CS-204-Reading-Selections
Part 1:

Darwin, Nietzsche, Freud, Mann
CHAPTER 1.

VARIATION UNDER DOMESTICATION:

Causes of Variability.

When we compare the individuals of the same variety or sub-variety of our older cultivated plants and animals, one of the first points which strikes us is, that they generally differ more from each other than do the individuals of any one species or variety in a state of nature. And if we reflect on the vast diversity of the plants and animals which have been cultivated, and which have varied during all ages under the most difficult climates and treatment, we are driven to conclude that this great variability is due to our domestic productions having been raised under conditions of life not so uniform as, and somewhat different from, those to which the parent species had been exposed under nature. [. . . ] It seems clear that organic beings must be exposed during several generations to new conditions to cause any great amount of variation; and that, when the organisation has once begun to vary, it generally continues varying for many generations. No case is on record of a variable organism ceasing to vary under cultivation. Our oldest cultivated plants, such as wheat, still yield new varieties: our oldest domesticated animals are still capable of rapid improvement or modification. [p. 31]

[. . . ]

CHAPTER 2.

VARIATION UNDER NATURE

[. . . ]

Individual Differences. The many slight differences which appear in the offspring from the same parents, or which it may be presumed have thus
arisen, from being observed in the individuals of the same species inhabiting the same confined locality, may be called individual differences. No one supposes that all the individuals of the same species are cast in the same actual mould. These individual differences are of the highest importance for us, for they are often inherited, as must be familiar to every one; and they thus afford materials for natural selection to act on and accumulate, in the same manner as man accumulates in any given direction individual differences in his domesticated productions. [p. 60]

[...]

CHAPTER 3.

STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

[...]

[I]t may be asked, how is it that varieties, which I have called incipient species, become ultimately converted into good and distinct species which in most cases obviously differ from each other far more than do the varieties of the same species? How do those groups of species, which constitute what are called distinct genera, and which differ from each other more than do the species of the same genus, arise? All these results, as we shall more fully see in the next chapter, follow inevitably from the struggle for life. Owing to this struggle, variations, however slight and from whatever cause proceeding, if they be in any degree profitable to the individuals of a species, in their infinitely complex relations to other organic beings and to their physical conditions of life, will tend to the preservation of such individuals, and will generally be inherited by the offspring. The offspring, also, will thus have a better chance of surviving, for, of the many individuals of any species which are periodically born, but a small number can survive. I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection, in order to mark its relation to man's power of selection. But the expression often used by Mr. Herbert Spencer of the Survival of the Fittest is more accurate, and is sometimes equally convenient. We have seen that man by selection can certainly produce great results, and can adapt organic beings to his own uses, through the accumulation of slight but useful variations, given to him by the hand of Nature. But Natural Selection, as we shall hereafter see, is a power incessantly ready for action, and is as immeasurably superior to man's feeble efforts, as the works of Nature are to those of Art.

[...]

Nothing is easier than to admit in words the truth of the universal struggle for life, or more difficult — at least I have found it so — than constantly to bear this conclusion in mind. Yet unless it be thoroughly engrained in the mind, the whole economy of nature, with every fact on distribution, rarity, abundance, extinction, and variation, will be dimly seen or quite misunderstood. We behold the face of nature bright with gladness, we often see superabundance of food; we do not see or we forget, that the birds which are idly singing round us mostly live on insects or seeds, and are thus constantly destroying life; or we forget how largely these songsters, or their eggs, or their nestlings, are destroyed by birds and beasts of prey; we do not always bear in mind, that,
though food may be now superabundant, it is not so at all seasons of each recurring year.

The Term, Struggle for Existence, Used in a Large Sense. I should premise that I use this term in a large and metaphorical sense including dependence of one being on another, and including (which is more important) not only the life of the individual, but success in leaving progeny. Two canine animals, in a time of dearth, may be truly said to struggle with each other which shall get food and live. But a plant on the edge of a desert is said to struggle for life against the drought, though more properly it should be said to be dependent on the moisture. A plant which annually produces a thousand seeds, of which only one of an average comes to maturity, may be more truly said to struggle with the plants of the same and other kinds which already clothe the ground. The mistletoe is dependent on the apple and a few other trees, but can only in a farfetched sense be said to struggle with these trees, for, if too many of these parasites grow on the same tree, it languishes and dies. But several seedling mistletoes, growing close together on the same branch, may more truly be said to struggle with each other. As the mistletoe is disseminated by birds, its existence depends on them; and it may metaphorically be said to struggle with other fruit-bearing plants, in tempting the birds to devour and thus disseminate its seeds. In these several senses, which pass into each other, I use for convenience' sake the general term of Struggle for Existence.

Geometrical Ratio of Increase. A struggle for existence inevitably follows from the high rate at which all organic beings tend to increase. Every being, which during its natural lifetime produces several eggs or seeds, must suffer destruction during some period of its life, and during some season or occasional year, otherwise, on the principle of geometrical increase, its numbers would quickly become so inordinately great that no country could support the product. Hence, as more individuals are produced than can possibly survive, there must in every case be a struggle for existence, either one individual with another of the same species, or with the individuals of distinct species, or with the physical conditions of life. It is the doctrine of Malthus applied with manifold force to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms; for in this case there can be no artificial increase of food, and no prudential restraint from marriage. Although some species may be now increasing, more or less rapidly, in numbers, all cannot do so, for the world would not hold them.

There is no exception to the rule that every organic being naturally increases at so high a rate, that, if not destroyed, the earth would soon be covered by the progeny of a single pair. Even slow-breeding man has doubled in twenty-five years, and at this rate, in less than a thousand years, there would literally not be standing-room for his progeny. Linnaeus has calculated that if an annual plant produced only two seeds — and there is no plant so unproductive as this — and their seedlings next year produced two, and so on, then in twenty years there should be a million plants. The elephant is reckoned the slowest breeder of all known animals, and I have taken some pains to estimate its probable minimum rate of natural increase; it will be safest to assume that it begins breeding when thirty years old, and goes on breeding till ninety years old, bringing forth six young in the interval, and surviving till one hundred years
old; if this be so, after a period of from 740 to 750 years there would be nearly nineteen million elephants alive, descended from the first pair.

But we have better evidence on this subject than mere theoretical calculations, namely, the numerous recorded cases of the astonishingly rapid increase of various animals in a state of nature, when circumstances have been favourable to them during two or three following seasons. Still more striking is the evidence from our domestic animals of many kinds which have run wild in several parts of the world; if the statements of the rate of increase of slow-breeding cattle and horses in South America, and latterly in Australia, had not been well authenticated, they would have been incredible. So it is with plants; cases could be given of introduced plants which have become common throughout whole islands in a period of less than ten years. Several of the plants, such as the cardoon and a tall thistle, which are now the commonest over the whole plains of La Plata, clothing square leagues of surface almost to the exclusion of every other plant, have been introduced from Europe; and there are plants which now range in India (...) from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya, which have been imported from America since its discovery. In such cases, and endless others could be given, no one supposes, that the fertility of the animals or plants has been suddenly and temporarily increased in any sensible degree. The obvious explanation is that the conditions of life have been highly favourable, and that there has consequently been less destruction of the old and young, and that nearly all the young have been enabled to breed. Their geometrical ratio of increase, the result of which never fails to be surprising, simply explains their extraordinarily rapid increase and wide diffusion in their new homes. [pp. 74-8]

Nature of the Checks to Increase. The causes which check the natural tendency of each species to increase are most obscure. Look at the most vigorous species; by as much as it swarms in numbers, by so much will it tend to increase still further. We know not exactly what the checks are even in a single instance. Nor will this surprise any one who reflects how ignorant we are on this head, even in regard to mankind, although so incomparably better known than any other animal. [ . . . ] Eggs or very young animals seem generally to suffer most, but this is not invariably the case. With plants there is a vast destruction of seeds, but, from some observations which I have made it appears that the seedlings suffer most from germinating in ground already thickly stocked with other plants. Seedlings, also, are destroyed in vast numbers by various enemies; for instance, on a piece of ground three feet long and two wide, dug and cleared, and where there could be no choking from other plants, I marked all the seedlings of our native weeds as they came up, and out of 357 no less than 295 were destroyed, chiefly by slugs and insects. If turf which has long been mown [ . . . ] be let to grow, the more vigorous plants gradually kill the less vigorous, though fully grown plants; thus out of twenty species growing on a little plot of mown turf (three feet by four) nine species perished, from the other species being allowed to grow up freely.

The amount of food for each species of course gives the extreme limit to which each can increase; but very frequently it is not the obtaining food, but the serving as prey to other animals, which determines the average numbers of a species.
Climate plays an important part in determining the average number of a species, and periodical seasons of extreme cold or drought seem to be the most effective of all checks. I estimated (chiefly from the greatly reduced numbers of nests in the spring) that the winter of 1854-5 destroyed four-fifths of the birds in my own grounds; and this is a tremendous destruction, when we remember that ten per cent is an extraordinarily severe mortality from epidemics with man. The action of climate seems at first sight to be quite independent of the struggle for existence; but in so far as climate chiefly acts in reducing food, it brings on the most severe struggle between the individuals, whether of the same or of distinct species, which subsist on the same kind of food. Even when climate, for instance, extreme cold, acts directly, it will be the least vigorous individuals, or those which have got least food through the advancing winter, which will suffer most.

When a species, owing to highly favourable circumstances, increases inordinately in numbers in a small tract, epidemics — at least, this seems generally to occur with our game animals often ensue; and here we have a limiting check independent of the struggle for life. But even some of these so-called epidemics appear to be due to parasitic worms, which have from some cause, possibly in part through facility of diffusion amongst the crowded animals, been disproportionately favoured: and here comes in a sort of struggle between the parasite and its prey. [pp. 79-81]

CHAPTER 4.

**Natural Selection; or the Survival of the Fittest**

How will the struggle for existence, briefly discussed in the last chapter, act in regard to variation? Can the principle of selection, which we have seen is so potent in the hands of man, apply under nature? I think we shall see that it can act most efficiently. Let the endless number of slight variations and individual differences occurring in our domestic productions, and, in a lesser degree, in those under nature, be borne in mind; as well as the strength of the hereditary tendency. Under domestication, it may be truly said that the whole organisation becomes in some degree plastic. But the variability, which we almost universally meet with in our domestic productions, is not directly produced, as Hooker and Asa Gray have well remarked, by man; he can neither originate varieties, nor prevent their occurrence; he can preserve and accumulate such as do occur. Unintentionally he exposes organic beings to new and changing conditions of life, and variability ensues; but similar changes of conditions might and do occur under nature. Let it also be borne in mind how infinitely complex and close-fitting are the mutual relations of all organic beings to each other and to their physical conditions of life; and consequently what infinitely varied diversities of structure might be of use to each being under changing conditions of life. Can it, then, be thought improbable, seeing that variations useful to man have undoubtedly occurred, that other variations useful in some way to each being in the great and complex battle of life, should occur in the course of many successive
generations. If such do occur, can we doubt (remembering that many more individuals are born than can possibly survive) that individuals having any advantage, however slight, over others, would have the best chance of surviving and of procreating their kind? On the other hand, we may feel sure that any variation in the least degree injurious would be rigidly destroyed. This preservation of favourable individual differences and variations, and the destruction of those which are injurious, I have called Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest. Variations neither useful nor injurious would not be affected by natural selection, and would be left either a fluctuating element, as perhaps we see in certain polymorphic species, or would ultimately become fixed, owing to the nature of the organism and the nature of the conditions.

