiefly by their useful or pernicious Tendencies, we cannot forbear applying the Epithet of Blame, when we discover a Sentiment, which rises to a Degree that is hurtful: But it may happen, at the same Time, that its noble Elevation, or its engaging Tenderness so seizes the Heart, as rather to encrease our Friendship and Concern for the Person^[15].

THE Amours and Attachments of *Harry* the IVth, during the civil Wars of the League, frequently hurt his Interest and his Cause; but all the young, at least, and amorous, who can sympathize with that Passion, will allow, that this very Weakness (for they will readily call it such) chiefly endears that Hero, and interests them in his Fortunes.

THE excessive Bravery and resolute Inflexibility of *Charles* the XIIth ruin'd his own Country, and infested all his Neighbours: But have such Splendour and Greatness in their Appearance, as strike us with Admiration; and they might, in some Degree, be even approv'd of, if they betray'd not sometimes too evident Symptoms of Madness and Disorder.

THE *Athenians* pretended to the first Invention of Agriculture and of Laws; and always valu'd themselves extremely on the Benefit thereby procur'd to the whole Race of Mankind. They also boasted, and with Reason, of their warlike Enterprizes; particularly against those innumerable Fleets and Armies of *Persians*, which invaded *Greece* during the Reign of *Darius* and of *Xerxes*. But tho' there be no Comparison, in Point of Utility, betwixt these peaceful and military Honours; yet we find, that the Orators, who have wrote such

elaborate Panegyrics on that famous City, have chiefly triumph'd in displaying the warlike Atchievements. [Lysias](#), *Thucydides*, [Plato](#) and [Isocrates](#) discover, all of them, the same Partiality: which, tho' condemn'd by calm Reason and Reflection, appears so natural in the Mind of Man.

'Tis observable, that the great Charm of Poetry consists in lively Pictures of the sublime Passions, Magnanimity, Courage, Disdain of Fortune; or those of the tender Affections, Love and Friendship; which warm the Heart, and diffuse over us similar Sentiments and Emotions. And tho' every Kind of Passion, even the most disagreeable, such as Grief and Anger, are observ'd, when excited by Poetry, to convey a Pleasure and Satisfaction, from a Mechanism of Nature, not easy to be explain'd: Yet those more elevated or softer Affections have a peculiar Influence, and please from more than one Cause or Principle. Not to mention, that they alone interest us in the Fortune of the Persons represented, or communicate any Esteem and Affection for their Character.

AND can it possibly be doubted, that this Talent itself of Poets, to move the Passions, this PATHETIC and SUBLIME of Sentiment, is a very considerable Merit, and being enhanc'd by its extreme Rarity, may exalt the Person possess of it, above every Character of the Age, in which he lives? The Prudence, Address, Steadiness, and benign Government of *Augustus*, adorn'd with all the Splendour of his noble Birth and imperial Crown, render him but an unequal Competitor for Fame with [Virgil](#), who lays nothing into the opposite Scale but the divine Beauties of his poetical Genius.

THE very Sensibility to these Beauties or a DELICACY of Taste, is itself a Beauty in any Character; as conveying the purest, the most durable, and most innocent of all Enjoyments.

THESE are some Instances of the Species of Virtue, that are prais'd from the immediate Pleasure, which they communicate to the Person, possess of them. No Views of Utility or of future beneficial Consequences enter into this Sentiment of Approbation; yet is it of a similar Kind to that other Sentiment, which arises from Views of

public or private Utility. The same social Sympathy, we may observe, or Fellow-feeling with human Happiness or Misery, gives Rise to both; and this Analogy in all the Parts of the present Theory may justly be regarded as a Confirmation of it.

1. ↑ There is no Man, who, on particular Occasions, is not affected with all the disagreeable Passions, Fear, Anger, Dejection, Grief, Melancholy, Anxiety, &c. But these, so far as they are natural, and universal, make no Difference betwixt one Man and another, and can never be the Object of Blame. 'Tis only when the Disposition gives a *Propensity* to any of these disagreeable Passions, that they disfigure the Character, and by giving Uneasiness, convey the Sentiment of Disapprobation to the Spectator.
2. ↑
J'aime la vertu, sans rudessé; J'aime le plaisir, sans molesse; J'aime la vie, & n'en crains point la fin. St. Evremond.
3. ↑ Cap. 9.
4. ↑ Idem.
5. ↑ Reflection 10 sur Longin.
6. ↑ *Plutarch in Phoc.*
7. ↑ [Tacit.](#) Hist. Lib. 3. The Author entering upon the Narration, says, *Laniata veste, fædum spectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo inlacrimante: deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat.* To enter thoroughly into this Method of thinking, we must make Allowance for the ancient Maxims, that no one ought to prolong his Life after it became dishonourable; but as he had always a Right to dispose of it, it then became a Duty to part with it.
8. ↑ The Absence of a Virtue may often be a Vice; and that of the highest Kind; as in the Instance of Ingratitude, as well as Meanness. Where we expect a Beauty, the Disappointment gives an uneasy Sensation, and produces a real Deformity. An Abjectness of Character, likewise, is disgusting and contemptible in another View. Where a Man has no Sense of Value in himself,

we are not likely to have any higher Estimation of him. And if the same Person, who crouches to his Superiors, is insolent to his Inferiors (as often happens) this Contrariety of Behaviour, instead of correcting the former Vice, aggravates it extremely, by the Addition of a Vice still more odious. See Sect. 8.

9. [↑](#) *Pro corona.*
10. [↑](#) De moribus Germ.
11. [↑](#) Lib. 4.
12. [↑](#) Lib. 1.
13. [↑](#) It is a common Use, says he, amongst their Gentlemen's Sons, that, as soon as they are able to use their Weapons, they strait gather to themselves three or four Stragglers or Kern, with whom wandering a while up and down idly the Country, taking only Meat, he at last falleth into some bad Occasion, that shall be offer'd; which being once made known, he is thenceforth counted a Man of Worth, in whom there is Courage.
14. [↑](#) Sect. 5. Part 2.
15. [↑](#) Cheerfulness could scarce admit of Blame from its Excess, were it not, that dissolute Mirth, without a proper Cause or Subject, is a sure Symptom and Characteristic of Folly, and on that Account disgusting.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

SECTION VIII

OF QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE TO OTHERS[\[1\]](#)

As the mutual Shocks, in *Society*, and the Oppositions of Interest and Self-love have constrain'd Mankind to establish the Laws of *Justice*; in order to preserve the Advantages of common Assistance and Protection: in like Manner, the eternal Contrarities, in *Company*, of Men's Pride and Self-conceit have introduc'd the Rules of GOOD-MANNERS or POLITENESS, in order to facilitate the Intercourse of Minds, and an undisturb'd Commerce and Conversation. Amongst well-bred People, a mutual Deference is affected; Contempt of others disguis'd: Authority conceal'd: Attention given to each in his Turn: And an easy Stream of Conversation maintain'd, without Vehemence, without mutual Interruption, without Eagerness for Victory, and without any Airs of Superiority. These Attentions and Regards are immediately *agreeable* to others, abstracted from any Regard to Utility or beneficial Tendencies: They conciliate Affection, promote Esteem, and enhance extremely the Merit of the Person, who regulates his Behaviour by them.

MANY of the Forms of Breeding are arbitrary and casual: But the Thing exprest by them is still the same. A *Spaniard* goes out of his own House before his Guest, to signify, that he leaves him Master of all. In other Countries, the Landlord walks out last, as a common Mark of Deference and Regard.

BUT in order to render a Man perfect *Good-company*, he must have WIT and INGENUITY as well as Good-manners. What Wit is, it may not be easy to define; but 'tis easy surely to determine, that 'tis a Quality immediately *agreeable* to others, and communicating, on its first Appearance, a lively Joy and Satisfaction to every one, that has any Comprehension of it. The most profound Metaphysics, indeed, might be employ'd, in explaining the various Kinds and Species of Wit; and many Classes of it, which are now receiv'd on the simple Testimony of Taste and Sentiment, might, perhaps, be resolv'd into more general Principles. But this is sufficient for our present Purpose, that it does affect Taste and Sentiment, and bestowing an immediate Enjoyment, is a sure Source of Approbation and Affection.

IN Countries, where Men pass all their Time in Conversation, and Visits and Assemblies, these *companionable* Qualities, so to speak, are of high Estimation, and form a chief Part of personal Merit. In Countries, where Men live a more domestic Life, and either are employ'd in Business or amuse themselves in a narrower Circle of Acquaintance, the more solid Qualities are chiefly regarded. Thus, I have observ'd, that, amongst the *French*, the first Questions, with regard to a Stranger, are, *Is he polite? Has he Wit?* In our own Country, the chief Praise bestow'd is always that of a *good-natur'd, sensible Fellow*.

IN Conversation, the lively Spirit of Dialogue is *agreeable*, even to those who desire not to have any Share of the Discourse: Hence a Teller of long Stories or a pompous Declaimer is very little approv'd of. But most Men desire likewise their Share in the Conversation, and regard, with a very evil Eye, that *Loquacity*, which deprives them of a Right they are naturally so jealous of.

THERE are a Set of harmless *Lyars*, frequently to be met with in Company, who deal much in the Marvelous and Extraordinary. Their usual Intention is to please and entertain; but as Men are delighted with nothing but what they conceive to be Truth, these People mistake extremely the Means of pleasing, and incur universal Blame. Some Indulgence, however, to Lying or Fiction is given in *humourous*

Stories; because it is there agreeable and entertaining; and Truth is not of any Importance.

ELOQUENCE, Genius of all Kinds, even good Sense, and sound Reasoning, when it rises to an eminent Degree, and is employ'd upon Subjects of any considerable Dignity and nice Discernment; all these Qualities seem immediately agreeable, and have a Merit distinct from their Usefulness. Rarity, likewise, which so much enhances the Price of every Thing, must set an additional Value on these noble Talents of the human Mind.

MODESTY may be understood in different Senses, even abstracted from Chastity, which has been already treated of. It sometimes means that Tenderness and Nicety of Honour, that Apprehension of Blame, that Dread of Intrusion or Injury towards others, that *Pudor*, which is the proper Guardian of every Kind of Virtue, and a sure Preservative against Vice and Corruption. But its most usual Meaning is, when it is oppos'd to *Impudence* and *Arrogance*, and expresses a Diffidence of our own Judgment, and a due Attention and Regard to others. In young Men chiefly, this Quality is a sure Sign of Good-sense; and is also the certain Means of augmenting that Endowment, by preserving their Ears open to Instruction, and making them still grasp after new Attainments. But it has a farther Charm to every Spectator; by flattering each Man's Vanity, and presenting the Appearance of a docile Pupil, who receives, with proper Attention and Respect, every Word they utter^[2].

A DESIRE of Fame, Reputation, or a Character with others, is so far from being blameable, that it

seems inseparable from Virtue, Genius, Capacity, and a generous or noble Disposition. An Attention, even to trivial Matters, in order to please, is also expected and demanded by Society; and no one is surpriz'd, if he finds a Man in Company, to observe a greater Elegance of Dress and more pleasant Flow of Conversation, than when he passes his Time, at home, and altogether with his own Family. Wherein, then, consists VANITY, which is so justly regarded as a Fault or Imperfection? It seems to consist chiefly in such an

intemperate Display of our Advantages, Honours and Accomplishments; in such an importunate and open Demand of Praise and Admiration, as is offensive to others, and encroaches too far on *their* secret Vanity and Ambition It is besides a sure Symptom of the Want of true Dignity and Elevation of Mind, which is so great an Ornament to any Character. For why that impatient Desire of Applause; as if you were not justly entitled to it, and might not reasonably expect it would for ever attend you? Why so anxious to inform us of the great Company you have kept; the obliging Things, that were said to you; the Honours, the Distinctions you met with; as if these were not Things of Course, and what we could readily, of ourselves, have imagin'd, without being told of them?

DECENCY, or a proper Regard to Age, Sex, Character and Station in the World, may be rank'd among the Qualities, which are immediately agreeable to others, and which, by that Means, acquire Praise and Approbation. An effeminate Behaviour in a Man, a rough Manner in a Woman; these are ugly, because unsuitable to each Character, and different from the Qualities we expect in the Sexes. 'Tis as if a Tragedy abounded in comic Beauties, or a Comedy in tragic. The Disproportions hurt the Eye, and convey a disagreeable Sentiment to the Spectators, the Source of Blame and Disapprobation. This is that *Indecorum*, which is explain'd so much at large by *Cicero* in his Offices.

AMONGST the other Virtues, we may also give CLEANLINESS a Place; since it naturally renders us agreeable to others, and is no inconsiderable Source of Love and Affection. No one will deny, that a Negligence in this Particular is a Fault; and as Faults are nothing but smaller Vices, and this Fault can have no other Origin than the uneasy Sensation, which it excites in others; we may, in this Instance, seemingly so trivial, clearly discover the Origin of moral Distinctions, about which the Learned have involved themselves in such Mazes of Perplexity and Error.