[...]

We shall best understand the probable course of natural selection by taking the case of a country undergoing some slight physical change, for instance, of climate. The proportional numbers of its inhabitants will almost immediately undergo a change, and some species will probably become extinct. We may conclude, from what we have seen of the intimate and complex manner in which the inhabitants of each country are bound together, that any change in the numerical proportions of the inhabitants, independently of the change of climate itself, would seriously affect the others. If the country were open on its borders, new forms would certainly immigrate, and this would likewise seriously disturb the relations of some of the former inhabitants. Let it be remembered how powerful the influence of a single introduced tree or mammal has been shown to be. But in the case of an island, or of a country partly surrounded by barriers, into which new and better adapted forms could not freely enter, we should then have places in the economy of nature which would assuredly be better filled up, if some of the original inhabitants were in some manner modified; for, had the area been open to immigration, these same places would have been seized on by intruders. In such cases, slight modifications, which in any way favoured the individuals of any species, by better adapting them to their altered conditions, would tend to be preserved; and natural selection would have free scope for the work of improvement.

We have good reason to believe, as shown in the first chapter, that changes in the conditions of life give a tendency to increased variability; and in the foregoing cases the conditions have changed, and this would manifestly be favourable to natural selection, by affording a better chance of the occurrence of profitable variations. Unless such occur, natural selection can do nothing. Under the term of "variations", it must never be forgotten that mere individual differences are included. As man can produce a great result with his domestic animals and plants by adding up in any given direction individual differences, so could natural selection, but far more easily from having incomparably longer time for action. Nor do I believe that any great physical change, as of climate, or any unusual degree of isolation to check immigration, is necessary in order that new and unoccupied places should be left, for natural selection to fill up by improving some of the varying inhabitants. For as all the inhabitants of each country are struggling together with nicely balanced forces, extremely slight modifications in the structure or habits of one species would often give it an advantage over others; and still further modifications of the same kind would often still further increase the advantage, as long as the species
continued under the same conditions of life and profited by similar means of subsistence and defence. No country can be named in which all the native inhabitants are now so perfectly adapted to each other and to the physical conditions under which they live, that none of them could be still better adapted or improved; for in all countries, the natives have been so far conquered by naturalised productions, that they have allowed some foreigners to take firm possession of the land. And as foreigners have thus in every country beaten some of the natives, we may safely conclude that the natives might have been modified with advantage, so as to have better resisted the intruders. [pp. 88-91]

Illustrations of the Action of Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest. In order to make it clear how, as I believe, natural selection acts, I must beg permission to give one or two imaginary illustrations. Let us take the case of a wolf, which preys on various animals, securing some by craft, some by strength, and some by fleetness; and let us suppose that the fleetest prey, a deer for instance, had from any change in the country increased in numbers, or that other prey had decreased in numbers, during that season of the year when the wolf was hardest pressed for food. Under such circumstances the swiftest and slimmest wolves would have the best chance of surviving and so be preserved or selected, — provided always that they retained strength to master their prey at this or some other period of the year, when they were compelled to prey on other animals. I can see no more reason to doubt that this would be the result, than that man should be able to improve the fleetness of his greyhounds by careful and methodical selection, or by that kind of unconscious selection which follows from each man trying to keep the best dogs without any thought of modifying the breed. I may add, that there are two varieties of wolf in the United States, one with a light greyhound-like form which pursues deer, and the other more bulky, with shorter legs, which more frequently attacks the shepherd's flocks.

It should be observed that, in the above illustration, I speak of the slimmest individual wolves, and not of any single strongly-marked variation having been preserved. [pp. 96-7]

CHAPTER 5.

LAWS OF VARIATION

I have hitherto sometimes spoken as if the variations — so common and multiform with organic beings under domestication, and in a lesser degree with those under nature - were due to chance. This, of course, is a wholly incorrect expression. But it serves to acknowledge plainly our ignorance of the cause of each particular variation. Some authors believe it to be as much the function of the reproductive system to produce individual differences, or slight deviations of structure, as to make the child like its parents. But the fact of variations and monstrosities occurring much more frequently under domestication than under nature, and the greater variability of species having wider ranges than of those with restricted ranges, lead to the conclusion that
variability is generally related to the conditions of life to which each species has been exposed during several successive generations. In the first chapter I attempted to show that changed conditions act in two ways, directly on the whole organisation or on certain parts alone, and indirectly through the reproductive system. In all cases there are two factors, the nature of the organism, which is much the most important of the two, and the nature of the conditions. The direct action of changed conditions leads to definite or indefinite results. In the latter case the organisation seems to become plastic, and we have much fluctuating variability. In the former case the nature of the organism is such that it yields readily, when subjected to certain conditions, and all, or nearly all the individuals become modified in the same way.

It is very difficult to decide how far changed conditions, such as of climate, food, etc., have acted in a definite manner. There is reason to believe that in the course of time the effects have been greater than can be proved by clear evidence. But we may safely conclude that the innumerable complex co-adaptations of structure, which we see throughout nature between various organic beings, cannot be attributed simply to such action. In the following cases the conditions seem to have produced some slight definite effect; E. Forbes asserts that shells at their southern limit, and when living in shallow water, are more brightly coloured than those of the same species from further north or from a greater depth; but this certainly does not always hold good. Mr. Gould believes that birds of the same species are more brightly coloured under a clear atmosphere, than when living near the coast or on islands, and Wollaston is convinced that residence near the sea affects the colours of insects. Moquin-Tandon gives a list of plants which, when growing near the sea-shore, have their leaves in some degree fleshy, though not elsewhere fleshy. These slightly varying organisms are interesting in as far as they present characters analogous to those possessed by the species which are confined to similar conditions.

When a variation is of the slightest use to any being, we cannot tell how much to attribute to the accumulative action of natural selection, and how much to the definite action of the conditions of life. Thus, it is well known to furriers that animals of the same species have thicker and better fur the further north they live; but who can tell how much of this difference may be due to the warmest-clad individuals having been favoured and preserved during many generations, and how much to the action of the severe climate? For it would appear that climate has some direct action on the hair of our domestic quadrupeds.

Instances could be given of similar varieties being produced from the same species under external conditions of life as different as can well be conceived; and, on the other hand, of dissimilar varieties being produced under apparently the same external conditions. Again, innumerable instances are known to every naturalist, of species keeping true, or not varying at all, although living under the most opposite climates. Such considerations as these incline me to lay less weight on the direct action of the surrounding conditions, than on a tendency to vary, due to causes of which we are quite ignorant.

In one sense the conditions of life may be said, not only to cause variability, either directly or indirectly, but likewise to include natural selection, for the
conditions determine whether this or that variety shall survive. But when man is the selecting agent, we clearly see that the two elements of change are distinct; variability is in some manner excited, but it is the will of man which accumulates the variations in certain directions; and it is this latter agency which answers to the survival of the fittest under nature. [pp. 133-5]

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CHAPTER 6.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE THEORY

Special Difficulties of the Theory of Natural Selection. Although we must be extremely cautious in concluding that any organ could not have been produced by successive, small, transitional gradations, yet undoubtedly serious cases of difficulty occur.

One of the most serious is that of neuter insects, which are often differently constructed from either the males or fertile females; but this case will be treated of in the next chapter. The electric organs of fishes offer another case of special difficulty; for it is impossible to conceive by what steps these wondrous organs have been produced.

[...]

Finally then, although in many cases it is most difficult even to conjecture by what transitions organs have arrived at their present state; yet, considering how small the proportion of living and known forms is to the extinct and unknown, I have been astonished how rarely an organ can be named, towards which no transitional grade is known to lead. It certainly is true, that new organs appearing as if created for some special purpose, rarely or never appear in any being; — as indeed is shown by that old, but somewhat exaggerated, canon in natural history of "Natura non facit saltum" [nature does not make a sudden leap]. We meet with this admission in the writings of almost every experienced naturalist; or as Milne Edwards has well expressed it, Nature is prodigal in variety, but niggard in innovation. Why, on the theory of Creation, should there be so much variety and so little real novelty? Why should all the parts and organs of many independent beings, each supposed to have been separately created for its proper place in nature, be so commonly linked together by graduated steps? Why should not Nature take a sudden leap from structure to structure? On the theory of natural selection, we can clearly understand why she should not; for natural selection acts only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a great and sudden leap, but must advance by short and sure, though slow steps. [pp. 178, 184]

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CHAPTER 7.

MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE THEORY OF NATURAL SELECTION

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[Mr. Mivart's Objections: Supposed Incompetence of Natural Selection to Account for the Incipient Stages of Useful Structures.] The giraffe, by its lofty stature, much elongated neck, forelegs, head and tongue, has its whole frame beautifully adapted for browsing on the higher branches of trees. It can thus obtain food beyond the reach of the other Ungulata or hoofed animals inhabiting the same country; and this must be a great advantage to it during dearths. The Niatas cattle in S. America show us how a small difference in structure may make, during such periods, a great difference in preserving an animal's life. These cattle can browse as well as others on grass, but from the projection of the lower jaw they cannot, during the often recurrent droughts, browse on the twigs of trees, reeds, etc., to which food the common cattle and horses are then driven; so that at these times the Niatas perish, if not fed by their owners. Before coming to Mr. Mivart's objections, it may be well to explain once again how natural selection will act in all ordinary cases. Man has modified some of his animals, without necessarily having attended to special points of structure, by simply preserving and breeding from the fleetest individuals, as with the racehorse and greyhound, or as with the game-cock, by breeding from the victorious birds. So under nature with the nascent giraffe the individuals which were the highest browsers, and were able during dearths to reach even an inch or two above the others, will often have been preserved; for they will have roamed over the whole country in search of food. That the individuals of the same species often differ slightly in the relative lengths of all their parts may be seen in many works of natural history, in which careful measurements are given. These slight proportional differences, due to the laws of growth and variation, are not of the slightest use or importance to most species. But it will have been otherwise with the nascent giraffe, considering its probable habits of life; for those individuals which had some one part or several parts of their bodies rather more elongated than usual, would generally have survived. These will have intercrossed and left offspring, either inheriting the same bodily peculiarities, or with a tendency to vary again in the same manner; whilst the individuals, less favoured in the same respects, will have been the most liable to perish.

We here see that there is no need to separate single pairs, as man does, when he methodically improves a breed: natural selection will preserve and thus separate all the superior individuals, allowing them freely to intercross, and will destroy all the inferior individuals. By this process long-continued, which exactly corresponds with what I have called unconscious selection by man, combined no doubt in a most important manner with the inherited effects of the increased use of parts, it seems to me almost certain that an ordinary hoofed quadruped might be converted into a giraffe.

To this conclusion Mr. Mivart brings forward two objections. One is that the increased size of the body would obviously require an increased supply of food, and he considers it as "very problematical whether the disadvantages thence arising would not, in times of scarcity, more than counterbalance the advantages." But as the giraffe does actually exist in large numbers in S. Africa, and as some of the largest antelopes in the world, taller than an ox, abound there, why should we doubt that, as far as size is concerned, intermediate gradations could formerly have existed there, subjected as now to severe dearths. Assuredly the being able to reach, at each stage of increased
size, to a supply of food, left untouched by the other hoofed quadrupeds of the
country, would have been of some advantage to the nascent giraffe. Nor must
we overlook the fact, that increased bulk would act as a protection against
almost all beasts of prey excepting the lion; and against this animal, its tall
neck, — and the taller the better, — would, as Mr. Chauncey Wright has
remarked, serve as a watch-tower. It is from this cause, as Sir S. Baker
remarks, that no animal is more difficult to stalk than the giraffe. This animal
also uses its long neck as a means of offence or defence, by violently swinging
his head armed with stump-like horns. The preservation of each species can
rarely be determined by any one advantage, but by the union of all, great and
small.

Mr. Mivart then asks (and this is his second objection), if natural selection be
so potent, and if high browsing be so great an advantage, why has not any
other hoofed quadruped acquired a long neck and lofty stature, besides the
giraffe, and, in a lesser degree, the camel, guanaco, and macrauchenia? Or,
again, why has not any member of the group acquired a long proboscis? With
respect to S. Africa, which was formerly inhabited by numerous herds of the
giraffe, the answer is not difficult, and can best be given by an illustration. In
every meadow in England in which trees grow, we see the lower branches
trimmed or planed to an exact level by the browsing of the horses or cattle;
and what advantage would it be, for instance, to sheep, if kept there, to acquire
slightly longer necks? In every district some one kind of animal will almost
certainly be able to browse higher than the others; and it is almost equally
certain that this one kind alone could have its neck elongated for this purpose,
through natural selection and the effects of increased use. In S. Africa the
competition for browsing on the higher branches of the acacias and other trees
must be between giraffe and giraffe, and not with the other ungulate animals.

Why, in other quarters of the world, various animals belonging to this same
order have not acquired either an elongated neck or a proboscis, cannot be
distinctly answered; but it is as unreasonable to expect a distinct answer to
such a question, as why some event in the history of mankind did not occur in
one country, whilst it did in another. We are ignorant with respect to the
conditions which determine the numbers and range of each species; and we
cannot even conjecture what changes of structure would be favourable to its
increase in some new country. We can, however, see in a general manner that
various causes might have interfered with the development of a long neck or
proboscis. To reach the foliage at a considerable height (without climbing, for
which hoofed animals are singularly ill-constructed) implies greatly increased
bulk of body; and we know that some areas support singularly few large
quadrupeds, for instance S. America, though it is so luxuriant; whilst S. Africa
abounds with them to an unparalleled degree. Why this should be so, we do
not know; nor why the later tertiary periods should have been so much more
favourable for their existence than the present time. Whatever the causes may
have been, we can see that certain districts and times would have been much
more favourable than others for the development of so large a quadruped as
the giraffe.

In order that an animal should acquire some structure specially and largely
developed, it is almost indispensable that several other parts should be
modified and co-adapted. Although every part of the body varies slightly, it
does not follow that the necessary parts should always vary in the right direction and to the right degree. With the different species of our domesticated animals we know that the parts vary in a different manner and degree; and that some species are more variable than others. Even if the fitting variations did arise, it does not follow that natural selection would be able to act on them, and produce a structure which apparently would be beneficial to the species. For instance, if the number of individuals existing in a country is determined chiefly through destruction by beasts of prey, — by external or internal parasites, etc., — as seems often to be the case, then natural selection will be able to do little, or will be greatly retarded, in modifying any particular structure for obtaining food. Lastly, natural selection is a slow process, and the same favourable conditions must long endure in order that any marked effect should thus be produced. Except by assigning such general and vague reasons, we cannot explain why, in many quarters of the world, hoofed quadrupeds have not acquired much elongated necks or other means for browsing on the higher branches of trees. [pp. 205-8]

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CHAPTER 15.

RECAPITULATION AND CONCLUSION

[Recapitulation of the General and Special Circumstances in Favour of the Theory of Natural Selection.] Now let us turn to the other side of the argument. Under domestication we see much variability, caused, or at least excited, by changed conditions of life; but often in so obscure a manner, that we are tempted to consider the variations as spontaneous. Variability is governed by many complex laws, — by correlated growth, compensation, the increased use and disuse of parts, and the definite action of the surrounding conditions. There is much difficulty in ascertaining how largely our domestic productions have been modified; but we may safely infer that the amount has been large, and that modifications can be inherited for long periods. As long as the conditions of life remain the same, we have reason to believe that a modification, which has already been inherited for many generations, may continue to be inherited for an almost infinite number of generations. On the other hand, we have evidence that variability when it has once come into play, does not cease under domestication for a very long period; nor do we know that it ever ceases, for new varieties are still occasionally produced by our oldest domesticated productions.

Variability is not actually caused by man; he only unintentionally exposes organic beings to new conditions of life, and then nature acts on the organisation and causes it to vary. But man can and does select the variations given to him by nature, and thus accumulates them in any desired manner. He thus adapts animals and plants for his own benefit or pleasure. He may do this methodically, or he may do it unconsciously by preserving the individuals most useful or pleasing to him without any intention of altering the breed. It is certain that he can largely influence the character of a breed by selecting, in

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1 [Darwin has just summarized arguments against Natural Selection.]
each successive generation, individual differences so slight as to be inappreciable except by an educated eye. This unconscious process of selection has been the great agency in the formation of the most distinct and useful domestic breeds. That many breeds produced by man have to a large extent the character of natural species, is shown by the inextricable doubts whether many of them are varieties or aboriginally distinct species.

There is no reason why the principles which have acted so efficiently under domestication should not have acted under nature. In the survival of favoured individuals and races, during the constantly-recurrent Struggle for Existence, we see a powerful and ever-acting form of Selection. The struggle for existence inevitably follows from the high geometrical ratio of increase which is common to all organic beings. This high rate of increase is proved by calculation, — by the rapid increase of many animals and plants during a succession of peculiar seasons, and when naturalised in new countries. More individuals are born than can possibly survive. A grain in the balance may determine which individuals shall live and which shall die, — which variety or species shall increase in number, and which shall decrease, or finally become extinct. As the individuals of the same species come in all respects into the closest competition with each other, the struggle will generally be most severe between them; it will be almost equally severe between the varieties of the same species, and next in severity between the species of the same genus. On the other hand the struggle will often be severe between beings remote in the scale of nature. The slightest advantage in certain individuals, at any age or during any season, over those with which they come into competition, or better adaptation in however slight a degree to the surrounding physical conditions, will, in the long run, turn the balance.

With animals having separated sexes, there will be in most cases a struggle between the males for the possession of the females. The most vigorous males, or those which have most successfully struggled with their conditions of life, will generally leave most progeny. But success will often depend on the males having special weapons, or means of defence, or charms; and a slight advantage will lead to victory.

As geology plainly proclaims that each land has undergone great physical changes, we might have expected to find that organic beings have varied under nature, in the same way as they have varied under domestication. And if there has been any variability under nature, it would be an unaccountable fact if natural selection had not come into play. It has often been asserted, but the assertion is incapable of proof, that the amount of variation under nature is a strictly limited quantity. Man, though acting on external characters alone and often capriciously, can produce within a short period a great result by adding up mere individual differences in his domestic productions; and every one admits that species present individual differences. But, besides such differences, all naturalists admit that natural varieties exist, which are considered sufficiently distinct to be worthy of record in systematic works. No one has drawn any clear distinction between individual differences and slight varieties; or between more plainly marked varieties and sub-species, and species. On separate continents, and on different parts of the same continent when divided by barriers of any kind, and on outlying islands, what a multitude of forms exist, which some experienced naturalists rank as varieties,
others as geographical races or sub-species, and others as distinct, though closely allied species!

If then, animals and plants do vary, let it be ever so slightly or slowly, why should not variations or individual differences, which are in any way beneficial, be preserved and accumulated through natural selection, or the survival of the fittest? If man can by patience select variations useful to him, why, under changing and complex conditions of life, should not variations useful to nature's living products often arise, and be preserved or selected? What limit can be put to this power, acting during long ages and rigidly scrutinising the whole constitution, structure, and habits of each creature, — favouring the good and rejecting the bad? I can see no limit to this power, in slowly and beautifully adapting each form to the most complex relations of life. The theory of natural selection, even if we look no farther than this, seems to be in the highest degree probable. I have already recapitulated, as fairly as I could, the opposed difficulties and objections: now let us turn to the special facts and arguments in favour of the theory.

On the view that species are only strongly marked and permanent varieties, and that each species first existed as a variety, we can see why it is that no line of demarcation can be drawn between species, commonly supposed to have been produced by special acts of creation, and varieties which are acknowledged to have been produced by secondary laws. On this same view we can understand how it is that in a region where many species of a genus have been produced, and where they now flourish, these same species should present many varieties; for where the manufactory of species has been active, we might expect, as a general rule, to find it still in action; and this is the case if varieties be incipient species. Moreover, the species of the larger genera, which afford the greater number of varieties or incipient species, retain to a certain degree the character of varieties; for they differ from each other by a less amount of difference than do the species of smaller genera. The closely allied species also of the larger genera apparently have restricted ranges, and in their affinities they are clustered in little groups round other species — in both respects resembling varieties. These are strange relations on the view that each species was independently created, but are intelligible if each existed first as a variety.

As each species tends by its geometrical rate of reproduction to increase inordinately in number; and as the modified descendants of each species will be enabled to increase by as much as they become more diversified in habits and structure, so as to be able to seize on many and widely different places in the economy of nature, there will be a constant tendency in natural selection to preserve the most divergent offspring of any one species. Hence, during a long-continued course of modification, the slight differences characteristic of varieties of the same species, tend to be augmented into the greater differences characteristic of the species of the same genus. New and improved varieties will inevitably supplant and exterminate the older, less improved, and intermediate varieties; and thus species are rendered to a large extent defined and distinct objects. Dominant species belonging to the larger groups within each class tend to give birth to new and dominant forms; so that each large group tends to become still larger, and at the same time more divergent in character. But as all groups cannot thus go on increasing in size,
for the world would not hold them, the more dominant groups beat the less
dominant. This tendency in the large groups to go on increasing in size and
diverging in character, together with the inevitable contingency of much
extinction, explains the arrangement of all the forms of life in groups
subordinate to groups, all within a few great classes, which has prevailed
throughout all time. This grand fact of the grouping of all organic beings under
what is called the Natural System, is utterly inexplicable on the theory of
creation.

As natural selection acts solely by accumulating slight, successive, favourable
variations, it can produce no great or sudden modifications; it can act only by
short and slow steps. Hence, the canon of "Natura non facit saltum," which
every fresh addition to our knowledge tends to confirm, is on this theory
intelligible. We can see why throughout nature the same general end is gained
by an almost infinite diversity of means, for every peculiarity when once
acquired is long inherited, and structures already modified in many different
ways have to be adapted for the same general purpose. We can, in short, see
why nature is prodigal in variety, though niggard in innovation. But why this
should be a law of nature if each species has been independently created no
man can explain. [pp. 441-4]

[...]