BUT besides all the *agreeable* Qualities, the Origin of whose Beauty we can, in some Degree, explain and account for, there still remains

something mysterious and unaccountable, which conveys an immediate Satisfaction to the Spectators, but how, or why, or for what Reason, they cannot pretend to determine. There is a MANNER, a Grace, a Genteelness, an I-know-not-what, which some Men possess above others, which is very different from external Beauty and Comeliness, and which, however, catches our Affection almost as suddenly and powerfully. And tho' this *Manner* be chiefly talk'd of in the Passion betwixt the Sexes, where the conceal'd Magic is easily explain'd, yet surely much of it prevails in all our Estimation of Characters, and forms no inconsiderable Part of personal Merit. This Class of Virtues, therefore, must be trusted entirely to the blind, but sure Testimony of Taste and Sentiment; and must be consider'd as a Part of Ethics, left by Nature to baffle all the Pride of Philosophy, and make her sensible of her narrow Boundaries and slender Acquisitions.

WE approve of another, because of his Wit, Politeness, Modesty, Decency, or any agreeable Quality he possesses, although he be not of our Acquaintance, nor has ever given us any Entertainment, by Means of these Accomplishments. The Idea, which we form of their Effect on his Acquaintance, has an agreeable Influence on our Imagination, and gives us the Sentiment of Approbation. This Principle enters into all the Judgments, which we form concerning Morals.

1. ↑ 'Tis the Definition of Virtue, that 'tis a *Quality of the Mind agreeable to or approv'd of by every one, who considers or contemplates it*. But some Qualities produce Pleasure, because they are useful to Society, or useful or agreeable to the Person himself; others produce it more immediately: Which is the Class of Virtues here consider'd.
2. ↑ Men have in general a much greater Propensity to over-value than under-value themselves; notwithstanding the Opinion of [Aristotle](#). This makes us more jealous of the Excess on the former Side, and causes us to regard, with a particular Indulgence, all Tendency to Modesty and Self-diffidence; as

esteeming the Danger less of falling into any vicious Extreme of that Nature. 'Tis thus, in Countries, where Men's Bodies are apt to exceed in Corpulency, personal Beauty is plac'd in a much greater Degree of Slenderness, than in Countries where that is the most usual Defect. Being so often struck with Instances of one Species of Deformity, Men think they can never keep at too great a Distance from it, and will always to have a Leaning to the opposite Side. In like Manner, were the Door open'd to Self-praise, and were [Montaigne's](#) Maxim observ'd, that one should say as frankly, *I have Sense, I have Learning, I have Courage, Beauty, or Wit*; as 'tis sure we often think so; were this the Case, I say, every one is sensible, that such a Flood of Impertinence would break in upon us as would render Society altogether intolerable. For this Reason Custom has establish'd it as a Rule, in common Societies, that Men should never praise themselves, and not even speak much of themselves; and 'tis only amongst intimate Friends or People of very manly Behaviour, that one is allow'd to do himself Justice. No body finds fault with *Maurice*, Prince of *Orange*, for his Reply to one, who ask'd him whom he esteem'd the first General of the Age, *The Marquis de Spinola*, said he, is *the second*. Tho' 'tis even observable, that the Self-praise imply'd is here better imply'd, than if it had been directly express'd, without any Cover or Disguise.

He must be a very superficial Thinker, who imagines, that all Instances of mutual Deference are to be understood in earnest, and that a Man would be more esteemable for being ignorant of his own Merits and Accomplishments. A small Byass towards Modesty, even in the internal Sentiments, is favourably regarded, especially in young People; and a strong Byass is requir'd in the outward Behaviour: But this excludes not a noble Pride and Spirit, which may openly display itself in its full Extent, when one lies under Calumny or Oppression of any kind. The generous Contumacy of *Socrates*, as [Cicero](#) calls it, has been highly celebrated in all Ages; and when join'd to the usual

Modesty of his Behaviour, forms a most shining Character. *Iphicrates*, the *Athenian* General, being accus'd of betraying the Interests of his Country, ask'd his Accuser, *Would you*, says he, *on a like Occasion, have been guilty of that Crime? By no Means*, reply'd the other. *And can you then imagine*, cry'd the Hero, *that Iphicrates would be guilty?* Quinctil. Lib. 5. Cap. 12. In short, a generous Spirit and Self-value, well founded, decently disguis'd, and courageously supported under Distress and Calumny, is a very great Virtue, and seems to derive its Merit from the noble Elevation of its Sentiment, or its immediate Agreeableness to its Possessor. In ordinary Characters, we approve of a Byass to Modesty, which is immediately agreeable to others. The vic'ous Excess of the former Virtue, *viz.* Insolence or Haughtiness, is immediately disagreeable to others: The Excess of the latter is so to the Possessor. Thus are the Boundaries of these Duties adjusted.

SECTION IX

CONCLUSION OF THE *WHOLE*

PART I

It may justly appear surprizing, that any Man, in so late an Age, should find it requisite to prove, by elaborate Reasonings, that VIRTUE or PERSONAL MERIT consists altogether in the Possession of Qualities, *useful* or *agreeable* to the *Person himself* or to *others*. It might be expected that this Principle would have occur'd even to the first rude, unpractis'd Enquirers concerning Morals, and been receiv'd, from its own Evidence, without any Argument or Disputation. Whatever is valuable in any Kind so naturally classes itself under the Division of *useful* or *agreeable*, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that 'tis not easy to imagine, why we should ever seek farther, or consider the Question as a Matter of nice Research or Enquiry. And as every Thing useful or agreeable must possess these Qualities with regard either to the *Person himself* or to *others*, the compleat Delineation or Description of Merit seems to be perform'd as naturally as a Shadow is cast by the Sun, or an Image is reflected upon Water. If the Ground, on which the Shadow is cast, be not broken and uneven, nor the Surface, from which the Image is

reflected, disturb'd and confus'd, a just Figure is immediately presented, without any Art or Attention. And it seems a reasonable Presumption, that Systems and Hypotheses have perverted our natural Understanding, when a Theory, so simple and obvious, could so long have escap'd the most elaborate Scrutiny and Examination.

BUT however the Case may have far'd with Philosophy; in common Life, these Principles are still implicitly maintain'd; nor is any other Topic of Praise or Blame ever recur'd to, when we employ any Panegyric or Satyre, any Applause or Censure of human Action and Behaviour. If we observe Men, in every Intercourse of Business or Pleasure, in each Conference and Conversation, we shall find them no where, except in the Schools, at any Loss upon this Subject. What so natural, for Instance, as the following Dialogue? You are very happy, we shall suppose one to say, addressing himself to another, that you have given your Daughter to *Cleanthes*: He is a Man of Honour and Humanity. Every one, who has any Intercourse with him, is sure of *fair* and *kind* Treatment^[1]. I congratulate you too, says another, on the promising Expectations of this Son-in-law; whose assiduous Application to the Study of the Laws, whose quick Penetration and early Knowledge both of Men and Business, prognosticate the greatest Honours and Advancement^[2]. You surprize me much, replies a third, when you talk of Cleanthes as a Man of Business and Application. I met him lately in a Circle of the gayest Company, and he was the very Life and Soul of our Conversation: So much Wit with Good-manners; so much Gallantry without Affectation; so much ingenious Knowledge so genteely deliver'd, I have never before observ'd in any one^[3]. You would admire him still more, says a fourth, if you knew him more familiarly. That Cheerfulness, which you might remark in him, is not a sudden Flash struck out by Company: It runs thro' the whole Tenor of his Life, and preserves a perpetual Serenity on his Countenance, and Tranquillity in his Soul. He has met with severe Trials, Misfortunes as well as Dangers; and by his Greatness of Mind, was still superior to all of them^[4]. The Image, Gentlemen, you have here delineated of *Cleanthes*, cry I, is that of accomplish'd Merit. Each of you has given

a Stroke of the Pencil to his Figure; and you have unawares exceeded all the Pictures drawn by *Gratian* or *Castiglione*. A Philosopher might select this Character as a Model of perfect Virtue.

AND as every Quality, which is useful or agreeable to ourselves or others, is, in common Life, admitted under the Denomination of Virtue or personal Merit; so no other will ever be receiv'd, where Men judge of Things by their natural, unprejudic'd Reason, without the delusive Glosses of Superstition and false Religion. Celibacy, Fasting, Penances, Mortification, Self-denial, Humility, Silence, Solitude and the whole Train of monkish Virtues; for what Reason are they every where rejected by Men of Sense, but because they **serve to no manner**^[errata 1] of Purpose; neither advance a Man's Fortune in the World, nor render him a more valuable Member of Society; neither qualify him for the Entertainment of Company, nor encrease his Power of Self-enjoyment? We observe, on the contrary, that they cross all these desirable Ends; stupify the Understanding and harden the Heart, obscure the Fancy and sow the Temper. We justly, therefore transfer them to the opposite Column, and place them in the Catalogue of Vices; nor has any Superstition Force sufficient, amongst Men of the World, to pervert entirely these natural Sentiments. A gloomy, hair-brain'd Enthusiast, after his Death, may have Place in the Calendar; but will scarce ever be admitted, when alive, into Intimacy and Society, except by those who are as delirious and dismal as himself.

IT seems a Happiness in the present Theory, that it enters not into that vulgar Dispute concerning the *Degrees* of Benevolence or Self-love, which prevail in human Nature; a Dispute, which is never likely to have any Issue, both because Men, who have taken Party, are not easily convinc'd, and because the Phænomena, which can be produc'd on either Side, are so dispers'd, so uncertain, and subject to so many Interpretations, that 'tis scarce possible accurately to compare them, or draw from them any determinate Inference or Conclusion. 'Tis sufficient for our present Purpose, if it be allow'd, what surely, without the greatest Absurdity, cannot be disputed, that there is some Benevolence, however small, infus'd into our Bosom;

some Spark of Friendship for human Kind; some Particle of the Dove, kneaded into our Frame, along with the Elements of the Wolf and Serpent. Let these generous Sentiments be suppos'd ever so weak; let them be hardly sufficient to move even a Hand or Finger of our Body; they must still direct the Determinations of our Mind, and where every Thing else is equal, produce a cool Preference of what is useful and serviceable to Mankind, above what is pernicious and dangerous. A *moral Distinction*, therefore, immediately arises; a general Sentiment of Blame and Approbation; a Tendency, however faint, to the Objects of the one, and a proportionable Aversion to those of the other. Nor will those Reasoners, who so earnestly maintain the predominant Selfishness of human Kind, be any way scandaliz'd at hearing of the weak Sentiments of Virtue, implanted in our Nature. On the contrary, they are found as ready to maintain the one Tenet as the other; and their Spirit of Satyre, (for such it appears, rather than of Corruption) naturally gives Rise to both Opinions; which have, indeed, a great, and almost indissoluble Connexion together.

AVARICE, Ambition, Vanity, and all Passions, vulgarly, tho' improperly, compriz'd under the Denomination of *Self-love*, are here excluded from our Theory concerning the Origin of Morals, not because they are too weak, but because they have not a proper Direction, for that Purpose. The Notion of Morals implies some Sentiment, common to all Mankind, which recommends the same Object to general Approbation, and makes every Man, or most Men, agree in the same Opinion or Decision concerning it. It also implies some Sentiment, so universal and comprehensive as to extend to all Mankind, and render the Actions and Conduct, even of Persons the most remote, an Object of Censure or Applause, according as they agree or disagree with that Rule of Right, which is establish'd. These two requisite Circumstances belong alone to the Sentiment of Humanity here insisted on. The other Passions produce, in every Breast, many strong Sentiments of Desire and Aversion, Affection and Hatred; but these neither are felt so much in common, nor are

so comprehensive, as to be the Foundation of any general System and establish'd Theory of Blame or Approbation.

WHEN a Man denominates another his *Enemy*, his *Rival*, his *Antagonist*, his *Adversary*, he is understood to speak the Language of Self-love, and to express Sentiments, peculiar to himself, and arising from his particular Circumstances and Situation: But when he bestows on any Man the Epithets of *vicious* or *odious* or *deprav'd*, he then speaks another Language, and expresses Sentiments, in which he expects all his Audience are to concur with him. He must here, therefore, depart from his private and particular Situation, and must choose a Point of View, common to him with others: He must move some universal Principle of the human Frame, and touch a String, to which all Mankind have an Accord and Symphony. If he means, therefore, to express, that this Man possesses Qualities, whose Tendency is pernicious to Society, he has chosen this common Point in View, and has touch'd the Principle of Humanity, in which every Man, in some Degree, concurs. While the human Heart is compounded of the same Elements as at present, it will never be altogether indifferent to the Good of Mankind, nor entirely unaffected with the Tendencies of Characters and Manners. And tho' this Affection of Humanity may not generally be esteem'd so strong, as Ambition or Vanity, yet, being common to all Men, it can alone be the Foundation of Morals, or of any general System of Conduct and Behaviour. One Man's Ambition is not another's Ambition; nor will the same Event or Object satisfy both: But the Humanity of one Man is the Humanity of every one; and the same Object touches this Passion in all human Creatures.

BUT the Sentiments, which arise^[errata 2] from Humanity, are not only the same in all human Creatures, and produce the same Approbation or Censure; but they also comprehend all human Creatures; nor is there any one, whose Conduct and Character is not, by their Means, an Object, to every one, of Censure or Approbation. On the contrary those other Passions, commonly denominated selfish, both produce different Sentiments in each Individual, according to his particular Situation; and also

contemplate the greatest Part of Mankind with the utmost Indifference and Unconcern. Whoever has a high Regard and Esteem for me flatters my Vanity; whoever expresses Contempt mortifies and displeases me: But as my Name is known but to a small Part of Mankind, there are few, that come within the Sphere of this Passion, or excite, on its Account, either my Affection or Disgust. But if you represent a tyrannical, insolent, or barbarous Behaviour, in any Country or in any Age of the World; I soon carry my Eye to the pernicious Tendency of such a Conduct, and feel the Sentiments of Repugnance and Displeasure towards it. No Character can be so remote as to be, in this Light, altogether indifferent to me. What is beneficial to Society or to the Person himself must still be prefer'd. And every Quality or Action, of every human Being, must, by this Means, be rank'd under some Class or Denomination, expressive of general Censure or Applause.