I have now recapitulated the facts and considerations which have thoroughly
convinced me that species have been modified, during a long course of
descent. This has been effected chiefly through the natural selection of
numerous successive, slight, favourable variations; aided in an important
manner by the inherited effects of the use and disuse of parts; and in an
unimportant manner, that is in relation to adaptive structures, whether past or
present, by the direct action of external conditions, and by variations which
seem to us in our ignorance to arise spontaneously. It appears that I formerly
underrated the frequency and value of these latter forms of variation, as
leading to permanent modifications of structure independently of natural
selection. But as my conclusions have lately been much misrepre-sented, and
it has been stated that I attribute the modification of species exclusively to
natural selection, I may be permitted to remark that in the first edition of this
work, and subsequently, I placed in a most conspicuous position — namely, at
the close of the Introduction — the following words: "I am convinced that
natural selection has been the main but not the exclusive means of
modification." This has been of no avail. Great is the power of steady
misrepresentation; but the history of science shows that fortunately this power
does not long endure.

It can hardly be supposed that a false theory would explain, in so satisfactory a
manner as does the theory of natural selection, the several large classes of
facts above specified. It has recently been objected that this is an unsafe
method of arguing; but it is a method used in judging of the common events of
life, and has often been used by the greatest natural philosophers. The
undulatory theory of light has thus been arrived at; and the belief in the
revolution of the earth on its own axis was until lately supported by hardly any
direct evidence. It is no valid objection that science as yet throws no light on
the far higher problem of the essence or origin of life. Who can explain what is
the essence of the attraction of gravity? No one now objects to following out the results consequent on this unknown element of attraction; notwithstanding that Leibnitz formerly accused Newton of introducing "occult qualities and miracles into philosophy."

I see no good reason why the views given in this volume should shock the religious feelings of any one. It is satisfactory, as showing how transient such impressions are, to remember that the greatest discovery ever made by man, namely, the law of the attraction of gravity, was also attacked by Leibnitz, "as subversive of natural, and inferentially of revealed, religion." A celebrated author and divine has written to me that "he has gradually learnt to see that it is just as noble a conception of the Deity to believe that He created a few original forms capable of self-development into other and needful forms, as to believe that He required a fresh act of creation to supply the voids caused by the action of His laws."

Causes of the General Belief in the Immutability of Species. Why, it may be asked, until recently did nearly all the most eminent living naturalists and geologists disbelieve in the mutability of species? It cannot be asserted that organic beings in a state of nature are subject to no variation; it cannot be proved that the amount of variation in the course of long ages is a limited quality; no clear distinction has been, or can be, drawn between species and well-marked varieties. It cannot be maintained that species when intercrossed are invariably sterile, and varieties invariably fertile; or that sterility is a special endowment and sign of creation. The belief that species were immutable productions was almost unavoidable as long as the history of the world was thought to be of short duration; and now that we have acquired some idea of the lapse of time, we are too apt to assume, without proof, that the geological record is so perfect that it would have afforded us plain evidence of the mutation of species, if they had undergone mutation.

But the chief cause of our natural unwillingness to admit that one species has given birth to clear and distinct species, is that we are always slow in admitting great changes of which we do not see the steps. The difficulty is the same as that felt by so many geologists, when Lyell first insisted that long lines of inland cliffs had been formed, the great valleys excavated, by the agencies which we see still at work. The mind cannot possibly grasp the full meaning of the term of even a million years; it cannot add up and perceive the full effects of many slight variations, accumulated during an almost infinite number of generations.

Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given in this volume under the form of an abstract, I by no means expect to convince experienced naturalists whose minds are stocked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly opposite to mine. It is so easy to hide our ignorance under such expressions as the "plan of creation," "unity of design," etc., and to think that we give an explanation when we only re-state a fact. Any one whose disposition leads him to attach more weight to unexplained difficulties than to the explanation of a certain number of facts will certainly reject the theory. A few naturalists, endowed with much flexibility of mind, and who have already begun to doubt the immutability of species, may be influenced by this volume; but I look with
confidence to the future, — to young and rising naturalists, who will be able to
view both sides of the question with impartiality. Whoever is led to believe
that species are mutable will do good service by conscientiously expressing
his conviction; for thus only can the load of prejudice by which this subject is
overwhelmed be removed.

Several eminent naturalists have of late published their belief that a multitude
of reputed species in each genus are not real species; but that other species are
real, that is, have been independently created. This seems to me a strange
conclusion to arrive at. They admit that a multitude of forms, which till lately
they themselves thought were special creations, and which are still thus looked
at by the majority of naturalists, and which consequently have all the external
characteristic features of true species, — they admit that these have been
produced by variation, but they refuse to extend the same view to other and
slightly different forms. Nevertheless they do not pretend that they can define,
or even conjecture, which are the created forms of life, and which are those
produced by secondary laws. They admit variation as a vera causa in one case,
they arbitrarily reject it in another, without assigning any distinction in the two
cases. The day will come when this will be given as a curious illustration of
the blindness of preconceived opinion. These authors seem no more startled at
a miraculous act of creation than at an ordinary birth. But do they really
believe that at innumerable periods in the earth's history certain elemental
atoms have been commanded suddenly to flash into living tissues? Do they
believe that at each supposed act of creation one individual or many were
produced? Were all the infinitely numerous kinds of animals and plants
created as eggs or seed, or as full grown? and in the case of mammals, were
they created bearing the false marks of nourishment from the mother's womb?
Undoubtedly some of these same questions cannot be answered by those who
believe in the appearance or creation of only a few forms of life, or of some
one form alone. It has been maintained by several authors that it is as easy to
believe in the creation of a million beings as of one; but Maupertuis'
philosophical axiom "of least action" leads the mind more willingly to admit
the smaller number; and certainly we ought not to believe that innumerable
beings within each great class have been created with plain, but deceptive,
marks of descent from a single parent.

As a record of a former state of things, I have retained in the foregoing
paragraphs, and elsewhere, several sentences which imply that naturalists
believe in the separate creation of each species; and I have been much
censured for having thus expressed myself. But undoubtedly this was the
general belief when the first edition of the present work appeared. I formerly
spoke to very many naturalists on the subject of evolution, and never once met
with any sympathetic agreement. It is probable that some did then believe in
evolution, but they were either silent, or expressed themselves so ambiguously
that it was not easy to understand their meaning. Now things are wholly
changed, and almost every naturalist admits the great principle of evolution.
There are, however, some who still think that species have suddenly given
birth, through quite unexplained means, to new and totally different forms:
but, as I have attempted to show, weighty evidence can be opposed to the
admission of great and abrupt modifications. Under a scientific point of view,
and as leading to further investigation, but little advantage is gained by
believing that new forms are suddenly developed in an inexplicable manner from old and widely different forms, over the old belief in the creation of species from the dust of the earth.

How Far the Theory of Natural Selection may be Extended. It may be asked how far I extend the doctrine of the modification of species. The question is difficult to answer, because the more distinct the forms are which we consider, by so much the arguments in favour of community of descent become fewer in number and less in force. But some arguments of the greatest weight extend very far. All the members of whole classes are connected together by a chain of affinities, and all can be classed on the same principle, in groups subordinate to groups. Fossil remains sometimes tend to fill up very wide intervals between existing orders.

Organs in a rudimentary condition plainly show that an early progenitor had the organ in a fully developed condition; and this in some cases implies an enormous amount of modification in the descendants. Throughout whole classes various structures are formed on the same pattern, and at a very early age the embryos closely resemble each other. Therefore I cannot doubt that the theory of descent with modification embraces all the members of the same great class or kingdom. I believe that animals are descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number.

Analogy would lead me one step farther, namely, to the belief that all animals and plants are descended from some one prototype. But analogy may be a deceitful guide. Nevertheless all living things have much in common, in their chemical composition, their cellular structure, their laws of growth, and their liability to injurious influences. We see this even in so trifling a fact as that the same poison often similarly affects plants and animals; or that the poison secreted by the gall-fly produces monstrous growths on the wild rose or oak-tree. With all organic beings excepting perhaps some of the very lowest, sexual reproduction seems to be essentially similar. With all, as far as is at present known the germinal vesicle is the same; so that all organisms start from a common origin. If we look even to the two main divisions — namely, to the animal and vegetable kingdoms — certain low forms are so far intermediate in character that naturalists have disputed to which kingdom they should be referred. As Professor Asa Gray has remarked, "the spores and other reproductive bodies of many of the lower algae may claim to have first a characteristically animal, and then an unequivocally vegetable existence." Therefore, on the principle of natural selection with divergence of character, it does not seem incredible that, from such low and intermediate form, both animals and plants may have been developed; and, if we admit this, we must likewise admit that all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth may be descended from some one primordial form. But this inference is chiefly grounded on analogy and it is immaterial whether or not it be accepted. No doubt it is possible, as Mr. G. H. Lewes has urged, that at the first commencement of life many different forms were evolved; but if so we may conclude that only a very few have left modified descendants. For, as I have recently remarked in regard to the members of each great kingdom, such as the Vertebrata Articulata etc., we have distinct evidence in their embryological homologous and rudimentary structures that within each kingdom all the members are descended from a single progenitor.
Effects of its Adoption on the Study of Natural History. When the views advanced by me in this volume, and by Mr. Wallace, or when analogous views on the origin of species are generally admitted, we can dimly foresee that there will be a considerable revolution in natural history.

Systematists will be able to pursue their labours as at present; but they will not be incessantly haunted by the shadowy doubt whether this or that form be a true species. This, I feel sure and I speak after experience, will be no slight relief. The endless disputes whether or not some fifty species of British brambles are good species will cease. Systematists will have only to decide (not that this will be easy) whether any form be sufficiently constant and distinct from other forms, to be capable of definition; and if definable, whether the differences be sufficiently important to deserve a specific name. This latter point will become a far more essential consideration than it is at present; for differences, however slight, between any two forms if not blended by intermediate gradations, are looked at by most naturalists as sufficient to raise both forms to the rank of species.

Hereafter we shall be compelled to acknowledge that the only distinction between species and well-marked varieties is, that the latter are known, or believed, to be connected at the present day by intermediate gradations, whereas species were formerly thus connected. Hence, without rejecting the consideration of the present existence of intermediate gradations between any two forms we shall be led to weigh more carefully and to value higher the actual amount of difference between them. It is quite possible that forms now generally acknowledged to be merely varieties may hereafter be thought worthy of specific names; and in this case scientific and common language will come into accordance. In short, we shall have to treat species in the same manner as those naturalists treat genera, who admit that genera are merely artificial combinations made for convenience. This may not be a cheering prospect; but we shall at least be free from the vain search for the undiscovered and undiscoverable essence of the term species.

The other and more general departments of natural history will rise greatly in interest. The terms used by naturalists, of affinity, relationship, community of type, paternity, morphology, adaptive characters, rudimentary and aborted organs, etc., will cease to be metaphorical, and will have a plain signification. When we no longer look at an organic being as a savage looks at a ship, as something wholly beyond his comprehension; when we regard every production of nature as one which has had a long history; when we contemplate every complex structure and instinct as the summing up of many contrivances, each useful to the possessor, in the same way as any great mechanical invention is the summing up of the labour, the experience, the reason, and even the blunders of numerous workmen; when we thus view each organic being, how far more interesting — I speak from experience — does the study of natural history become!

CONCLUDING REMARKS.
A grand and almost untrodden field of inquiry will be opened, on the causes and laws of variation, on correlation, on the effects of use and disuse, on the direct action of external conditions, and so forth. The study of domestic productions will rise immensely in value. A new variety raised by man will be a more important and interesting subject for study than one more species added to the infinitude of already recorded species. Our classifications will come to be, as far as they can be so made, genealogies, and will then truly give what may be called the plan of creation. The rules for classifying will no doubt become simpler when we have a definite object in view. We possess no pedigrees or armorial bearings; and we have to discover and trace the many diverging lines of descent in our natural genealogies, by characters of any kind which have long been inherited. Rudimentary organs will speak infallibly with respect to the nature of long-lost structures. Species and groups of species which are called aberrant, and which may fancifully be called living fossils, will aid us in forming a picture of the ancient forms of life. Embryology will often reveal to us the structure, in some degree obscured, of the prototype of each great class.

When we feel assured that all the individuals of the same species, and all the closely allied species of most genera, have within a not very remote period descended from one parent, and have migrated from some one birth-place; and when we better know the many means of migration, then, by the light which geology now throws, and will continue to throw, on former changes of climate and of the level of the land, we shall surely be enabled to trace in an admirable manner the former migrations of the inhabitants of the whole world. Even at present, by comparing the differences between the inhabitants of the sea on the opposite sides of a continent, and the nature of the various inhabitants on that continent, in relation to their apparent means of immigration, some light can be thrown on ancient geography.

The noble science of Geology loses glory from the extreme imperfection of the record. The crust of the earth with its imbedded remains must not be looked at as a well-filled museum, but as a poor collection made at hazard and at rare intervals. The accumulation of each great fossiliferous formation will be recognised as having depended on an unusual concurrence of favourable circumstances, and the blank intervals between the successive stages as having been of vast duration. But we shall be able to gauge with some security the duration of these intervals by a comparison of the preceding and succeeding organic forms. We must be cautious in attempting to correlate as strictly contemporaneous two formations, which do not include many identical species, by the general succession of the forms of life. As species are produced and exterminated by slowly acting and still existing causes, and not by miraculous acts of creation; and as the most important of all causes of organic change is one which is almost independent of altered and perhaps suddenly altered physical conditions, namely, the mutual relation of organism to organism, — the improvement of one organism entailing the improvement or the extermination of others; it follows, that the amount of organic change in the fossils of consecutive formations probably serves as a fair measure of the relative though not actual lapse of time. A number of species, however, keeping in a body might remain for a long period unchanged, whilst within the same period several of these species by migrating into new countries and
coming into competition with foreign associates, might become modified; so that we must not overrate the accuracy of organic change as a measure of time.

In the future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be securely based on the foundation already well laid by Mr. Herbert Spencer, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity by gradation. Much light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history.

Authors of the highest eminence seem to be fully satisfied with the view that each species has been independently created. To my mind it accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes, like those determining the birth and death of the individual. When I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Cambrian system was deposited, they seem to me to become ennobled. Judging from the past, we may safely infer that not one living species will transmit its unaltered likeness to a distant futurity. And of the species now living very few will transmit progeny of any kind to a far distant futurity; for the manner in which all organic beings are grouped, shows that the greater number of species in each genus, and all the species in many genera, have left no descendants, but have become utterly extinct. We can so far take a prophetic glance into futurity as to foretell that it will be the common and widelypread species, belonging to the larger and dominant groups within each class, which will ultimately prevail and procreate new and dominant species. As all the living forms of life are the lineal descendants of those which lived long before the Cambrian epoch, we may feel certain that the ordinary succession by generation has never once been broken, and that no cataclysm has desolated the whole world. Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of great length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection.

It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse: a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved. [pp. 451-9]
GLOSSARY

ABERRANT: Forms or groups of animals or plants which deviate in important characters from their nearest allies, so as not to be easily included in the same group with them, are said to be aberrant.

ABNORMAL: Contrary to the general rule.

ALTERNATION OF GENERATIONS: This term is applied to a peculiar mode of reproduction which prevails among many of the lower animals, in which the egg produces a living form quite different from its parent, but from which the parent-form is reproduced by a process of budding, or by the division of the substance of the first product of the egg.

ANALOGY: That resemblance of structures which depends upon similarity of function, as in the wings of insects and birds. Such structures are said to be analogous, and to be analogues of each other.

ATROPHIED: Arrested in development at a very early stage.

CAMBRIAN SYSTEM: A series of very ancient Palaeozoic rocks. Until recently these were regarded as the oldest fossiliferous rocks.

COCCOON: A case usually of silky material, in which insects are frequently enveloped during the second or resting-stage (pupa) of their existence. The term "cocoon-stage" is here used as equivalent to "pupastage".

CORRELATION: The normal coincidence of one phenomenon, character, etc., with another.

DIFFERENTIATION: The separation or discrimination of parts or organs which in simpler forms of life are more or less united.

ENDEMIC: Peculiar to a given locality.

FOSSILIFEROUS: Containing fossils.

FERAL: Having become wild from a state of cultivation or domestication.

GERMINAL VESICLE: A minute vesicle in the eggs of animals, from which development of the embryo proceeds.

HABITAT: The locality in which a plant or animal naturally lives.

HOMOLOGY: That relation between parts which results from their development from corresponding embryonic parts, either in different animals, as in the case of the arm of man, the foreleg of a quadruped, and the wing of a bird; or in the same individual, as in the case of the fore and hind legs in quadrupeds, and the segments or rings and their appendages of which the body of a worm, a centipede, etc., is composed. The latter is called serial homology. The parts which stand in such a relation to each other are said to be homologous, and one such part or organ is called the homologue of the other. In different plants the parts of the flower are homologous, and in general these parts are regarded as homologous with leaves.

HYBRID: The offspring of the union of two distinct species.

INDIGENS: The aboriginal or vegetable inhabitants of a country or region.

MAMMALIA: The highest class of animals, including the ordinary hairy quadrupeds, the Whales, and Man, and characterised by the production of living young which are nourished after birth by milk from the teats (Mammæ, Mammary glands) of the mother. A striking difference in embryonic development has led to the division of this class into two great groups: in one of these, when the embryo has attained a certain stage, a vascular connection called the placenta, is formed between the embryo and the mother; in the other this is wanting, and the young are produced in a very incomplete state. The former, including the greater part of the class, are called Placental mammals: the latter, or Aplacental mammals, include the Marsupials and Monotremes (Ornithorhynchus).

MAMMIFEROUS: Having mammae or teats (see MAMMALIA).

MORPHOLOGY: The law of form or structure independent of function.
NASCENT: Commencing development.

NEUTERS: Imperfectly developed females of certain social insects (such as Ants and Bees), which perform all the labours of the community. Hence they are also called workers.

ORGANISM: An organised being, whether plant or animal.

PARASITE: An animal or plant living upon or in, and at the expense of, another organism.

PARTHENOGENESIS: The production of living organisms from unimpregnated eggs or seeds.

PLASTIC: Readily capable of change.

POLYMORPHIC: Presenting many forms.

PROTEAN: Exceedingly variable.

RANGE: The extent of country over which a plant or animal is naturally spread. Range in time expresses the distribution of a species or group through the fossiliferous beds of the earth's crust.

RETROGRESSION: Backward development. When an animal, as it approaches maturity, becomes less perfectly organised than might be expected from its early stages and known relationships, it is said to undergo a retrograde development or metamorphosis.

RUDIMENTARY: Very imperfectly developed.

SPECIALISATION: The setting apart of a particular organ for the performance of a particular function.

TERTIARY: The latest geological epoch, immediately preceding the establishment of the present order of things.

UNGULATA: Hoofed quadrupeds.

UNICELLULAR: Consisting of a single cell.

VERTEBRATA, or VERTEBRATE ANIMALS: The highest division of the animal kingdom, so called from the presence in most cases of a backbone composed of numerous joints or vertebrae, which constitutes the centre of the skeleton and at the same time supports and protects the central parts of the nervous system.
SUPPOSING that Truth is a woman—what then? Is there not ground for suspecting that all philosophers, in so far as they have been dogmatists, have failed to understand women—that the terrible seriousness and clumsy importunity with which they have usually paid their addresses to Truth, have been unskilled and unseemly methods for winning a woman? Certainly she has never allowed herself to be won; and at present every kind of dogma stands with sad and discouraged mien—IF, indeed, it stands at all!

For there are scoffers who maintain that it has fallen, that all dogma lies on the ground—nay more, that it is at its last gasp. But to speak seriously, there are good grounds for hoping that all dogmatizing in philosophy, whatever solemn, whatever conclusive and decided airs it has assumed, may have been only a noble puerilism and tyronism; and probably the time is at hand when it will be once and again understood WHAT has actually sufficed for the basis of such imposing and absolute philosophical edifices as the dogmatists have hitherto reared: perhaps some popular superstition of immemorial time (such as the soul-superstition, which, in the form of subject- and ego-superstition, has not yet ceased doing mischief): perhaps some play upon words, a deception on the part of grammar, or an audacious generalization of very restricted, very personal, very human—all-too-human facts. The philosophy of the dogmatists, it is to be hoped, was only a promise for thousands of years afterwards, as was astrology in still earlier times, in the service of which probably more labour, gold, acuteness, and patience have been spent than on any actual science hitherto: we owe to it, and to its ‘super-terrestrial’ pretensions in Asia and Egypt, the grand style of architecture. It seems that in order to inscribe themselves upon the heart of humanity with everlasting claims, all great things have first to wander about the earth as enormous and awe-inspiring caricatures: dogmatic philosophy has been a caricature of this kind—for instance, the Vedanta doctrine in Asia, and Platonism in Europe. Let us not be ungrateful to it, although it must certainly be confessed that the worst, the most tiresome, and the most dangerous of errors hitherto has been a dogmatist error—namely, Plato’s invention of Pure Spirit and the Good in Itself. But now when it has been surmounted, when Europe, rid of this nightmare, can again draw breath freely and at least enjoy a healthier—sleep, we, WHOSE DUTY IS WAKEFULNESS ITSELF, are the heirs of all the strength which the struggle against this error has fostered. It amounted to the very inversion of truth, and the denial of the PERSPECTIVE— the
fundamental condition—of life, to speak of Spirit and the Good as Plato spoke
of them; indeed one might ask, as a physician: ‘How did such a malady attack
that finest product of antiquity, Plato? Had the wicked Socrates really
corrupted him? Was Socrates after all a corrupter of youths, and deserved his
hemlock?’ But the struggle against Plato, or—to speak plainer, and for the
‘people’—the struggle against the ecclesiastical oppression of millenniums of
Christianity (FOR CHRISTIANITY IS PLATONISM FOR THE ‘PEOPLE’),
produced in Europe a magnificent tension of soul, such as had not existed
anywhere previously; with such a tensely strained bow one can now aim at the
furthest goals. As a matter of fact, the European feels this tension as a state of
distress, and twice attempts have been made in grand style to unbend the bow:

once by means of Jesuitism, and the second time by means of democratic
enlightenment— which, with the aid of liberty of the press and newspaper-
reading, might, in fact, bring it about that the spirit would not so easily find
itself in ‘distress’! (The Germans invented gunpowder—all credit to them! but
they again made things square—they invented printing.) But we, who are
neither Jesuits, nor democrats, nor even sufficiently Germans, we GOOD
EUROPEANS, and free, VERY free spirits—we have it still, all the distress of
spirit and all the tension of its bow! And perhaps also the arrow, the duty, and,
who knows? THE GOAL TO AIM AT….