WHAT more, therefore, can we ask to distinguish the Sentiments, dependant on Humanity, from those connected with any other Passion, or to satisfy us why the former is the Origin of Morals, and not the latter? Whatever Conduct gains my Approbation, by touching my Humanity, procures also the Applause of all Mankind, by affecting the same Principle in them: But what serves my Avarice or Ambition pleases only these Passions in me, and affects not the Avarice or Ambition of the rest of Mankind. No Conduct, in any Man. which has a beneficial Tendency, but is agreeable to my Humanity, however remote the Person: But every Man, so far remov'd as neither to cross nor serve my Avarice and Ambition, is altogether indifferent to those Passions. The Distinction, therefore, betwixt those different Species of Sentiment being so strong and evident, Language must soon be moulded upon it, and must invent a peculiar Set of Terms to express those universal Sentiments of Censure or Approbation, which arise from Humanity or from Views of general Usefulness and its contrary. VIRTUE and VICE become then known: Morals are recogniz'd: Certain general Ideas are fram'd of human Conduct and Behaviour: Such Measures are expected from Men, in such Situations: This Action is determin'd conformable to our abstract

Rule; that other, contrary. And by such universal Principles are the particular Sentiments of Self-love frequently controul'd and limited^[5].

FROM Instances of popular Tumults, Seditions, Factions, Panics, and all Passions, which are shar'd with a Multitude; we may learn the Influence of Society, in exciting and supporting any Emotion; while the most ungovernable Disorders are rais'd, we find, by that Means, from the slightest and most frivolous Occasions. *Solon* was no very cruel, tho', perhaps, an unjust Legislator, who punish'd Neuters in civil Wars; and few, I believe, would, in such Cases, incur the Penalty, were their Affection and Discourse allow'd sufficient to absolve them. No Selfishness, and scarce any Philosophy, has there Force sufficient to support a total Coolness and Indifference; and he must be more or less than Man, who kindles not in the common Blaze. What Wonder, then, that moral Sentiments are found of such Influence in Life; tho' springing from Principles, which may appear, at first Sight, somewhat small and delicate? But these Principles, we must remark, are social and universal: They form, in a Manner, the *Party* of Human-kind against Vice or Disorder, its common Enemy: And as the benevolent Concern for others is diffus'd, in a greater or less Degree, over all Men, and is the same in all, it occurs more frequently in Discourse, is foster'd by Society and Conversation, and the Blame and Approbation, consequent on it, are thereby rous'd from that Lethargy, into which they are probably lull'd, in solitary and uncultivated Nature. Other Passions, tho' perhaps originally stronger, yet being selfish and private, are often over-power'd by its Force, and yield the Dominion of our Breast to those social and public Principles.

ANOTHER Spring of our Constitution, that brings great Addition of Force to moral Sentiment, is, the Love of Fame; which rules, with such uncontrol'd Authority, in all generous Minds, and is often the grand Object of all their Designs and Undertakings. By our continual and earnest Pursuit of a Character, a Name, a Reputation in the World, we bring our own Deportment and Conduct frequently in Review, and consider how they appear in the Eyes of those, who approach and regard us. This constant Habit of surveying ourself, as

it were, in Reflexion, keeps alive all the Sentiments of Right and Wrong, and begets, in noble Natures, a certain Reverence for themselves as well as others; which is the surest Guardian of every Virtue. The animal Conveniencies and Pleasures sink gradually in their Value; while every inward Beauty and moral Grace is studiously acquir'd, and the Mind is accomplish'd in each Perfection, that can adorn or embellish a rational Creature.

HERE is the most perfect Morality we are acquainted with: Here is display'd the Force of many Sympathies. Our moral Sentiment is itself a Feeling chiefly of that Nature: And our Regard to a Character with others seems to arise only from a Care of preserving a Character with ourselves, in order to which we find it necessary to prop our tottering Judgment on the correspondent Approbation of Mankind.

BUT in order to accommodate Matters, and remove, if possible, every Difficulty, let us allow all these Reasonings to be false. Let us allow, that when we resolve the Pleasure, that arises from Views of Utility, into the Sentiments of Humanity and Sympathy, we have embrac'd a wrong Hypothesis. Let us confess it necessary to find some other Explication of that Applause, which is paid to all Objects, whether inanimate, animate or rational, if they have a Tendency to promote the Welfare and Advantage of others. However difficult it be to conceive, that an Object is approv'd of, on Account of its Tendency to a certain End, while the End itself is totally indifferent; let us swallow this Absurdity, and consider what are the Consequences. The preceding Delineation or Definition of VIRTUE must still retain its Evidence and Authority: It must still be allow'd, that every Quality of the Mind, which is *useful* or *agreeable* to the *Person himself* or to *others*, communicates a Pleasure to the Spectator, engages his Esteem, and is admitted under the honourable Denomination of Virtue or Merit. Are not Justice, Fidelity, Honour, Veracity, Allegiance, Chastity esteem'd solely on Account of their Tendency to promote the Good of Society? Is not that Tendency inseperable from Humanity, Benevolence, Lenity, Generosity, Gratitude, Moderation, Tenderness, Friendship, and all

the other social Virtues? Can it possibly be doubted, that Industry, Discretion, Frugality, Secrecy, Order, Perseverance, Forethought, Judgment, and that whole Class of Virtues, of which many Pages would not contain the Catalogue; can it be doubted, I say, that the Tendency of these Virtues to promote the Interest and Happiness of their Possessor is the sole Foundation of their Merit? Who can dispute that a Mind, which supports a perpetual Serenity and Cheerfulness, a noble Dignity and undaunted Spirit, a tender Affection and Good-will to all around; as it has more Enjoyment within itself, is also a more animating and rejoicing Spectacle, than if dejected with Melancholy, tormented with Anxiety, irritated with Rage, or sunk into the most abject Baseness and Degeneracy? And as to the Qualities, immediately *agreeable to others*, they speak sufficiently for themselves; and he must be unhappy, indeed, either in his own Temper, or in his Situation and Circumstances, who has never perceiv'd the Charms of a facetious Wit or flowing Affability, of a delicate Modesty or decent Genteelness of Address and Manner.

I AM sensible, that nothing can be more unphilosophical than to be positive or dogmatical on any Subject; and that, even if *excessive* Scepticism could be maintain'd, it would not be more destructive to all just Reasoning and Enquiry. I am convinc'd, that, where Men are the most sure and arrogant, they are commonly the most mistaken, and have there given Reins to Passion, without that proper Deliberation and Suspence, which can alone secure them from the grossest Absurdities. Yet I must confess, that this Enumeration puts the Matter in so strong a Light, that I cannot, *at present*, be more assur'd of any Truth, which I learn from Reasoning and Argument, than that Virtue consists altogether in the Usefulness or Agreeableness of Qualities to the Person himself, possess of them, or to others, who have any Intercourse with him. But when I reflect, that, tho' the Bulk and Figure of the Earth have been measur'd and delineated, tho' the Motions of the Tides have been accounted for, the Order and Œconomy of the heavenly Bodies subjected to their proper Laws, and INFINITE itself reduc'd to Calculation; yet Men still dispute concerning the Foundation of their moral Duties: When I

reflect on this, I say, I fall back into Diffidence and Scepticism, and suspect, that an Hypothesis, so obvious, had it been a true one, would, long 'ere now, have been receiv'd, by the unanimous Suffrage and Consent of Mankind.

PART II.

There remains nothing, but to consider briefly our *Obligation* to Virtue, and to enquire, whether every Man, who has any Regard to his own Happiness and Welfare, will not best find his Account in the Practice of every moral Duty. If this can be clearly ascertain'd from the foregoing Theory, we shall have the Satisfaction to reflect, that we have advanc'd Principles, which not only, 'tis hop'd, will stand the Test of Reasoning and Enquiry, but may contribute to the Amendment of Men's Lives, and their Improvement in Morality and social Virtue. And tho' the philosophical Truth of any Proposition by no Means depends on its Tendency to promote the Interest of Society; yet a Man has but a bad Grace, who delivers a Theory, however true, which, he must confess, leads to a Practice, dangerous and pernicious. Why rake into those Corners of Nature, which spread a Nuisance all around? Why dig up the Pestilence from the Pit, in which it is bury'd? The Ingenuity of your Researches may be admir'd; but your Systems will be detested: And Mankind will agree, if they cannot refute them, to sink them, at least, in eternal Silence and Oblivion: Truths, which are *pernicious* to Society, if any such there be, will yield to Errors, which are salutary and *advantageous*.

BUT what philosophical Truths can be more advantageous to Society, than those here deliver'd, which represent Virtue in all her genuine and most engaging Charms, and make us approach her with Ease, Familiarity and Affection? The dismal Dress falls off, with which many Divines, and some Philosophers had cover'd her; and nothing appears but Gentleness, Humanity, Beneficence, Affability; nay even, at proper Intervals, Play, Frolic, and Gaiety. She talks not of useless

Austerities and Rigors, Sufferance and Self-denial. She declares, that her sole Purpose is, to make her Votaries and all Mankind, during every Instant of their Existence, if possible, cheerful and happy; nor does she ever willingly part with any Pleasure but in Hopes of ample Compensation in some other Period of their Lives. The sole Trouble she demands is that of just Calculation, and a steady Preference of the greater Happiness. And if any austere Pretenders approach her, Enemies to Joy and Pleasure, she either rejects them as Hypocrites and Deceivers, or if she admits them in her Train, they are rank'd, however, among the least favour'd of her Votaries.

AND indeed, to drop all figurative Expression, what Hopes can we ever have of engaging Mankind to a Practice, which we confess full of Austerity and Rigour? Or what Morality can ever serve any useful Purpose, unless it can show, by a particular Detail, that all the Duties it recommends, are also the true Interest of each Individual? And the peculiar Advantage of the foregoing Theory, seems to be, that it furnishes proper Mediums for that Purpose.

THAT the Virtues, which are immediately *useful* or *agreeable* to the Person, possess of them, are desirable in a View to Self-interest, it would surely be superfluous to prove. Moralists, indeed, may spare themselves all the Pains they often take in recommending these Duties. To what Purpose collect Arguments to evince, that Temperance is advantageous, and the Excesses of Pleasure hurtful? When it appears, that these Excesses are only denominated such, because they are hurtful; and that, if the unlimited Use of strong Liquors, for Instance, no more impair'd Health or the Faculties of the Mind and Body than the Use of Air or Water, it would not be a whit more vicious or blameable.

IT seems equally superfluous to prove, that the *companionable* Virtues of Good-manners and Wit, Decency and Genteelness are more desirable than the contrary Qualities. Vanity alone, without other Considerations, is a sufficient Motive to make us wish the Possession of these Accomplishments. No Man was ever willingly deficient in this Particular. All our Failures here proceed from bad

Education, Want of Capacity, or a perverse and unpliant Disposition. Would you have your Company coveted, admir'd, follow'd; rather than hated, despis'd, avoided? Can any one seriously deliberate in the Case? As no Enjoyment is sincere, without some Reference to Company and Society; so no Society can be agreeable or even tolerable, where a Man feels his Presence unwelcome, and discovers all around him Symptoms of Aversion and Disgust.

BUT why, in the greater Society or Confederacy of Mankind, should not the Case be the same as in particular Clubs and Companies? Why is it more doubtful, that the enlarg'd Virtues of Humanity, Generosity, Beneficence are desirable with a View to Happiness and Self-interest, than the limited Endowments of Ingenuity and Politeness? Are we apprehensive, that those social Affections have a greater and more immediate Interference, than any other Pursuits, with private Utility, and cannot be gratify'd without some important Sacrifices of Honour and Advantage? If so, we are but ill instructed in the Nature of the human Passions, and are more influenc'd by verbal Distinctions than by real Differences.

WHATEVER Contradiction, may vulgarly be suppos'd betwixt the *social* and *selfish* Sentiments or Dispositions, they are really no more opposite than selfish and ambitious, selfish and revengeful, selfish and vain. 'Tis requisite there be an original Propensity of some Kind, in order to be a Basis to Self-love, by giving a Relish to the Objects of its Pursuit; and none more fit for this Purpose than Beneficence or Humanity. The Goods of Fortune are spent in one Gratification or other: The Miser, who accumulates his annual Income, and lends it out at Interest, has really spent it in the Gratification of his Avarice. And 'twould be difficult to show, why a Man is more a Loser by a generous Action, than by any other Method of Expence; since the utmost he can attain, by the most elaborate Selfishness, is the Indulgence of some Affection.