CHAPTER I:
PREJUDICES OF PHILOSOPHERS

1. The Will to Truth, which is to tempt us to many a hazardous enterprise, the
famous Truthfulness of which all philosophers have hitherto spoken with
respect, what questions has this Will to Truth not laid before us! What strange,
perplexing, questionable questions! It is already a long story; yet it seems as if
it were hardly commenced. Is it any wonder if we at last grow distrustful, lose
patience, and turn impatiently away? That this Sphinx teaches us at last to ask
questions ourselves? WHO is it really that puts questions to us here? WHAT
really is this ‘Will to Truth’ in us? In fact we made a long halt at the question
as to the origin of this Will—until at last we came to an absolute standstill
before a yet more fundamental question. We inquired about the VALUE of
this Will. Granted that we want the truth: WHY NOT RATHER untruth? And
uncertainty? Even ignorance? The problem of the value of truth prese-

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uncertainty? Even ignorance? The problem of the value of truth presented
itself before us—or was it we who presented ourselves before the problem?
Which of us is the Oedipus here? Which the Sphinx? It would seem to be a
rendezvous of questions and notes of interrogation. And could it be believed
that it at last seems to us as if the problem had never been propounded before,
as if we were the first to discern it, get a sight of it, and RISK RAISING it?
For there is risk in raising it, perhaps there is no greater risk.

2. ‘HOW COULD anything originate out of its opposite? For example, truth
out of error? or the Will to Truth out of the will to deception? or the generous
deed out of selfishness? or the pure sun-bright vision of the wise man out of
covetousness? Such genesis is impossible; whoever dreams of it is a fool, nay,
worse than a fool; things of the highest value must have a different origin, an origin of THEIR own—in this transitory, seductive, illusory, paltry world, in this turmoil of delusion and cupidity, they cannot have their source. But rather in the lap of Being, in the intransitory, in the concealed God, in the ‘Thing-in-itself— THERE must be their source, and nowhere else!’—This mode of reasoning discloses the typical prejudice by which metaphysicians of all times can be recognized, this mode of valuation is at the back of all their logical procedure; through this ‘belief’ of theirs, they exert themselves for their ‘knowledge,’ for something that is in the end solemnly christened ‘the Truth.’ The fundamental belief of metaphysicians is THE BELIEF IN ANTITHESSES OF VALUES. It never occurred even to the wariest of them to doubt here on the very threshold (where doubt, however, was most necessary); though they had made a solemn vow, ‘DE OMNIBUS DUBITANDUM.’ For it may be doubted, firstly, whether antitheses exist at all; and secondly, whether the popular valuations and antitheses of value upon which metaphysicians have set their seal, are not perhaps merely superficial estimates, merely provisional perspectives, besides being probably made from some corner, perhaps from below—‘frog perspectives,’ as it were, to borrow an expression current among painters. In spite of all the value which may belong to the true, the positive, and the unselfish, it might be possible that a higher and more fundamental value for life generally should be assigned to pretence, to the will to delusion, to selfishness, and cupidity. It might even be possible that WHAT constitutes the value of those good and respected things, consists precisely in their being insidiously related, knotted, and crocheted to these evil and apparently opposed things—perhaps even in being essentially identical with them. Perhaps! But who wishes to concern himself with such dangerous ‘Perhapses’! For that investigation one must await the advent of a new order of philosophers, such as will have other tastes and inclinations, the reverse of those hitherto prevalent—philosophers of the dangerous ‘Perhaps’ in every sense of the term. And to speak in all seriousness, I see such new philosophers beginning to appear.

3. Having kept a sharp eye on philosophers, and having read between their lines long enough, I now say to myself that the greater part of conscious thinking must be counted among the instinctive functions, and it is so even in the case of philosophical thinking; one has here to learn anew, as one learned anew about heredity and ‘innateness.’ As little as the act of birth comes into consideration in the whole process and procedure of heredity, just as little is ‘being- conscious’ OPPOSED to the instinctive in any decisive sense; the greater part of the conscious thinking of a philosopher is secretly influenced by his instincts, and forced into definite channels. And behind all logic and its seeming sovereignty of movement, there are valuations, or to speak more plainly, physiological demands, for the maintenance of a definite mode of life. For example, that the certain is worth more than the uncertain, that illusion is less valuable than ‘truth’ such valuations, in spite of their regulative importance for US, might notwithstanding be only superficial valuations, special kinds of maiserie, such as may be necessary for the maintenance of beings such as ourselves. Supposing, in effect, that man is not just the ‘measure of things.’
4. The falseness of an opinion is not for us any objection to it: it is here, perhaps, that our new language sounds most strangely. The question is, how far an opinion is life-furthering, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps species-rearing, and we are fundamentally inclined to maintain that the falsest opinions (to which the synthetic judgments a priori belong), are the most indispensable to us, that without a recognition of logical fictions, without a comparison of reality with the purely imagined world of the absolute and immutable, without a constant counterfeiting of the world by means of numbers, man could not live—that the renunciation of false opinions would be a renunciation of life, a negation of life. TO RECOGNISE UNTRUTH AS A CONDITION OF LIFE; that is certainly to impugn the traditional ideas of value in a dangerous manner, and a philosophy which ventures to do so, has thereby alone placed itself beyond good and evil.

6. It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy up till now has consisted of—namely, the confession of its originator, and a species of involuntary and unconscious autobiography; and moreover that the moral (or immoral) purpose in every philosophy has constituted the true vital germ out of which the entire plant has always grown. Indeed, to understand how the abstrusest metaphysical assertions of a philosopher have been arrived at, it is always well (and wise) to first ask oneself: ‘What morality do they (or does he) aim at?’ Accordingly, I do not believe that an ‘impulse to knowledge’ is the father of philosophy; but that another impulse, here as elsewhere, has only made use of knowledge (and mistaken knowledge!) as an instrument. But whoever considers the fundamental impulses of man with a view to determining how far they may have here acted as INSPIRING GENII (or as demons and cobolds), will find that they have all practiced philosophy at one time or another, and that each one of them would have been only too glad to look upon itself as the ultimate end of existence and the legitimate LORD over all the other impulses. For every impulse is imperious, and as SUCH, attempts to philosophize. To be sure, in the case of scholars, in the case of really scientific men, it may be otherwise—‘better,’ if you will; there there may really be such a thing as an ‘impulse to knowledge,’ some kind of small, independent clock-work, which, when well wound up, works away industriously to that end, WITHOUT the rest of the scholarly impulses taking any material part therein. The actual ‘interests’ of the scholar, therefore, are generally in quite another direction—in the family, perhaps, or in money-making, or in politics; it is, in fact, almost indifferent at what point of research his little machine is placed, and whether the hopeful young worker becomes a good philologist, a mushroom specialist, or a chemist; he is not CHARACTERISED by becoming this or that. In the philosopher, on the contrary, there is absolutely nothing impersonal; and above all, his morality furnishes a decided and decisive testimony as to WHO HE IS,—that is to say, in what order the deepest impulses of his nature stand to each other.

11. It seems to me that there is everywhere an attempt at present to divert attention from the actual influence which Kant exercised on German philosophy, and especially to ignore prudently the value which he set upon himself. Kant was first and foremost proud of his Table of Categories; with it in his hand he said: ‘This is the most difficult thing that could ever be undertaken on behalf of metaphysics.’ Let us only understand this ‘could be’!
He was proud of having DISCOVERED a new faculty in man, the faculty of synthetic judgment a priori. Granting that he deceived himself in this matter; the development and rapid flourishing of German philosophy depended nevertheless on his pride, and on the eager rivalry of the younger generation to discover if possible something—at all events ‘new faculties’—of which to be still prouder!—But let us reflect for a moment—it is high time to do so. ‘How are synthetic judgments a priori POSSIBLE?’ Kant asks himself—and what is really his answer? ‘BY MEANS OF A MEANS (faculty)’—but unfortunately not in five words, but so circumstantially, imposingly, and with such display of German profundity and verbal flourishes, that one altogether loses sight of the comical niaiserie allemande involved in such an answer. People were beside themselves with delight over this new faculty, and the jubilation reached its climax when Kant further discovered a moral faculty in man—for at that time Germans were still moral, not yet dabbling in the ‘Politics of hard fact.’ Then came the honeymoon of German philosophy. All the young theologians of the Tubingen institution went immediately into the groves—all seeking for ‘faculties.’ And what did they not find—in that innocent, rich, and still youthful period of the German spirit, to which Romanticism, the malicious fairy, piped and sang, when one could not yet distinguish between ‘finding’ and ‘inventing’! Above all a faculty for the ‘transcendental’; Schelling christened it, intellectual intuition, and thereby gratified the most earnest longings of the naturally pious-inclined Germans. One can do no greater wrong to the whole of this exuberant and eccentric movement (which was really youthfulness, notwithstanding that it disguised itself so boldly, in hoary and senile conceptions), than to take it seriously, or even treat it with moral indignation. Enough, however—the world grew older, and the dream vanished. A time came when people rubbed their foreheads, and they still rub them today. People had been dreaming, and first and foremost—old Kant. ‘By means of a means (faculty)’—he had said, or at least meant to say. But, is that—an answer? An explanation? Or is it not rather merely a repetition of the question? How does opium induce sleep? ‘By means of a means (faculty), ‘namely the virtus dormitiva, replies the doctor in Moliere, Quia est in eo virtus dormitiva, Cujus est natura sensus assoupire. But such replies belong to the realm of comedy, and it is high time to replace the Kantian question, ‘How are synthetic judgments a PRIORI possible?’ by another question, ‘Why is belief in such judgments necessary?’—in effect, it is high time that we should understand that such judgments must be believed to be true, for the sake of the preservation of creatures like ourselves; though they still might naturally be false judgments! Or, more plainly spoken, and roughly and readily—synthetic judgments a priori should not ‘be possible’ at all; we have no right to them; in our mouths they are nothing but false judgments. Only, of course, the belief in their truth is necessary, as plausible belief and ocular evidence belonging to the perspective view of life. And finally, to call to mind the enormous influence which ‘German philosophy’—I hope you understand its right to inverted commas (goosefeet)?—has exercised throughout the whole of Europe, there is no doubt that a certain VIRTUS DORMITIVA had a share in it; thanks to German philosophy, it was a delight to the noble idlers, the virtuous, the mystics, the artiste, the three-fourths Christians, and the political obscurantists of all nations, to find an antidote to
the still overwhelming sensualism which overflowed from the last century into this, in short—‘sensus assoupire.’ …

13. Psychologists should bethink themselves before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to DISCHARGE its strength—life itself is WILL TO POWER; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent RESULTS thereof. In short, here, as everywhere else, let us beware of SUPERFLUOUS teleological principles!—one of which is the instinct of self-preservation (we owe it to Spinoza’s inconsistency). It is thus, in effect, that method ordains, which must be essentially economy of principles.