Now if Life, without Passion, must be altogether insipid and tiresome; let a Man suppose he has full Power of modelling his own Disposition, and let him deliberate what Appetite or Desire he would

choose for the Foundation of his Happiness and Enjoyment. Every Affection, he would observe, when gratify'd by Success, gives a Satisfaction, proportion'd to its Force and Violence; but besides this Advantage, common to all, the immediate Feeling of Benevolence and Friendship, Humanity and Kindness, is sweet, smooth, tender, and agreeable, independent of all Fortune and Accidents. These Virtues are besides attended with a pleasing Consciousness and Remembrance, and keep us in Humour with ourselves as well as others; while we retain the agreeable Reflection of having done our Part towards Mankind and Society. And tho' all Men show a Jealousy of our Success in the Pursuits of Avarice or Ambition; yet are we almost sure of their Good-will and Good-wishes, so long as we persevere in the Paths of Virtue, and employ ourselves in the Execution of generous Plans and Purposes. What other Passion is there, where we shall find so many Advantages united; an agreeable Sentiment, a pleasing Consciousness, a good Reputation? But of these Truths, we may observe, Men are, of themselves, pretty much convinc'd; nor are they deficient in their Duty to Society, because they would not wish to be generous, friendly, and humane; but because they do not feel themselves such.

TREATING Vice with the greatest Candour, and making it all possible Concessions, we must acknowledge, that there is not, in any Instance, the smallest Pretext for giving it the Preference above Virtue, with a View to Self-interest; except, perhaps, in the Case of Justice, where a Man, taking Things in a certain Light, may often seem to be a Loser by his Integrity. And tho' 'tis acknowledg'd, that, without a Regard to Property, no Society could subsist; yet according to the imperfect Way, in which human Affairs are conducted, a sensible Knave, in particular Incidents, may think, that an Act of Iniquity or Infidelity will make a considerable Addition to his Fortune, without causing any considerable Breach in the social Union and Confederacy. That *Honesty is the best Policy*, may be a good general Rule; but is liable to many Exceptions: And he, it may, perhaps, be judg'd, conducts himself with most Wisdom, who observes the general Rule, and takes Advantage of all the Exceptions.

I MUST confess, that if a Man thinks, that this Reasoning much requires an Answer, 'twill be a little difficult to find any, that will to him appear satisfactory and convincing. If his Heart does not rebel against such pernicious Maxims, if he feels no Reluctance to the Thoughts of Villainy or Baseness, he has indeed lost a considerable Motive to Virtue; and we may expect, that his Practice will be answerable to his Speculation. But in all ingenuous Natures, the Antipathy to Treachery and Roguery is too strong to be counterballanc'd by any Views of Profit or pecuniary Advantage. Inward Peace of Mind, Consciousness of Integrity, a satisfactory Review of our own Conduct; these are Circumstances very requisite to Happiness, and will be cherish'd and cultivated by every honest Man, who feels the Importance of them.

SUCH a one has, besides, the frequent Satisfaction of seeing Knaves, with all their pretended Cunning and Ability, betray'd by their own Maxims; and while they purpose to cheat only with Moderation and Secrecy, a tempting Incident occurs, Nature is frail, and they give into the Snare; whence they can never extricate themselves, without a total Loss of Reputation, and the Forfeiture of all future Trust and Confidence with Mankind.

BUT were they ever so secret and successful, the honest Man, if he has any Tincture of Philosophy, or even common Observation and Reflection, will discover, that they themselves are, in the End, the greatest Dupes, and have sacrific'd the invaluable Enjoyment of a Character, with themselves at least, for the Acquisition of worthless Toys and Gewgaws. How little is requisite to supply the *Necessities* of Nature? And in the View of *Pleasure*, what Comparison betwixt the unbought Satisfactions of Conversation, Society, Study, even Health and the common Beauties of Nature, but especially the peaceful Reflection on one's own Conduct: What Comparison, I say, betwixt these, and the feverish, empty Amusements of Luxury and Expence? These natural Pleasures, indeed, are really without Price; both because they are below all Price in their Attainment, and above it in their Enjoyment.

1. [↑](#). Qualities useful to others.
2. [↑](#). Qualities useful to the Person himself.
3. [↑](#). Qualities immediately agreeable to others.
4. [↑](#). Qualities immediately agreeable to the Person himself.
5. [↑](#). It seems certain, both from Reason and Experience, that a rude, untaught Savage regulates chiefly his Love and Hatred by the Ideas of private Utility and Injury, and has but faint Conceptions of a general Rule or System of Behaviour. The Man, who stands opposite to him in Battle, he hates heartily, not only for the present Moment, which is almost unavoidable, but for ever after; nor is he satisfy'd without the most extreme Punishment and Vengeance. But we, accustom'd to Society and to more enlarg'd Reflections, consider, that this Man is serving his own Country and Community; that any Man, in the same Situation, would do the same; that we ourselves, in like Circumstances, observe a like Conduct; that in general human Society is best supported on such Maxims: And by these Suppositions and Views, we correct, in some Measure, our ruder and narrower Passions. And tho' much of our Friendship and Enmity be still regulated by private Considerations of Benefit and Harm, we pay, at least, this Homage to general Rules, which we are accustom'd to respect, that we commonly pervert our Adversary's Conduct, by imputing Malice or Injustice to him, in order to give Vent to those Passions, which arise from Self-love and private Interest. When the Heart is full of Rage, it never wants Pretexts of this Nature; tho' sometimes as frivolous, as those, from which [Horace](#), being almost crush'd by the Fall of a Tree, affects to accuse of Parricide the first Planter of it.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

APPENDIX I

CONCERNING MORAL SENTIMENT

If the foregoing Hypothesis be receiv'd, 'twill now be easy for us to determine the Question first stated^[1], concerning the general Principles of Morals; and tho' we postpon'd the Decision of that Question, lest it should then involve us in intricate Speculations, which are totally unfit for moral Discourses, we may resume it at present, and examine how far either *Reason* or *Sentiment* enters into all moral Determinations.

THE chief Foundation of moral Praise being suppos'd to lie in the Usefulness of any Quality or Action; 'tis evident, that *Reason* must enter for a considerable Share in all Determinations of this Kind; since nothing but that Faculty can instruct us in the Tendency of Qualities and Actions, and point out their beneficial Consequences to Society and to their Possessors. In many Cases, this is an Affair liable to great Controversy: Doubts may arise; opposite Interests occur; and a Preference must be given to one Side, from very nice Views and a small Overballance of Utility. This is particularly remarkable in Questions with regard to Justice; as is, indeed, natural to suppose from that Species of Utility, which attends this Virtue^[2]. Were every single Instance of Justice, like that of Benevolence, beneficial and useful to Society; this would be a more simple State of the Case, and seldom liable to great Controversy. But as single

Instances of Justice are often pernicious, in their first and immediate Tendency, and as the Advantage to Society results only from the Observance of the general Rule, and from the Concurrence and Combination of several Persons in the same equitable Conduct; the Case here becomes more intricate and involv'd. The various Circumstances of Society; the various Consequences of any Practice; the various Interests, which may be propos'd: These on many Occasions are doubtful, and subject to great Discussion and Enquiry. The Object of municipal Laws is to fix all Questions with regard to Justice: The Debates of Civilians; the Reflections of Politicians; the Precedents of Histories and public Records, are all directed to the same Purpose. And a very accurate *Reason* or *Judgment* is often requisite, to give the true Determination, amidst such intricate Doubts arising from obscure or opposite Utilities.

BUT tho' Reason, when fully assisted and improv'd, be sufficient to instruct us in the pernicious or useful Tendencies of Qualities and Actions; it is not alone sufficient to produce any moral Blame or Approbation. Utility is only a Tendency to a certain End; and were the End totally indifferent to us, we should feel the same Indifference towards the Means. 'Tis requisite a *Sentiment* should here display itself, in order to give a Preference to the useful above the pernicious Tendencies. This Sentiment can be no other than a Feeling for the Happiness of Mankind, and a Resentment of their Misery; since these are the different Ends, which Virtue and Vice have a Tendency to promote. Here therefore, *Reason* instructs us in the several Tendencies of Actions, and *Humanity* makes a Distinction in favour of those, which are useful and beneficial.

THIS Partition betwixt the Faculties of Understanding and Sentiment, in all moral Decisions, seems clear from the preceding Hypothesis. But I shall suppose that Hypothesis false: 'Twill then be requisite to look out for some other Theory, that may be satisfactory; and I dare venture to affirm, that none such will ever be found, as long as we suppose Reason to be the sole Source of Morals. To prove this, it will be proper to weigh the five following Considerations.

I. 'TIS easy for a false Hypothesis to maintain some Appearance of Truth, while it keeps altogether in Generals, makes use of undefin'd Terms, and employs Comparisons, instead of Instances. This is particularly remarkable in that Philosophy, which ascribes the Discernment of all moral Distinctions to Reason alone without the Concurrence of Sentiment. 'Tis impossible, in any particular Instance, that this Hypothesis can so much as be render'd intelligible; whatever specious Figure it may make in general Declamations and Discourses. Examine the Crime of *Ingratitude*, for Instance; which has Place, wherever we observe Good-will, exprest and known, along with Good-offices perform'd, on the one Side, and a Return of Ill-will or Indifference, with Ill-offices or Neglect, on the other: Anatomize all these Circumstances, and examine, by your Reason alone, wherein consists the Demerit or Blame: You never will come to any Issue or Conclusion.

REASON judges either of *Matter of Fact* or of *Relations*. Enquire then, *first*, where is that Matter of Fact, which we here call *Crime*; point it out; determine the Time of its Existence; describe its Essence or Nature; explain the Sense or Faculty, to which it discovers itself. It resides in the Mind of the Person, who is ungrateful. He must, therefore, feel it and be conscious of it. But nothing is there, except the Passion of Ill-will or absolute Indifference. You cannot say, that these, of themselves, always, and in all Circumstances, are Crimes. No: They are only Crimes, when directed towards Persons, who have before exprest and display'd Good-will towards us. Consequently, we may infer, that the Crime of Ingratitude is not any particular individual *Fact*; but arises from a Complication of Circumstances, which, being presented to the Spectator, excites the *Sentiment* of Blame, by the particular Structure and Fabric of his Mind.

THIS Representation, you say, is false. Crime, indeed, consists not in a particular *Fact*, of whose Reality we are assur'd by *Reason*: But it consists in certain *moral Relations*, discoverable by Reason, in the same Manner as we discover, by Reason, the Truths of Geometry or Algebra. But what are the Relations, I ask, of which you here talk?

In the Case stated above, I see first Good-will and Good-offices, in one Person; then Ill-will and Ill-offices in the other: Betwixt these, there is the Relation of *Contrariety*. Does the Crime consist in that Relation? But suppose a Person bore me Ill-will or did me Ill-offices; and I, in return, were indifferent towards him, or did him Good-offices: Here is the same Relation of *Contrariety*; and yet my Conduct is often highly laudable^[errata 1]. Twist and turn this Matter, as much as you will, you can never rest the Morality on Relation; but must have Recourse to the Decisions of Sentiment.

WHEN 'tis affirm'd, that two and three are equal to the half of ten; this Relation of Equality, I understand perfectly. I conceive, that if ten be divided into two Parts, of which one had as many Unites as the other; and if any of these Parts be compar'd to two added to three, it will contain as many Unites as that compound Number. But when you draw thence a Comparison to moral Relations, I own, I am altogether at a loss to understand you. A moral Action, a Crime, such as Ingratitude, is a complicated Object. Does the Morality consist in the Relation of its Parts to each other. How? After what Manner? Specify the Relation: Be more particular and explicate in your Propositions; and you will easily see their Falshood.

No, say you, the Morality consists in the Relation of Action to the Rule of Right; and they are denominated good or ill, according as they agree or disagree with it. What then is this Rule of Right? Wherein does it consist? How is it determin'd? By Reason, you'll say, which examines the moral Relations of Actions. So that moral Relations are determin'd by the Comparison of Actions to a Rule. And the Role is determin'd by considering the moral Relations of Objects. Is not this fine Reasoning?

ALL this is Metaphysics, you cry. That is enough: There needs nothing more to give a strong Presumption of Falshood. Yes, reply I: Here are Metaphysics surely: But they are all on your Side, who advance an abstruse Hypothesis, which can never be made intelligible, nor quadrate to any particular Instance or Illustration. The Hypothesis we embrace is plain. It maintains, that Morality is

determin'd by Sentiment. It defines Virtue to be, *whatever mental Action or Quality gives to a Spectator the pleasing Sentiment of Approbation*; and Vice the contrary. We then proceed to examine a plain Matter of Fact, viz. what Actions have this Influence: We consider all the Circumstances, in which these Actions agree: And from thence endeavour to extract some general Observations with regard to these Sentiments. If you call this Metaphysics, and find any thing abstruse here, you need only conclude, that your Turn of Mind is not suited to the moral Sciences.

II. WHEN a Man, at any Time, deliberates concerning his own Conduct, (as, whether he had better, in a particular Emergence, assist a Brother or a Benefactor) he must consider these separate Relations, with the whole Circumstances and Situation of the Persons, in order to determine his superior Duty and Obligation: And in order to determine the Proportion of Lines in any Triangle, 'tis necessary to examine the Nature of that Figure, and the Relations, which its several Parts bear to each other. But notwithstanding this apparent Similarity in the two Cases, there is, at the bottom, an extreme Difference betwixt them. A speculative Reasoner concerning Triangles or Circles considers the several known and given Relations of the Parts of these Figures; and from thence infers some unknown Relation, which is dependent on the former. But in moral Deliberations, we must be acquainted, before-hand, with all the Objects, and all their Relations to each other; and from a Comparison of the whole, fix our Choice or Approbation. No new Fact to be ascertain'd: No new Relation to be discover'd. The whole Circumstances of the Case are suppos'd to be laid before us, 'ere we can fix any Sentence of Blame or Approbation. If any material Circumstance be yet unknown or doubtful, we must first employ our Enquiry or intellectual Faculties to assure us of it; **and must suspend** [\[errata 2\]](#) for a Time all moral Decision or Sentiment. While we are ignorant, whether a Man was Aggressor or not, how can we determine, whether the person, who kill'd him, be criminal or innocent? But after every Circumstance, every Relation is known, the Understanding has no farther Room to operate, nor any Object, on

which it could employ itself. The Approbation or Blame, which then ensues, cannot be the Work of the Judgment, but of the Heart, and is not a speculative Proposition or Affirmation, but an active Feeling or Sentiment. In the Disquisitions of the Understanding, from known Circumstances and Relations, we infer some new and unknown. In moral Decisions, the whole Circumstances and Relations must be antecedently known; and the Mind, from the Contemplation of the Whole, feels some new Impression of Affection of Disgust, Esteem or Contempt, Approbation or Blame.

HENCE the great Difference betwixt a Mistake of *Fact* and one of *Right*; and hence the Reason, why the one is commonly criminal and not the other. When *OEdipus* kill'd *Laius*, he was ignorant of the Relation, and from Circumstances, innocent and involuntary, form'd erroneous Opinions concerning the Action he committed. But when *Nero* kill'd *Agrippina*, all the Relations betwixt himself and the person, and all the Circumstances of the Fact were antecedently known to him: But the Motive of Revenge, or Fear or Interest, in his savage Heart, prevail'd over the Sentiments of Duty and Humanity. And when we express a Detestation against him, to which he, himself, in a little Time, became insensible; 'tis not, that we see any Relations, of which he was ignorant, but that, from the Rectitude of our Disposition, we feel Sentiments, against which he was harden'd, from Flattery and a long Perseverance in the most enormous Crimes. In these Sentiments, then, not in a Discovery of Relations of any Kind, do all moral Determinations consist. Before we can pretend to form any Decision of this kind, every Thing must be known and ascertain'd on the Side of the Object or Action. Nothing remains but to feel, on our Part, some Sentiment of Blame or Approbation, whence we pronounce the Action criminal or virtuous.

III. THIS Doctrine will become still more evident, if we compare moral Beauty with natural, to which, in many Particulars, it bears so near a Resemblance. 'Tis on the Proportion, Relation, and Position of Parts, that all natural Beauty depends; but 'twould be absurd thence to infer, that the Perception of Beauty, like that of Truth in geometrical Problems, consists altogether in the Perception of

Relations, and was perform'd entirely by the Understanding or intellectual Faculties. In all the Sciences, our Mind, from the known Relations, investigates the unknown: But in all Decisions of Taste or external Beauty, the whole Relations are before-hand obvious to the Eye, and we thence proceed to feel a Sentiment of Complacency or Disgust, according to the Nature of the Object, and Disposition of our Organs.

[EUCLID](#) has fully explain'd all the Qualities of the Circle; but has not, in any Proposition, said a Word of its Beauty. The Reason is evident. The Beauty is not a Quality of the Circle. It lies not in any Part of the Line, whose Parts are all equally distant from a common Center. It is only the Effect, which that Figure operates upon the Mind, whose peculiar Fabric or Structure renders it susceptible of such Sentiments. In vain, would you look for it in the Circle, or seek it, either by your Senses or by mathematical Reasonings, in all the Properties of that Figure.

ATTEND to *Palladio* and *Perrault*, while they explain all the Parts and Proportions of a Pillar: They talk of the Cornice and Freeze and Base and Entablature and Shaft and Architrave; and give the Description and Position of each of these Members. But should you ask the Description and Position of its Beauty, they would readily reply, that the Beauty is not any of the Parts or Members of a Pillar, but results from the Whole, when that complicated Figure is presented to an intelligent Mind, susceptible of those finer Sensations. Till such a Spectator appear, there is nothing but a Figure of such particular Dimensions and Proportions: From his Sentiments alone arises its Elegance and Beauty.

AGAIN; attend to [Cicero](#), while he paints the Crimes of a *Verres* or a *Catiline*; you must acknowledge, that the moral Turpitude results, in the same Manner, from the Contemplation of the Whole, when presented to a Being, whose Organs have such a particular Structure and Formation. The Orator may paint Rage, Insolence, Barbarity on the one Side: Meekness, Sufferance, Sorrow, Innocence on the other: But if you feel no Indignation or Compassion arise in you from

this Complication of Circumstances, you would in vain ask him, wherein consist, the Crime or Villainy, which he so vehemently exclaims against: At what Time, or on what Subject it first began to exist: And what has a few Months afterwards become of it, when every Disposition and Thought of all the Actors is totally alter'd or annihilated. No satisfactory Answer can be given to any of these Questions, upon the abstract Hypothesis of Morals; and we must at last acknowledge, that the Crime or Immorality is no particular Fact or Relation, which can be the Object of the Understanding: But arises altogether from the Sentiment of Disapprobation, which, by the Structure of human Nature, we unavoidably feel on the Apprehension of Barbarity or Treachery.

IV. INANIMATE Objects may bear to each other all the same Relations, which we observe in moral Agents; tho' the former can never be the Object of Love or Hatred, nor are consequently susceptible of Merit or Iniquity. A young Tree, that over-tops or destroys its Parent, from whose Seed it sprung, stands in all the same Relations with *Nero*, when he murder'd *Agrippina*; and if Morality consisted in any abstract Relations, would, no doubt, be equally criminal.

V. IT appears evident, that the ultimate Ends of human Actions can never, in any Case, be accounted for by *Reason*, but recommend themselves entirely to the Sentiments and Affections of Mankind, without any Dependance on the intellectual Faculties. Ask a Man, *why he uses Exercise*; he will answer, *because he desires to keep his Health*. If you then enquire, *why he desires Health*, he will readily reply, *because Sickness is painful*. If you push your Enquiries farther, and desire a Reason, *why he hates Pain*, 'tis impossible he can ever give any. This is an ultimate End, and is never refer'd to any other Object.

PERHAPS, to your second Question, *why he desires Health*, he may also reply, that *'tis requisite for the Exercise of his Calling*. If you ask, *why he is anxious on that head*, he will answer, *because he desires to get Money*. If you demand, *Why? It is the Instrument of*

Pleasure, says he. And beyond this, 'tis an Absurdity to ask for a Reason. 'Tis impossible there can be a Progress *in infinitum*; and that one Thing can always be the Reason, why another is desir'd. Something must be desirable on its own Account, and because of its immediate Accord or Agreement with human Sentiment and Affection.

Now as Virtue is an End, and is desirable on its own Account, without Fee or Reward, merely for the immediate Satisfaction it conveys; 'tis requisite there should be some Sentiment, which it touches; some internal Taste or Feeling, or whatever you please to call it, which distinguishes moral Good and Evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other.

THUS the distinct Boundaries and Offices of *Reason* and *Taste* are easily ascertain'd. The former conveys the Knowledge of Truth and Falshood: The latter gives the Sentiment of Beauty and Deformity, Vice and Virtue. The one discovers Objects, as they really stand in Nature, without Addition or Diminution: The other has a productive Faculty, and guiding or staining all natural Objects with the Colours, borrow'd from internal Sentiment, raises in a Manner, a new Creation. Reason, being cool and disengag'd, is no Motive to Action, and directs only the Impulse, receiv'd from Appetite or Inclination, by showing us the Means of obtaining Happiness or avoiding Misery: Taste, as it gives Pleasure or Pain, and thereby constitutes Happiness or Misery, becomes a Motive to Action, and is the first Spring or Impulse to Desire and Volition. From Circumstances and Relations, known or suppos'd, the former leads us to the Discovery of the conceal'd and unknown: After all Circumstances and Relations are laid before us, the latter makes us feel from the Whole a new Sentiment of Blame or Approbation. The Standard of the one, being founded on the Nature of Things, is eternal and inflexible, even by the Will of the Supreme Being: The Standard of the other, arising from the internal Frame and Constitution of Animals, is ultimately deriv'd from that Supreme Will, who bestow'd on each being its peculiar Nature, and arrang'd the several Classes and Orders of Existence.

1. [↑](#) Sect. I.
2. [↑](#) See Appendix II.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

APPENDIX II

SOME FARTHER CONSIDERATIONS WITH REGARD TO JUSTICE

The Intention of this Appendix is to give some more particular Explication of the Origin and Nature of Justice, and mark some Differences betwixt it and the other Virtues.

THE social Virtues of Humanity and Benevolence exert their Influence immediately, by a direct Tendency or Instinct, which keeps chiefly in View the simple Object, that moves the Affections, and comprehends not any Scheme or System, nor the Consequences resulting from the Concurrence, Imitation, or Example of others. A Parent flies to the Relief of his Child; transported by that natural Sympathy, which actuates him, and which affords no Leisure to reflect on the Sentiments or Conduct of the rest of Mankind in like Circumstances. A generous Man embraces cheerfully an Opportunity of serving his Friend; because he then feels himself under the Dominion of the beneficent Affections, nor is he concern'd whether any other Person in the Universe was ever before actuated by such noble Motives, or will ever afterwards prove their Influence. In all these Cases, the social Passions have in View a single individual Object, and pursue alone the Safety or Happiness of the Person, lov'd and esteem'd. With this, they are satisfy'd: In this, they acquiesce. And as the Good resulting from their benign Influence, is

in itself compleat and entire, it also excites the moral Sentiment of Approbation, without any Reflection on farther Consequences, or more enlarg'd Views of the Concurrence or Imitation of the other Members of Society. On the contrary, were the generous Friend or disinterested Patriot to stand alone in the Practice of Beneficence; this would rather inhanche his Value in our Eyes, and join the Praise of Rarity and Novelty to his other more exalted Merits.

THE Case is not the same with the social Virtues of Justice and Fidelity. They are highly useful, or indeed absolutely necessary to the Well-being of Mankind: But the Benefit, resulting from them, is not the Consequence of every individual single Act; but arises from the whole Scheme or System, concur'd in by the whole, or the greatest Part of the Society. General Peace and Order is the Attendant of Justice or a general Abstinence from the Possessions of others: But a particular Regard to the particular Right of one individual Citizen may frequently, consider'd in itself, be attended with pernicious Consequences. The Result of the several Acts is here often directly opposite to that of the whole System of Actions; and the former may be extremely hurtful, while the latter is, to the highest Degree, advantageous. Riches, inherited from a Parent, are, in a bad Man's Hand, the Instruments of Mischief. The Right of Succession may, in one Instance, be hurtful. Its Benefit arises only from the Observance of the general Rule; and 'tis sufficient, if Compensation be thereby made for all the Ills and Inconveniencies, which flow from particular Characters and Situations.

CYRUS, young and unexperienc'd, consider'd only the individual Case before him, and reflected on its limited Fitness and Convenience, when he assign'd the long Coat to the tall Boy, and the short Coat to the other of smaller Size. His Governor instructed him better; while he pointed out more enlarg'd Views and Consequences, and inform'd his Pupil of the general, inflexible Rules, requisite to support general Peace and Order in Society.

THE Happiness and Prosperity of Mankind, arising from the social Virtue of Benevolence and its Subdivisions, may be compar'd to a

Wall, built by many Hands; which still rises by each Stone, that is heap'd upon it, and receives proportional Encrease to the Diligence and Care of each Workman. The same Happiness, rais'd by the social Virtue of Justice and its Subdivisions, may be compar'd to the building of a Vault, where each individual Stone would, of itself, fall to the Ground; nor does the whole Fabric support itself, but by the mutual Assistance and Combination of its correspondent Parts.

ALL the Laws of Nature, which regulate Property, as well as all civil Laws, are general, and regard alone some essential Circumstances of the Case, without taking into Consideration the Characters, Situations and Connexions of the Persons concern'd, or any particular Consequences, that may result from the Determination of these Laws, in every particular Case, that offers. They deprive, without Scruple, a beneficent Man of all his Possessions, if acquir'd by Mistake, without a good Title; in order to bestow them on a selfish Miser, who has already heap'd up immense Stores of superfluous Riches. Public Utility requires, that Property should be regulated by general inflexible Rules; and tho' such Rules are adopted as best serve the same End of public Utility, 'tis impossible for them to prevent all particular Hardships, or make beneficial Consequences result from every individual Case. 'Tis sufficient, if the whole Plan or Scheme be necessary to the Support of civil Society, and if the Ballance of Good, in the main, does thereby preponderate much above that of Evil. Even the general Laws of the Universe, tho' plann'd by infinite Wisdom, cannot exclude all Evil or Inconvenience, in every particular Operation.

IT has been asserted by some, that all Justice arises from HUMAN CONVENTIONS, and proceeds from the voluntary Choice, Consent, or Combination of Mankind. If by *Convention* be here meant a *Promise* (which is the most usual Sense of the Word) nothing can be more absurd, than this Position. The Observance of Promises is itself one of the most considerable Parts of Justice; and we are not surely bound to keep our Word, because we have given our Word to keep it. But if by Convention be meant a Sense of common Interest; which Sense each Man feels in his own Breast, which he observes in

his Fellows, and which carries him, in concurrence with others, into a general Plan or System of Actions, that **tends**^[errata 1] to public Utility; it must be own'd, that, in this Sense, Justice arises from human Conventions. For if it be allow'd (what is, indeed, evident) that the particular Consequences of a particular Act of Justice may be hurtful to the Public as well as to Individuals; it follows, that every Man, in embracing that Virtue, must have an Eye to the whole Plan or System, and must expect the Concurrence of his Fellows in the same Conduct and Behaviour. Were all his Views to terminate in the particular Consequences of each particular Act of his own, his Benevolence and Humanity, as well as Self-love, might often prescribe to him Measures of Conduct very different from those, which are agreeable to the strict Rules of Right and Justice.