16. There are still harmless self-observers who believe that there are ‘immediate certainties’; for instance, ‘I think,’ or as the superstition of Schopenhauer puts it, ‘I will’; as though cognition here got hold of its object purely and simply as ‘the thing in itself,’ without any falsification taking place either on the part of the subject or the object. I would repeat it, however, a hundred times, that ‘immediate certainty,’ as well as ‘absolute knowledge’ and the ‘thing in itself,’ involve a CONTRADICTION IN ADJECTO; we really ought to free ourselves from the misleading significance of words! The people on their part may think that cognition is knowing all about things, but the philosopher must say to himself: ‘When I analyze the process that is expressed in the sentence, ‘I think,’ I find a whole series of daring assertions, the argumentative proof of which would be difficult, perhaps impossible: for instance, that it is I who think, that there must necessarily be something that thinks, that thinking is an activity and operation on the part of a being who is thought of as a cause, that there is an ‘ego,’ and finally, that it is already determined what is to be designated by thinking—that I KNOW what thinking is. For if I had not already decided within myself what it is, by what standard could I determine whether that which is just happening is not perhaps ‘willing’ or ‘feeling’? In short, the assertion ‘I think,’ assumes that I COMPARE my state at the present moment with other states of myself which I know, in order to determine what it is; on account of this retrospective connection with further ‘knowledge,’ it has, at any rate, no immediate certainty for me.’—In place of the ‘immediate certainty’ in which the people may believe in the special case, the philosopher thus finds a series of metaphysical questions presented to him, veritable conscience questions of the intellect, to wit: ‘Whence did I get the notion of ‘thinking’? Why do I believe in cause and effect? What gives me the right to speak of an ‘ego,’ and even of an ‘ego’ as cause, and finally of an ‘ego’ as cause of thought?’ He who ventures to answer these metaphysical questions at once by an appeal to a sort of INTUITIVE perception, like the person who says, ‘I think, and know that this, at least, is true, actual, and certain’—will encounter a smile and two notes of interrogation in a philosopher nowadays. ‘Sir,’ the philosopher will perhaps give him to understand, ‘it is improbable that you are not mistaken, but why should it be the truth?’

17. With regard to the superstitions of logicians, I shall never tire of emphasizing a small, terse fact, which is unwillingly recognized by these credulous minds—namely, that a thought comes when ‘it’ wishes, and not when ‘I’ wish; so that it is a PERVERSION of the facts of the case to say that the subject ‘I’ is the condition of the predicate ‘think.’ ONE thinks; but that
this ‘one’ is precisely the famous old ‘ego,’ is, to put it mildly, only a supposition, an assertion, and assuredly not an ‘immediate certainty.’ After all, one has even gone too far with this ‘one thinks’—even the ‘one’ contains an INTERPRETATION of the process, and does not belong to the process itself. One infers here according to the usual grammatical formula—‘To think is an activity; every activity requires an agency that is active; consequently’ … It was pretty much on the same lines that the older atomism sought, besides the operating ‘power,’ the material particle wherein it resides and out of which it operates—the atom. More rigorous minds, however, learnt at last to get along without this ‘earth-residuum,’ and perhaps some day we shall accustom ourselves, even from the logician’s point of view, to get along without the little ‘one’ (to which the worthy old ‘ego’ has refined itself).

18. It is certainly not the least charm of a theory that it is refutable; it is precisely thereby that it attracts the more subtle minds. It seems that the hundred-times-refuted theory of the ‘free will’ owes its persistence to this charm alone; some one is always appearing who feels himself strong enough to refute it.

19. Philosophers are accustomed to speak of the will as though it were the best-known thing in the world; indeed, Schopenhauer has given us to understand that the will alone is really known to us, absolutely and completely known, without deduction or addition. But it again and again seems to me that in this case Schopenhauer also only did what philosophers are in the habit of doing—he seems to have adopted a POPULAR PREJUDICE and exaggerated it. Willing—seems to me to be above all something COMPLICATED, something that is a unity only in name—and it is precisely in a name that popular prejudice lurks, which has got the mastery over the inadequate precautions of philosophers in all ages. So let us for once be more cautious, let us be ‘unphilosophical’; let us say that in all willing there is firstly a plurality of sensations, namely, the sensation of the condition ‘AWAY FROM WHICH we go,’ the sensation of the condition ‘TOWARDS WHICH we go,’ the sensation of this ‘FROM’ and ‘TOWARDS’ itself, and then besides, an accompanying muscular sensation, which, even without our putting in motion ‘arms and legs,’ commences its action by force of habit, directly we ‘will’ anything. Therefore, just as sensations (and indeed many kinds of sensations) are to be recognized as ingredients of the will, so, in the second place, thinking is also to be recognized; in every act of the will there is a ruling thought;—and let us not imagine it possible to sever this thought from the ‘willing,’ as if the will would then remain over! In the third place, the will is not only a complex of sensation and thinking, but it is above all an EMOTION, and in fact the emotion of the command. That which is termed ‘freedom of the will’ is essentially the emotion of supremacy in respect to him who must obey: ‘I am free, ‘he’ must obey’—this consciousness is inherent in every will; and equally so the straining of the attention, the straight look which fixes itself exclusively on one thing, the unconditional judgment that ‘this and nothing else is necessary now,’ the inward certainty that obedience will be rendered—and whatever else pertains to the position of the commander. A man who WILLS commands something within himself which renders obedience, or which he believes renders obedience. But now let us notice what is the strangest thing about the will,—this affair so extremely complex, for which
the people have only one name. Inasmuch as in the given circumstances we are at the same time the commanding AND the obeying parties, and as the obeying party we know the sensations of constraint, impulsion, pressure, resistance, and motion, which usually commence immediately after the act of will; inasmuch as, on the other hand, we are accustomed to disregard this duality, and to deceive ourselves about it by means of the synthetic term ‘I’; a whole series of erroneous conclusions, and consequently of false judgments about the will itself, has become attached to the act of willing—to such a degree that he who wills believes firmly that willing SUFFICES for action. Since in the majority of cases there has only been exercise of will when the effect of the command—consequently obedience, and therefore action—was to be EXPECTED, the APPEARANCE has translated itself into the sentiment, as if there were a NECESSITY OF EFFECT; in a word, he who wills believes with a fair amount of certainty that will and action are somehow one; he ascribes the success, the carrying out of the willing, to the will itself, and thereby enjoys an increase of the sensation of power which accompanies all success. ‘Freedom of Will’—that is the expression for the complex state of delight of the person exercising volition, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the order—who, as such, enjoys also the triumph over obstacles, but thinks within himself that it was really his own will that overcame them. In this way the person exercising volition adds the feelings of delight of his successful executive instruments, the useful ‘underwills’ or under-souls—indeed, our body is but a social structure composed of many souls—to his feelings of delight as commander. L’EFFET C’EST MOI. what happens here is what happens in every well-constructed and happy commonwealth, namely, that the governing class identifies itself with the successes of the commonwealth. In all willing it is absolutely a question of commanding and obeying, on the basis, as already said, of a social structure composed of many ‘souls’, on which account a philosopher should claim the right to include willing-as-such within the sphere of morals—regarded as the doctrine of the relations of supremacy under which the phenomenon of ‘life’ manifests itself.

CHAPTER II:
THE FREE SPIRIT

24. O sancta simplicitias! In what strange simplification and falsification man lives! One can never cease wondering when once one has got eyes for beholding this marvel! How we have made everything around us clear and free and easy and simple! how we have been able to give our senses a passport to everything superficial, our thoughts a godlike desire for wanton pranks and wrong inferences!—how from the beginning, we have contrived to retain our ignorance in order to enjoy an almost inconceivable freedom, thoughtlessness, imprudence, heartiness, and gaiety—in order to enjoy life! And only on this solidified, granitelike foundation of ignorance could knowledge rear itself hitherto, the will to knowledge on the foundation of a far more powerful will,
the will to ignorance, to the uncertain, to the untrue! Not as its opposite, but—as its refinement! It is to be hoped, indeed, that LANGUAGE, here as elsewhere, will not get over its awkwardness, and that it will continue to talk of opposites where there are only degrees and many refinements of gradation; it is equally to be hoped that the incarnated Tartuffery of morals, which now belongs to our unconquerable ‘flesh and blood,’ will turn the words round in the mouths of us discerning ones. Here and there we understand it, and laugh at the way in which precisely the best knowledge seeks most to retain us in this SIMPLIFIED, thoroughly artificial, suitably imagined, and suitably falsified world: at the way in which, whether it will or not, it loves error, because, as living itself, it loves life!

32. Throughout the longest period of human history—one calls it the prehistoric period—the value or non-value of an action was inferred from its CONSEQUENCES; the action in itself was not taken into consideration, any more than its origin; but pretty much as in China at present, where the distinction or disgrace of a child redounds to its parents, the retro-operating power of success or failure was what induced men to think well or ill of an action. Let us call this period the PRE-MORAL period of mankind; the imperative, ‘Know thyself!’ was then still unknown.—In the last ten thousand years, on the other hand, on certain large portions of the earth, one has gradually got so far, that one no longer lets the consequences of an action, but its origin, decide with regard to its worth: a great achievement as a whole, an important refinement of vision and of criterion, the unconscious effect of the supremacy of aristocratic values and of the belief in ‘origin,’ the mark of a period which may be designated in the narrower sense as the MORAL one: the first attempt at self-knowledge is thereby made. Instead of the consequences, the origin—what an inversion of perspective! And assuredly an inversion effected only after long struggle and wavering! To be sure, an ominous new superstition, a peculiar narrowness of interpretation, attained supremacy precisely thereby: the origin of an action was interpreted in the most definite sense possible, as origin out of an INTENTION; people were agreed in the belief that the value of an action lay in the value of its intention. The intention as the sole origin and antecedent history of an action: under the influence of this prejudice moral praise and blame have been bestowed, and men have judged and even philosophized almost up to the present day.—Is it not possible, however, that the necessity may now have arisen of again making up our minds with regard to the reversing and fundamental shifting of values, owing to a new self-consciousness and acuteness in man—is it not possible that we may be standing on the threshold of a period which to begin with, would be distinguished negatively as ULTRAMORAL: nowadays when, at least among us immoralists, the suspicion arises that the decisive value of an action lies precisely in that which is NOT INTENTIONAL, and that all its intentionalness, all that is seen, sensible, or ‘sensed’ in it, belongs to its surface or skin—which, like every skin, betrays something, but CONCEALS still more? In short, we believe that the intention is only a sign or symptom, which first requires an explanation—a sign, moreover, which has too many interpretations, and consequently hardly any meaning in itself alone: that morality, in the sense in which it has been understood hitherto, as intention-morality, has been a prejudice, perhaps a prematureness or preliminariness, probably something of the same rank as astrology and alchemy, but in any
33. It cannot be helped: the sentiment of surrender, of sacrifice for one's neighbour, and all self-renunciation-morality, must be mercilessly called to account, and brought to judgment; just as the aesthetics of 'disinterested contemplation,' under which the emasculation of art nowadays seeks insidiously enough to create itself a good conscience. There is far too much witchery and sugar in the sentiments ‘for others’ and ‘NOT for myself,’ for one not needing to be doubly distrustful here, and for one asking promptly: ‘Are they not perhaps—DECEPTIONS?’—That they PLEASE—him who has them, and him who enjoys their fruit, and also the mere spectator—that is still no argument in their FAVOUR, but just calls for caution. Let us therefore be cautious!