THUS two Men pull the Oars of a Boat, by common Convention, for common Interest, without any Promise or Contract: Thus Gold and Silver are made the Measures of Exchange; thus Speech and Words and Language are fixt, by human Convention and Agreement. Whatever is advantageous to two or more Persons, if all perform their Part; but what loses all Advantage, if only one perform, can arise from no other Principle. There would otherwise be no Motive for any one of them to enter into that Scheme of Conduct^[1].

THE Word, natural, is commonly taken in so many Senses, and is of such loose Signification, that it seems to little Purpose to dispute, whether Justice be natural or not. If Self-love, if Benevolence be natural to Man; if Reason and Forethought be also natural; then may the same Epithet be apply'd to Justice, Order, Fidelity, Property, Society. Men's Inclination, their Necessities lead them to combine; their Understanding and Experience tell them, that this Combination is impossible, where each governs himself by no Rule, and pays no Regard to the Possessions of others: And from these Passions and Reflections conjoin'd, as soon as we observe like Passions and Reflections in others, the Sentiment of Justice, thro' all Ages, has infallibly and certainly had place, to some Degree or other, in every Individual of human Species. In so sagacious an Animal, what

necessarily arises from the Exertion of his intellectual Faculties, may justly be esteem'd natural^[2].

AMONGST all civiliz'd Nations, it has been the constant Endeavour to remove every Thing arbitrary and partial from the Decision of Property, and to fix the Sentence of Judges by such general Views and Considerations, as may be equal to every Member of the Society. For besides, that nothing could be more dangerous than to accustom the Bench, even in the smallest Instance, to regard private Friendship or Enmity; 'tis certain, that Men, where they imagine, that there was no other Reason for the Preference of their Adversary but personal Favour, are apt to entertain the strongest Jealousy and Ill-will against the Magistrates and Judges. When natural Reason, therefore, points out no fixt View of public Utility, by which a Controversy of Property can be decided, positive Laws are often fram'd to supply its Place, and direct the Procedure of all Courts of Judicature. Where these too fail, as often happens, Precedents are call'd for; and a former Decision, tho' given itself without any sufficient Reason, justly becomes a sufficient Reason for a new Decision. If direct Laws and Precedents be wanting, imperfect and indirect ones are brought in Aid; and the controverted Case is rang'd under them, by analogical Reasonings, and Comparisons, and Similitudes, and Correspondencies, that are often more fanciful than real. In general, it may safely be asserted, that Jurisprudence is, in this respect, different from all the Sciences; and in many of its nicer Questions, there cannot properly be said to be Truth or Falshood on either Side. If one Pleader brings the Case under any former Law or Precedent, by a refin'd Analogy or Comparison; the opposite Pleader is not at a Loss to find an opposite Analogy or Comparison: And the Preference given by the Judge is often founded more on Taste and Imagination than on any solid Argument. Public Utility is the general View of all Courts of Judicature; and this Utility too requires a stable Rule in all Controversies: But where several Rules, nearly equal and indifferent, present themselves, 'tis a very slight Turn of Thought, which fixes the Decision in favour of either Party.

Cite error: <ref> tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding <references group="errata"/> tag was found

1. [↑] This Theory concerning the Origin of Property, and consequently of Justice is, in the main, the same with that hinted at and adopted by [Grotius](#). *Hinc discimus, quæ fuerit causa, ob quam a primæva communione rerum primo mobilium, deinde & immobilium discessum est: nimirum quod cum non contenti homines vesci sponte natis, antra habitare, corpore aut nudo agere, aut corticibus arborum ferarumve pellibus vestito, vitæ genus exquisitius delegissent, industria opus fuit, quam singuli rebus singulis adhiberent: Quo minus autem fructus in commune conferrentur, primum obstitit locorum, in quæ homines discesserunt, disantia, deinde justitiæ & amoris defectus, per quem fiebat, ut nec in labore, nec in consumptione fructuum quæ debebat, æqualitas servaretur. Simul discimus, quomodo res in proprietatem iverint, non animi actu solo, neque enim scire alii poterant, quid alii suum esse vellent, ut eo abstinerent, & idem velle plures poterant, sed pacto quodam aut expresso, ut per divisionem, aut tacito, ut per occupationem. De jure belli & pacis. Lib. 2. Cap. 2. § 2. Art. 4 & 5.*
2. [↑] Natural may be oppos'd, either to what is *unusual, miraculous, or artificial*. In the two former Senses, Justice and Property are undoubtedly natural. But as they suppose Reason, Forethought, Design, and a social Union and Confederacy amongst Men, perhaps, that Epithet cannot strictly, in the last Sense, be apply'd to them. Had Men liv'd without Society, Property had never been known, and neither Juice nor Injustice had ever existed. But Society amongst human Creatures, had been impossible, without Reason and Forethought. Inferior Animals, that unite, are guided by Instinct, which supplies the Place of Reason. But all these Disputes are merely verbal.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

A

DIALOGUE

My Friend, *Palamedes*, who is as great a Rambler in his Principles as in his Person, and who has run over, by Study and Travel, almost every Region of the intellectual and material World, surpriz'd me lately with an Account of a Nation, with whom, he told me, he had pass'd a considerable Part of his Life, and whom he found, in the main, an extreme civiliz'd, intelligent People.

THERE is a State, say'd he, in the World, call'd *Fourli*, no matter for its Longitude or Latitude, whose Ways of thinking in many Things, particularly in Morals, are diametrically opposite to ours. When I came amongst them, I found I must submit to double Pains; first to learn the Meaning of the Terms in their Language, and then to know the Import of those Terms, and the Praise or Blame attach'd to them. After a Word had been explain'd to me, and the Character, which it exprest, had been describ'd, I concluded, that such an Epithet must necessarily be the greatest Reproach in the World; and was extremely surpriz'd to find one, in a public Company, apply it to a Person, with whom he liv'd in the strictest Intimacy and Friendship. *You fancy*, said I, one Day, to an Acquaintance, *that Changuis is your mortal Enemy: I love to extinguish Quarrels; and I must, therefore, tell you, that Heard him talk of you in the most*

advantageous Manner. But to my great Astonishment, when I repeated *Changuis's* Words, tho' I had both remember'd and understood them perfectly, I found, that they were taken for the most mortal Affront, and that I had very innocently render'd the Breach betwixt these Persons altogether irreparable.

As it was my Fortune to come amongst this People on a very advantageous Footing, I was immediately introduc'd to the best Company; and being desir'd to live with *Alcheic*, I readily accepted his Invitation, as I found him universally esteem'd for his personal Merit; and indeed regarded by every one in *Fourli*, as a perfect Character.

ONE Evening he invited me, as an Amusement, to bear him Company in a Serenade, which he intended to give *Gulki*, with whom, he told me, he was extremely enamour'd; and I soon found his Taste was not singular: For we met many of his Rivals, who had come on the same Errand. I very naturally concluded, that this Flame of his must be one of the finest Women in Town; and I already felt a secret Inclination to see her, and be acquainted with her. But as the Moon began to rise, I was much surpriz'd to find, that we were in the Midst of the University, where *Gulki* study'd: And I was somewhat asham'd for having attended my Friend, on such an Errand.

I WAS told afterwards, that *Alcheic's* Choice of *Gulki* was very much approv'd of by all the good Company in Town; and that 'twas expected, while he gratify'd his own Passion, he would perform to that young Man the same good Office, which he had himself ow'd to *Elcouf*. It seems *Alcheic* had been very handsome in his Youth, and had been courted [\[errata 1\]](#) by many Lovers; but had bestow'd his Favours chiefly on the sage *Elcouf*, to whom he was suppos'd to owe, in a great Measure, the astonishing Progress he had made in Philosophy and Virtue.

IT gave me some Surprize, that *Alcheic's* Wife (who by-the-bye happen'd also to be his Sister) was no way scandaliz'd at this Species of Infidelity.

MUCH about the same Time I discover'd (for it was not attempted to be kept a Secret from me or any Body) that *Alcheic* was a Murderer and a Parricide, and had put to Death an innocent Person, the most nearly connected with him, and whom he was oblig'd to protect and defend by all the Ties of Nature and Humanity. When I ask'd, with all the Caution and Deference imaginable, what was his Motive for this Action; he reply'd coolly, that he was not then so much at his Ease as he is at present, and that he had acted, in that Particular, by the Advice of all his Friends.

HAVING heard *Alcheic's* Virtue so extremely celebrated, I pretended to join in the general Voice of Acclamation, and only ask'd, by way of Curiosity, as a Stranger, which of all his noble Actions was most highly applauded; and I soon found, that all Sentiments were united in giving the Preference to the Assassination of *Usbek*. This *Usbek* had been to the last Moment *Alcheic's* intimate Friend, had lay'd many high Obligations upon him, had even sav'd his Life on a certain Occasion, and had, by his Will, which was found after the Murder, made him his Heir to a considerable Part of his Fortune. *Alcheic*, it seems, conspir'd with about twenty or thirty more, most of them also *Usbek's* Friends; and falling all together on that unhappy Man, when he was not aware, they had tore him with a hundred Wounds; and given him that Reward for all his past Favours and Obligations. *Usbek*, said the general Voice of the People, had many great and good Qualities: His very Vices were shining, magnificent, and generous: But this Action of *Alcheic* sets him far above *Usbek* in the Eyes of all Judges of Merit; and is one of the noblest, that ever perhaps the Sun shone upon.

ANOTHER Part of *Alcheic's* Conduct, which I also found highly applauded, was his Behaviour towards *Calish*, with whom he was join'd in a Project or Undertaking of some Importance. *Calish*, being a passionate Man, gave *Alcheic*, one Day, a sound Drubbing; which he took very patiently, waited the Return of *Calish's* good Humour, kept still a fair Correspondence with him; and by that Means brought the Affair, in which they were join'd, to a happy Issue, and gain'd himself immortal Honour by his remarkable Temper and Moderation.

I HAVE lately receiv'd a Letter from a Correspondent in *Fourli*, by which I learn, that since my Departure, *Alcheic*, falling into a bad State of Health, has fairly hang'd himself; and has dy'd universally regreted and applauded by every one in that Country. So virtuous and noble a Life, says each *Fourlian*, could not be better crown'd than by so noble an End; and he has prov'd by this, as well as by all his other Actions, what was his constant Principle during his Life, and what he boasted of near his last Moments, that a wise Man is scarce inferior to the great God, *Vitzli*. This is the Name of the Supreme Deity amongst the *Fourlians*.

THE Notions of this People, continu'd *Palamedes*, are as extraordinary with regard to Good-manners and Sociableness, as with regard to Morals. My Friend *Alcheic* form'd once a Party for my Entertainment, compos'd of all the prime Wits and Philosophers of *Fourli*; and each of us brought his Mess along with him to the Place, where we assembled. I observ'd one of them to be worse provided than the rest, and offer'd him a Share of mine, which happen'd to be a roasted Pullet: And I could not but remark, that he, and all the rest of the Company star'd at my Simplicity. I was told, that *Alcheic* had once so much Interest with his Club as to prevail with them to eat in common, and that he had made use of an Artifice to that Purpose. He persuaded those, whom he observ'd to be *worst* provided, to offer their Mess to the Company; after which, the others, who had brought more delicate Fare, were asham'd not to make the same Offer. This is regarded as so extraordinary a Event, that it has since, as I learn, been recorded in the History of *Alcheic's* Life, compos'd by one of the greatest Geniuses of *Fourli*.

PRAY, says I, *Palamedes*, when you was at *Fourli*, did you also learn the Art of turning your Friends into Ridicule, by telling them strange Stories, and then laughing at them, if they believ'd you. I assure you, reply'd he, that had I been dispos'd to learn such a Lesson, there was no Place in the World more proper. My Friend, so often mention'd, did nothing, from Morning to Night, but sneer, and banter, and raily; and you could scarce ever distinguish, whether he was in Jest or Earnest; But you think, then, that my Story is

improbable; and that I have us'd, or rather abus'd the Privilege of a Traveller. To be sure, says I, you was but in Jest. Such barbarous and savage Manners are not only incompatible with a civiliz'd, intelligent People, such as you said these were; but are scarce compatible with human Nature. They exceed all we ever read of, amongst the *Mingrelians* and *Topinamboues*.

HAVE a care, cry'd he, have a care! You are not aware you are speaking Blasphemy, and are abusing your Favourites, the *Greeks*, especially the *Athenians*, whom I have couch'd all along, under these bizarre Names I employ'd. If you consider aright, there is not one Stroke of the foregoing Character, which might not be found in the Man of highest Merit at *Athens*, without diminishing, in the least, from the Brightness of his Character. The *Greek Love*, their Marriages^[1], and the exposing of their Children cannot but strike you immediately. The Death of *Usbek* is an exact Counter-part to that of Caesar.

ALL to a Trifle, say'd I, interrupting him; you did not mention, that *Usbek* was an Usurper.

I DID not, reply'd he; lest you should discover the Parallel I aim'd at. But even adding this Circumstance, we should make no Scruple, according to our Sentiments of Morals, to denominate *Brutus*, and *Cassius*, ungrateful Traitors and Assassins: Tho' you know, that they are, perhaps, the highest Characters of all Antiquity; and the *Athenians* erected Statues to them; which they plac'd near those of *Harmodius* and *Aristogiton*, their own Deliverers. And if you think this Circumstance, you mention, so material to absolve these Patriots, I shall compensate it by another, not mention'd, which will equally aggravate their Crime. A few Days before the Execution of their fatal Purpose, they all swore Fealty to *Cæsar*; and protesting to hold his Person ever sacred, they touch'd the Altar with those Hands, which they had already arm'd for his Destruction^[2].

I NEED not put you in mind of the famous and applauded Story of *Themistocles*, and of his Patience towards *Eurybiades*, the *Spartan*, his commanding Officer, who, heated by a Debate, lifted his Cane to

him in a Council of War (the same Thing as if he had cudgel'd him) *Strike!* cries the *Athenian*, *Strike! but hear me.*

You are too good a Scholar not to discover *Socrates* and his *Athenian* Club in my last Story; and you would certainly observe, that it is exactly copy'd from *Xenophon*, with a Variation only of the Names^[3]. And I think I have fairly made appear, that an *Athenian* Man of Merit might be such a one as with us would pass for Incestuous, a Parricide, an Assassin, an ungrateful, perjur'd Traitor, and something else too abominable to be nam'd; not to mention his Rusticity and Ill-manners. And having liv'd in this Manner, his Death may be entirely suitable: He may conclude the Scene by a desperate Act of Self-murder, and dye with the most absurd Blasphemies in his Mouth. And notwithstanding all this, he shall have Statues, if not Altars, erected to his Memory; Poems and Orations shall be compos'd in his Praise; great Sects shall be proud of calling themselves by his Name; and the most distant Posterity shall blindly continue their Admiration: Tho' were such a one to arise amongst themselves, they would justly regard him with Horror and Execration.

I MIGHT have been aware, reply'd I, of your Artifice. You seem to take Pleasure in this Topic; and are indeed the only Man I ever knew, who was well acquainted with the Antients, and did not extremely admire them. But instead of attacking their Philosophy, their Eloquence, or Poetry, the usual Subjects of Controversy betwixt us, you now seem to impeach their Morals, and accuse them of Ignorance in a Science, which is the only one, in my Opinion, wherein they are not surpass'd by the Moderns. Geometry, Physics, Astronomy, Anatomy, Botany, Geography, Navigation; in these we justly claim the Superiority: But what have we to oppose to their Moralists? Your Representation of Things is fallacious. You have no Indulgence for the Manners and Customs of different Ages. Would you try a *Greek* or *Roman* by the Common-law of *England*? Hear him defend himself by his own Maxims; and then pronounce.

THERE are no Manners so innocent or reasonable, which may not be render'd odious or ridiculous, if measur'd by a Standard, unknown to the Persons; especially, if you employ a little Art or Eloquence, in aggravating some Circumstances, and extenuating others, as best serves the Purpose of your Discourse. All these Artifices may easily be retorted on you. Could I inform the *Athenians*, for Instance, that there was a Nation^[errata 2], wherein Adultery, both active and passive, so to speak, was in the highest Vogue and Esteem: Wherein every Man of Education chose for his Mistress a marry'd Woman, the Wife, perhaps, of his Friend and Companion; and valu'd himself upon these infamous Conquests, as much as if he had been several Times a Conqueror in Boxing or Wrestling at the *Olympic* Games. Wherein every Man, also, took a Pride in his Tameness and Facility with regard to his own Wife, and was glad to make Friends or gain Interest by allowing her to prostitute her Charms; and even, without any such Motive, gave her full Liberty and Indulgence. I ask, what Sentiments the *Athenians* would entertain of such a People; they who never mention'd the Crime of Adultery but in Conjunction with Robbery and Poisoning? Which would they admire most, the Villainy or the Meanness of such a Conduct?

SHOULD I add, that the same People were as proud of their Slavery and Dependance as the *Athenians* were of their Liberty; and tho' a Man among them were oppress'd, disgrac'd, impoverish'd, insulted, or imprison'd by the Tyrant, he would still regard it as the highest Merit to love, serve, and obey him; and even to die for his smallest Glory or Satisfaction: These noble *Greeks* would probably ask me, whether I spoke of a human Society, or of some inferior, servile Species.

'TWAS then I might inform my *Athenian* Audience, that these People, however, wanted not Spirit and Bravery. If a Man, says I, tho' their intimate Friend, should throw out, in a private Company, a Raillery against them, nearly approaching any of those, with which your Generals and Demagogues every Day regale each other, in the Face of the whole City, they never can forgive him; but in order to revenge themselves, they oblige him immediately to run them thro' the Body, or be himself murder'd. And if a Man, who is an absolute

Stranger to them, should desire them, at the Peril of their own Life, to cut the Throat of their Bosom-companion▪ they immediately obey, and think themselves highly oblig'd and honour'd by the Commission. These are their Maxims of Honour: This is their favourite Morality.

BUT tho' so ready to draw their Sword against their Friends and Countrymen; no Disgrace, no Infamy, no Pain, no Poverty will ever engage these People to turn the Point of it against their own Breast. A Man of Rank would row in the Gallies, would beg his Bread, would languish in Prison, would suffer any Tortures; and still preserve his wretched Life. Rather than escape his Enemies by a generous Contempt of Death, he would infamously receive the same Death from his Enemies, aggravated by their triumphant Insults, and by the most exquisite Sufferings.

'TIS very usual too, continu'd I, amongst this People to shut up several of their Children in a perpetual Prison (where every Art of plaguing, and tormenting them is carefully study'd and practis'd) in order, that another Child, whom they own to have no greater or rather less Merit than the rest, may enjoy their whole Fortune, and wallow in every Kind of Voluptuousness and Pleasure. Nothing so virtuous in their Opinion as this barbarous Partiality.

BUT what is more particular in this whimsical Nation, say I to the *Athenians*, is, that a Frolic of yours during the *Saturnalia*^[4], when the Slaves are serv'd by their Masters, is seriously continu'd by them thro' the whole Year, and thro' the whole Course of their Lives; and accompany'd too with some Circumstances, which still farther augment the Absurdity and Ridicule. Your Sport only elevates for a few Days those whom Fortune has thrown down, and whom she too, in Sport, may really elevate for ever above you: But this Nation gravely exalt those, whom Nature has subjected to them, and whose Inferiority and Infirmities are absolutely incurable. The Women, tho' without Virtue, are their Masters and Sovereigns: These they reverence, praise, and magnify: To these, they pay the highest Deference and Respect: And in all Places and at all Times, the

Superiority of the Females is readily acknowledg'd and submitted to by every one, who has the least Pretensions to Education and Politeness. Scarce any Crime would be so universally detested as an Infraction of this Rule.

You need go no farther, reply'd *Palamedes*, I can easily conjecture the People you aim at. The Strokes, with which you have painted them, are pretty just; and yet you must acknowledge, that scarce any People are to be found, either in antient or modern Times, whose national Character is, upon the Whole, less liable to Exceptions. But I give you Thanks for helping me out with my Argument. I had no Intention of exalting the Moderns at the Expence of the Antients. I only meant to represent the Uncertainty of all these Judgments concerning Characters; and to convince you, that Fashion, Vogue, Custom, and Law were the chief Foundation of all moral Determinations. The *Athenians* surely, were a civiliz'd, intelligent People, if ever there was one; and yet their Man of Merit might, in this Age, be held in Horror and Execration. The *French* are also, without doubt, a very civiliz'd, intelligent People; and yet their Man of Merit might, with the *Athenians*, be an Object of the highest Contempt and Ridicule, and even Hatred. And what renders the Matter more extraordinary: These two national Characters are suppos'd to be the most similar of any in antient or modern Times; and while the English flatter themselves that they resemble the Romans, their Neighbours on the Continent draw the Parallel betwixt themselves and these polite *Greeks*. What wide Difference, therefore, in the Sentiments of Morals, must be found betwixt civiliz'd Nations and Barbarians, or betwixt Nations whose Characters have little in common? How shall we pretend to fix a Standard for Judgments of this Nature?

By tracing Matters, reply'd I, a little higher, and examining the first Principles, which each Nation establishes, of Blame or Censure. The *Rhine* flows North, the *Rhone* South; yet both spring from the *same* Mountain, and are also actuated, in their opposite Directions, by the *same* Principle of Gravity: The different Inclinations of the Ground, on which they run, cause all the Difference of their Courses.

IN how many Circumstances would an *Athenian* and *French* Man of Merit certainly concur? Good-sense, Knowledge, Wit, Eloquence, Humanity, Fidelity, Truth, Justice, Courage, Temperance, Constancy, Dignity of Mind. These you have all omitted; in order to insist only on the Points, in which they may, by Accident, differ. Very well: I am willing to comply with you; and shall endeavour to account for these Differences from the most universal, establish'd Principles of Morals.

THE *Greek* Loves, I care not to examine more particularly. I shall only observe, that, however blameable, they arose from a very innocent Cause, the Frequency of the Gymnastic Exercises amongst that People; and were recommended, tho' absurdly, as the Source of Friendship, Sympathy, mutual Attachment, and Fidelity^[5]; Qualities esteem'd in all Nations and all Ages.

THE Marriage of Half-brothers and Sisters seems no great Difficulty. Love betwixt the nearer Relations is contrary to Reason and public Utility; but the precise Point, where we are to stop, can scarcely be determin'd by natural Reason; and is therefore a very proper Subject of municipal Law or Custom. If the *Athenians* went a little too far on the one Side, the Canon Law has surely push'd Matters a great way into the other Extremity^[6].

HAD you ask'd a Parent at *Athens*, why he bereav'd his Child of that Life, which he had so lately given it. 'Tis because I love it, he would reply; and regard the Poverty it must inherit from me, as a greater Evil than a Death, which it is not capable of dreading, feeling, or resenting^[7].

How is public Liberty, the most valuable of all Blessings, to be recover'd from the Hands of an Usurper or Tyrant, if his Power shields him from public Rebellion, and our Scruples from private Vengeance? That his Crime is capital by Law, you acknowledge: And must the highest Aggravation of his Crime, the putting himself above Law, form his full Security? You can reply nothing, but by showing the great Inconveniencies of Assassination; which, could any one have prov'd clearly to the Antients, he had reform'd their Sentiments in this Particular.

AGAIN, to cast your Eye on the Picture I have drawn of modern Manners; there is almost as great Difficulty, I acknowledge, to justify *French* as *Greek* Gallantry; except only, that the former is much more natural and agreeable than the latter. But our Neighbours, it seems, have resolv'd to sacrifice some of the domestic to the sociable Pleasures; and to prefer Ease, Freedom, and an open Commerce to a strict Fidelity and Constancy. These Ends are both good, and are somewhat difficult to reconcile; nor need we be surpriz'd, if the Customs of Nations encline too much, sometimes to the one Side, sometimes to the other.

THE most inviolable Attachment to the Laws of our Country is every-where acknowledg'd a capital Virtue; and where the People are not so happy, as to have any other Legislature but a single Person, the strictest Loyalty is, in that Case, the truest Patriotism.

NOTHING surely can be more absurd and barbarous than the Practice of Duelling; but those, who justify it, say, that it begets Civility and Good-manners. And a Duelist, you may observe, always values himself upon his Courage, his Sense of Honour, his Fidelity and Friendship; Qualities, which are here indeed very oddly directed, but have been esteem'd universally, since the Foundation of the World.

HAVE the Gods forbid Self-murder? An *Athenian* allows, that it ought to be foreborn. Has the Deity permitted it? A *Frenchman* allows, that Death is preferable to Pain and Infamy.

You see then, continu'd I, that the Principles, upon which Men reason in Morals are always the same; tho' the Conclusions they draw are often very different. That they all reason aright with regard to this Subject, more than with regard to any other, it is not incumbent on any Moralist to show. 'Tis sufficient, that the original Principles of Censure or Blame are uniform, and that erroneous Conclusions can be corrected by sounder Reasonings and a larger Experience. As many Ages as have elaps'd since the Fall of *Greece* and *Rome*, and such Changes as have arriv'd in Religion, Language, Laws, and Customs; none of these Revolutions has ever produc'd

any considerable Innovation in the primary Sentiments of Morals, more than in those of external Beauty. Some minute Differences, perhaps, may be observ'd in both. [Horace](#)^[8] celebrates a low Forehead, and [Anacreon](#) join'd Eye-brows^[9]: But the *Apollo* and the *Venus* of Antiquity are still our Models for Male and Female Beauty; in like Manner as the Character of *Scipio* continues our Standard for the Glory of Heroes, and that of *Cornelia* for the Honour of Matrons.

IT appears, that there never was any Quality, recommended by any one, as a Virtue or moral Excellence; but on account of its being *useful*, or *agreeable*, to a Man *himself*, or to *others*. For what other Reason can there ever be for Praise or Approbation? Or where would be the Sense of extolling *good* Character of Action, which, at the same Time, is allow'd to be *good for nothing*? All the Differences, therefore, in Morals may be reduc'd to this one general Foundation, and may be accounted for by the different Views, which People take of these Circumstances.

SOMETIMES Men differ in their Judgment about the Usefulness of any Habit or Action: Sometimes also the peculiar Circumstances of Things render one moral Quality more useful than others, and give it a peculiar Preference.

'TIS not surprising, that, during a Period of War and Disorder, the military Virtues should be more celebrated than the pacific, and attract more the Admiration and Attention of Mankind. "How usual is it," says [Tully](#)^[10], "to find *Cimbrians*, *Celtiberians*, and other Barbarians, who bear, with inflexible Constancy, all the Fatigues and Dangers of the Field; but are immediately dispirited under the Suffrance and Hazard of a languishing Distemper: While, on the other hand, the *Greeks* patiently endure the slow Approaches of Death, when arm'd with Sickness and Disease; but timorously fly his Presence, when he attacks them violently with Swords and Falchions!" So opposite is even the same Virtue of Courage amongst warlike or peaceful Nations! And indeed, we may observe, that as the Difference betwixt War and Peace is the greatest, that arises among Nations and public Societies, it produces also the greatest

Variations in moral Sentiment, and diversifies the most our Idea of Virtue and personal Merit.

SOMETIMES too, Magnanimity, Greatness of Mind, Disdain of Slavery, inflexible Rigour and Integrity may suit better the Circumstances of one Age than those of another, and have a more kindly Influence, both on public Affairs, and on a Man's own Safety and Advancement. Our Idea of Merit, therefore, will also vary a little with these Variations; and *Labeo*, perhaps, be censur'd for the same Qualities, which procur'd *Cato* the highest Approbation.

A DEGREE of Luxury may be ruinous and pernicious in a Native of *Switzerland*, which only fosters the Arts, and encourages Industry in a *Frenchman* or *Englishman*. We are not, therefore, to expect, either the same Sentiment, or the same Laws in *Berne*, that prevail in *London* or *Paris*.

DIFFERENT Customs have also some Influence, as well as different Utilities; and by giving an early Biass to the Mind, may produce a superior Propensity, either to the useful or the agreeable Qualities; to those, which regard Self, or those, which extend to Society. These four Sources of moral Sentiment still subsist; but particular Accidents may, at one Time, make one of them flow with greater Abundance than at another.

THE Customs of some Nations shut up the Women from all social Commerce: Those of others make them so essential a Part of Society and Conversation, that, except where Business is canvass'd, the Male-sex alone are suppos'd absolutely incapable of mutual Discourse and Entertainment. As this Difference is the most material, that can happen in private Life, it must also produce the greatest Variation in our moral Sentiments.

OF all Nations in the World, where Polygamy was not allow'd, the *Greeks* seem to have been the most reserv'd in their Commerce with the Fair-sex, and to have impos'd on them the strictest Laws of Modesty and Decency. We have a strong Instance of this in an Oration of [*Lysias*](#)^[11]. A Widow injur'd, ruin'd, undone, calls a Meeting

of a few of her nearest Friends and Relations; and tho' never before accustom'd, says the Orator, to speak in the Presence of Men, the Distress of her Circumstances constrain'd her to lay the Case before them. Her very Opening her Mouth in such Company requir'd, it seems, an Apology.

WHEN [*Demosthenes*](#) prosecuted his Tutors, to make them refund his Patrimony, it became necessary for him, in the Course of the Law suit, to prove that the Marriage of *Aphobus's* Sister with *Oneter* was entirely fraudulent, and that, notwithstanding her Sham-marriage, she had liv'd with her Brother at *Athens* for two Years last past, ever since her Divorce from her former Husband. And 'tis remarkable, that tho' these were People of the first Fortune and Distinction in the City, the Orator could prove this Fact no Way, but by calling for her female Slaves to be put to the Question, and by the Evidence of one Physician, who had seen her in her Brother's House during her Illness^[12]. So reserv'd were *Greek* Manners.

WE may be certain, that an extreme Purity was the Consequence of this Reserve. Accordingly, we find, that, except the fabulous Stories of an *Helen* and a *Clytemnestra*, there scarce is an Instance of any Event in the *Greek* History, that proceeded from the Intrigues of Women. On the other hand, in modern Times, particularly in a neighbouring Nation, the Females enter into all Transactions and all Management of Church and State; and no Man can succeed, who takes not care to obtain their good Graces. *Harry* the third, by incurring the Displeasure of the Fair, endanger'd his Crown, and lost his Life, as much as by his Indulgence to Heresy.

'TIS needless to dissemble: The Consequence of a very free Commerce betwixt the Sexes, and of their living much together, will often terminate in Intrigues and Gallantry. We must sacrifice somewhat of the *useful*, if we be very anxious to obtain all the *agreeable* Qualities; and cannot pretend to reach alike every Kind of Advantage. Instances of Licence, daily multiplying, will weaken the Scandal with the one Sex, and teach the other, by Degrees, to adopt the famous Maxim of *la Fontaine*, with regard to female Infidelity,

that if one knows it, it is but a small Matter; if one knows it not, it is nothing^[13].

SOME People are inclin'd to think, that the best Way of adjusting all Differences, and of keeping the proper Medium betwixt the *agreeable* and *useful* Qualities of the Sex is to live with them after the Manner of the *Romans* and the *English* (for the Customs of these two Nations seem similar in this Respect^[14]) that is, without Gallantry^[15] and without Jealousy. By a Parity of Reason, the Customs of the *Spaniards* and of the *Italians* of an Age ago (for the present are very different) must be the worst of any; because they favour both Gallantry and Jealousy.

NOR will these different Customs of Nations affect only the one Sex: The Idea of personal Merit in the Males must also be somewhat different, with regard, at least, to Conversation, Address, and Humour. The one Nation, where the Men live much apart, will naturally more esteem Prudence; the other, Gaiety: With the one, Simplicity of Manners will be in the highest Respect; with the other, Politeness. The one will distinguish themselves by Good-sense and Judgment; the other, by Taste and Delicacy: The Eloquence of the former will shine most in the Senate; that of the other, on the Theatre.

THESE, I say, are the *natural* Effects of such Customs. For it must be confest, that Chance has a great Influence on national Manners; and many Events happen in Society, which are not to be accounted for by general Rules. Who could imagine, for Instance, that the *Romans*, who liv'd freely with their Women, should be very indifferent about Music, and esteem Dancing infamous: While the *Greeks*, who never almost saw a Woman but in their own Houses, were continually piping, singing, and dancing?

THE Differences of moral Sentiment, which naturally arise from a republican or monarchical Government, are also very obvious; as well as those, which proceed from general Riches or Poverty, Union or Faction, Ignorance or Learning. I shall conclude this long Discourse with observing, that different Customs and Situations vary

the original Ideas of Merit (however they may, some Consequences) in no very essential Point, and prevail chiefly with regard to young Men, who can aspire to the agreeable Qualities, and may attempt to please, The MANNER, the ORNAMENTS, the GRACES, that succeed in this Shape, are more arbitrary and casual: But the Merit of riper Years is almost every-where the same; and consists chiefly in Integrity, Humanity, Ability, Knowledge and the other more solid and useful Qualities of the human Mind.

WHAT you insist on, reply'd *Palamedes*, may have some Foundation, when you stick to the Maxims of common Life and ordinary Conduct. Experience and the Practice of the World readily correct any great Extravagance on either Side. But what say you to *artificial* Lives and Manners? How do you reconcile the Maxims, on which these are founded?

WHAT do you understand by *artificial* Lives and Manners, said I? I explain myself, reply'd he. You know, that Religion had, in antient Times' very little Influence on common Life, and that, after Men had perform'd their Duty in Sacrifices and Prayers at the Temple, they thought, that the Gods left the rest of their Conduct to themselves, and were little pleas'd, or offended with those Virtues and Vices, that only affected the Peace and Happiness of human Society. In those Ages, 'twas the Business of Philosophy alone to regulate Men's ordinary Behaviour and Deportment; and accordingly, we may observe, that this being the sole Principle, by which a Man could elevate himself above his Fellows, it acquir'd a mighty Ascendant over many, and produc'd great Singularities of Maxims and of Conduct. At present, that Philosophy has lost the Allurement of Novelty, it has no such extensive Influence; but seems to confine itself mostly to Speculations in the Closet; in the same Manner, as the antient Religion was limited to Sacrifices in the Temple. Its Place is now supply'd by the modern Religion, which inspects our whole Conduct, and prescribes an universal Rule to our Actions, to our Words, to our very Thoughts and Inclinations; a Rule so much the more austere, that it is guarded by infinite, tho' distant. Rewards and

Punishments; and no Infraction of it can ever be conceal'd or disguis'd.

DIOGENES is the most celebrated Model of extravagant Philosophy. Let us seek a Parallel to him in modern Times. We shall not disgrace any philosophic Name by a Comparison with the *Dominics* or *Loyolas*, or any canoniz'd Monk or Friar. Let us compare him to *Pascal*, a Man of Parts and Genius as well as Diogenes himself; and perhaps too, a Man of Virtue, had he allow'd his virtuous Inclinations to have exerted and display'd themselves.

THE Foundation of *Diogenes's* Conduct was to render himself an independent Being as much as possible, and to confine all his Wants and Desires and Pleasures within himself and his own Mind: The Aim of *Pascal* was to keep a perpetual Sense of his Dependance before his Eyes, and never to forget his numberless Wants and Necessities. The Antient supported himself by Magnanimity, Ostentation, Pride, and the Idea of his own Superiority above his Fellow-creatures. The Modern made constant Profession of Humility and Abasement, of the Contempt and Hatred of himself; and endeavour'd to attain these suppos'd Virtues, as far as they are attainable. The Austerities of the *Greek* were in order to inure himself to Hardships, and prevent his ever suffering: Those of the *Frenchman* were embrac'd merely for their own Sake, and in order to suffer as much as possible. The Philosopher indulg'd himself in the most beastly Pleasures, even in public: The Saint refus'd himself the most innocent, even in private: The former thought it his Duty to love his Friends, and to rail at them, and reprove them, and scold them: The latter endeavour'd to be absolutely indifferent towards his nearest Relations, and to love and speak well of his Enemies. The great Object of *Diogenes's* Wit was every Kind of Superstition, that is, every Kind of Religion known in his Time. The Mortality of the Soul was his Standard Principle; and even his Sentiments of a Divine Providence seem to have been very licentious. The most ridiculous Superstitions directed *Pascal's* Faith and Practice; and an extreme Contempt of this Life, in Comparison of the future, was the chief Foundation of his Conduct.

IN such a remarkable Contrast do these two Men stand: Yet both of them have met with universal Admiration in their different Ages, and have been propos'd as Models of Imitation. Where then is the universal Standard of Morals, which you talk of? And what Rule shall we establish for the many different, nay contrary Sentiments of Mankind?

AN Experiment, said I, that succeeds in the Air, will not always succeed in a Vacuum. When Men depart from the Maxims of common Reason, and affect these *artificial* Lives, as you call them, no-one can answer for what will please or displease them. They are in a different Element from the rest of Mankind; and the natural Principles of their Mind play not with the same Regularity, as if left to themselves, free from the Illusions of religious Superstition or philosophical Enthusiasm.

FINIS

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

1. ↑ The Laws of *Athens* allow'd a Man to marry his Sister by the Father. *Solon's* Laws forbid Pæderasty to Slaves, as being of too great Dignity for such mean Persons.
2. ↑ [Appian](#). Bell. Civ. lib. 3. [Suetonius](#) in vita Cæsaris.
3. ↑ Mem. Soc. lib. 3. sub fine.
4. ↑ The *Greeks* kept the Feast of *Saturn* or *Chronus*, as well as the *Romans*. See [Lucian](#), Epist. Saturn.
5. ↑ [Plat.](#) Symp. P. 182. Ex Edit. Serr.
6. ↑ See Enquiry, Sect. IV.
7. ↑ [Plutarch](#). de amore prolis, sub fine.
8. ↑ Epist. lib. I. epist. 7. Also lib. I. Ode 3.
9. ↑ Ode 28. Petronius (Cap. 86.) joins both these Circumstances as Beauties.

10. [↑](#) Tusc. Quæst. Lib. 2.
11. [↑](#) Orat. 33.
12. [↑](#) In Onetorem.
13. [↑](#)
Quand on le sçait c'est peu de chose; Quand on ne le sçait pas,
ce n'est rien.
14. [↑](#) During the Time of the Emperors, the *Romans* seem to have
been more given to Intrigues and Gallantry than the *English* are
at present: And the Women of Condition, in order to retain their
Lovers, endeavour'd to fix a Name of Reproach on those, who
were addicted to Wenching and low Amours. They were call'd
Ancillarioli. See [Seneca](#) de Beneficiis. Lib. I. Cap. 9. See also
[Martial](#), Lib. 12. Epig. 58.
15. [↑](#) The Gallantry here meant is that of Amours and Attachments,
not that of Complaisance, which is as much pay'd to the fair Sex
in *England* as in any other Country.

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no
corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

Errata

Cite error: `<ref>` tags exist for a group named "errata", but no
corresponding `<references group="errata"/>` tag was found

1. [Title page](#)
2. [An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals](#)
3. [Of the general Principles of Morals.](#)
4. [Of Benevolence.](#)
5. [Of Justice.](#)
6. [Of Political Society.](#)
7. [Why Utility pleases.](#)
8. [Of Qualities useful to Ourselves.](#)
9. [Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Ourselves.](#)
10. [Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Others.](#)
11. [Conclusion of the Whole.](#)
12. [Concerning Moral Sentiment.](#)
13. [Some farther Considerations with regard to Justice.](#)
14. [A Dialogue.](#)

LANDMARKS

1. [An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals](#)
2. [Cover](#)



This book has been downloaded from www.aliceandbooks.com.
You can find many more public domain books in our website