34. At whatever standpoint of philosophy one may place oneself nowadays, seen from every position, the ERRONEOUSNESS of the world in which we think we live is the surest and most certain thing our eyes can light upon: we find proof after proof thereof, which would fain allure us into surmisings concerning a deceptive principle in the ‘nature of things.’ He, however, who makes thinking itself, and consequently ‘the spirit,’ responsible for the falseness of the world—an honourable exit, which every conscious or unconscious advocatus dei avails himself of—he who regards this world, including space, time, form, and movement, as falsely DEDUCED, would have at least good reason in the end to become distrustful also of all thinking; has it not hitherto been playing upon us the worst of scurvy tricks? and what guarantee would it give that it would not continue to do what it has always been doing? In all seriousness, the innocence of thinkers has something touching and respectinspiring in it, which even nowadays permits them to wait upon consciousness with the request that it will give them HONEST answers: for example, whether it be ‘real’ or not, and why it keeps the outer world so resolutely at a distance, and other questions of the same description. The belief in ‘immediate certainties’ is a MORAL NAIVETE which does honour to us philosophers; but—we have now to cease being ‘MERELY moral’ men! Apart from morality, such belief is a folly which does little honour to us! If in middle-class life an ever-ready distrust is regarded as the sign of a ‘bad character,’ and consequently as an imprudence, here among us, beyond the middle-class world and its Yeas and Nays, what should prevent our being imprudent and saying: the philosopher has at length a RIGHT to ‘bad character,’ as the being who has hitherto been most befooled on earth—he is now under OBLIGATION to distrustfulness, to the wicked est squinting out of every abyss of suspicion.—Forgive me the joke of this gloomy grimace and turn of expression; for I myself have long ago learned to think and estimate differently with regard to deceiving and being deceived, and I keep at least a couple of pokes in the ribs ready for the blind rage with which philosophers struggle against being deceived. Why NOT? It is nothing more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than semblance; it is, in fact, the worst proved supposition in the world. So much must be conceded: there could have
been no life at all except upon the basis of perspective estimates and semblances; and if, with the virtuous enthusiasm and stupidity of many philosophers, one wished to do away altogether with the ‘seeming world’—well, granted that YOU could do that,—at least nothing of your ‘truth’ would thereby remain! Indeed, what is it that forces us in general to the supposition that there is an essential opposition of ‘true’ and ‘false’? Is it not enough to suppose degrees of seemingness, and as it were lighter and darker shades and tones of semblance—different valeurs, as the painters say? Why might not the world WHICH CONCERNS US—be a fiction? And to any one who suggested: ‘But to a fiction belongs an originator?’—might it not be bluntly replied: WHY? May not this ‘belong’ also belong to the fiction? Is it not at length permitted to be a little ironical towards the subject, just as towards the predicate and object? Might not the philosopher elevate himself above faith in grammar? All respect to governesses, but is it not time that philosophy should renounce governess-faith?

36. Supposing that nothing else is ‘given’ as real but our world of desires and passions, that we cannot sink or rise to any other ‘reality’ but just that of our impulses—for thinking is only a relation of these impulses to one another:—are we not permitted to make the attempt and to ask the question whether this which is ‘given’ does not SUFFICE, by means of our counterparts, for the understanding even of the so-called mechanical (or ‘material’) world? I do not mean as an illusion, a ‘semblance,’ a ‘representation’ (in the Berkeleyan and Schopenhauerian sense), but as possessing the same degree of reality as our emotions themselves—as a more primitive form of the world of emotions, in which everything still lies locked in a mighty unity, which afterwards branches off and develops itself in organic processes (naturally also, refines and debilitates)—as a kind of instinctive life in which all organic functions, including self-regulation, assimilation, nutrition, secretion, and change of matter, are still synthetically united with one another—as a PRIMARY FORM of life?—In the end, it is not only permitted to make this attempt, it is commanded by the conscience of LOGICAL METHOD. Not to assume several kinds of causality, so long as the attempt to get along with a single one has not been pushed to its furthest extent (to absurdity, if I may be allowed to say so): that is a morality of method which one may not repudiate nowadays—it follows ‘from its definition,’ as mathematicians say. The question is ultimately whether we really recognize the will as OPERATING, whether we believe in the causality of the will; if we do so—and fundamentally our belief IN THIS is just our belief in causality itself—we MUST make the attempt to posit hypothetically the causality of the will as the only causality. ‘Will’ can naturally only operate on ‘will’—and not on ‘matter’ (not on ‘nerves,’ for instance): in short, the hypothesis must be hazarded, whether will does not operate on will wherever ‘effects’ are recognized—and whether all mechanical action, inasmuch as a power operates therein, is not just the power of will, the effect of will. Granted, finally, that we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of one fundamental form of will—namely, the Will to Power, as my thesis puts it; granted that all organic functions could be traced back to this Will to Power, and that the solution of the problem of generation and nutrition—it is one problem—could also be found therein: one would thus have acquired the right to define ALL active force unequivocally as WILL TO POWER. The world seen from
within, the world defined and designated according to its ‘intelligible character’—it would simply be ‘Will to Power,’ and nothing else.

43. Will they be new friends of ‘truth,’ these coming philosophers? Very probably, for all philosophers hitherto have loved their truths. But assuredly they will not be dogmatists. It must be contrary to their pride, and also contrary to their taste, that their truth should still be truth for every one—that which has hitherto been the secret wish and ultimate purpose of all dogmatic efforts. ‘My opinion is MY opinion: another person has not easily a right to it’—such a philosopher of the future will say, perhaps. One must renounce the bad taste of wishing to agree with many people. ‘Good’ is no longer good when one’s neighbour takes it into his mouth. And how could there be a ‘common good’? The expression contradicts itself; that which can be common is always of small value. In the end things must be as they are and have always been—the great things remain for the great, the abysses for the profound, the delicacies and thrills for the refined, and, to sum up shortly, everything rare for the rare.

44. Need I say expressly after all this that they will be free, VERY free spirits, these philosophers of the future—as certainly also they will not be merely free spirits, but something more, higher, greater, and fundamentally different, which does not wish to be misunderstood and mistaken? But while I say this, I feel under OBLIGATION almost as much to them as to ourselves (we free spirits who are their heralds and forerunners), to sweep away from ourselves altogether a stupid old prejudice and misunderstanding, which, like a fog, has too long made the conception of ‘free spirit’ obscure. In every country of Europe, and the same in America, there is at present something which makes an abuse of this name a very narrow, prepossessed, enchained class of spirits, who desire almost the opposite of what our intentions and instincts prompt—not to mention that in respect to the NEW philosophers who are appearing, they must still more be closed windows and bolted doors. Briefly and regretfully, they belong to the LEVELLERS, these wrongly named ‘free spirits’—as glib-tongued and scribe-fingered slaves of the democratic taste and its ‘modern ideas’ all of them men without solitude, without personal solitude, blunt honest fellows to whom neither courage nor honourable conduct ought to be denied, only, they are not free, and are ludicrously superficial, especially in their innate partiality for seeing the cause of almost ALL human misery and failure in the old forms in which society has hitherto existed—a notion which happily inverts the truth entirely! What they would fain attain with all their strength, is the universal, green-meadow happiness of the herd, together with security, safety, comfort, and alleviation of life for every one, their two most frequently chanted songs and doctrines are called ‘Equality of Rights’ and ‘Sympathy with All Sufferers’—and suffering itself is looked upon by them as something which must be DONE AWAY WITH. We opposite ones, however, who have opened our eye and conscience to the question how and where the plant ‘man’ has hitherto grown most vigorously, believe that this has always taken place under the opposite conditions, that for this end the dangerousness of his situation had to be increased enormously, his inventive faculty and dissembling power (his ‘spirit’) had to develop into subtlety and daring under long oppression and compulsion, and his Will to Life had to be increased to the unconditioned Will to Power—we believe that
severity, violence, slavery, danger in the street and in the heart, secrecy, stoicism, tempter’s art and devilry of every kind,—that everything wicked, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and serpentine in man, serves as well for the elevation of the human species as its opposite—we do not even say enough when we only say THIS MUCH, and in any case we find ourselves here, both with our speech and our silence, at the OTHER extreme of all modern ideology and gregarious desirability, as their anti-podes perhaps?

CHAPTER III:
THE RELIGIOUS NATURE

53. Why Atheism nowadays? ‘The father’ in God is thoroughly refuted; equally so ‘the judge,’ ‘the rewarder.’ Also his ‘free will’: he does not hear—and even if he did, he would not know how to help. The worst is that he seems incapable of communicating himself clearly; is he uncertain?—This is what I have made out (by questioning and listening at a variety of conversations) to be the cause of the decline of European theism; it appears to me that though the religious instinct is in vigorous growth,—it rejects the theistic satisfaction with profound distrust.

54. What does all modern philosophy mainly do? Since Descartes—and indeed more in defiance of him than on the basis of his procedure—an ATTENTAT has been made on the part of all philosophers on the old conception of the soul, under the guise of a criticism of the subject and predicate conception—that is to say, an ATTENTAT on the fundamental presupposition of Christian doctrine. Modern philosophy, as epistemological skepticism, is secretly or openly ANTI-CHRISTIAN, although (for keener ears, be it said) by no means anti-religious. Formerly, in effect, one believed in ‘the soul’ as one believed in grammar and the grammatical subject: one said, ‘I’ is the condition, ‘think’ is the predicate and is conditioned—to think is an activity for which one MUST suppose a subject as cause. The attempt was then made, with marvelous tenacity and subtlety, to see if one could not get out of this net,—to see if the opposite was not perhaps true: ‘think’ the condition, and ‘I’ the conditioned; ‘I,’ therefore, only a synthesis which has been MADE by thinking itself. KANT really wished to prove that, starting from the subject, the subject could not be proved—nor the object either: the possibility of an APPARENT EXISTENCE of the subject, and therefore of ‘the soul,’ may not always have been strange to him,—

59. Whoever has seen deeply into the world has doubtless divined what wisdom there is in the fact that men are superficial. It is their preservative instinct which teaches them to be flighty, lightsome, and false. Here and there one finds a passionate and exaggerated adoration of ‘pure forms’ in philosophers as well as in artists: it is not to be doubted that whoever has NEED of the cult of the superficial to that extent, has at one time or another made an unlucky dive BENEATH it.
Among men, as among all other animals, there is a surplus of defective, diseased, degenerating, infirm, and necessarily suffering individuals; the successful cases, among men also, are always the exception; and in view of the fact that man is THE ANIMAL NOT YET PROPERLY ADAPTED TO HIS ENVIRONMENT, the rare exception. But worse still. The higher the type a man represents, the greater is the improbability that he will SUCCEED; the accidental, the law of irrationality in the general constitution of mankind, manifests itself most terribly in its destructive effect on the higher orders of men, the conditions of whose lives are delicate, diverse, and difficult to determine. [ . . . ] But when they had given comfort to the sufferers, courage to the oppressed and despairing, a staff and support to the helpless, and when they had allured from society into convents and spiritual penitentiaries the broken-hearted and distracted: what else had they to do in order to work systematically in that fashion, and with a good conscience, for the preservation of all the sick and suffering, which means, in deed and in truth, to work for the DETERIORATION OF THE EUROPEAN RACE? To REVERSE all estimates of value—THAT is what they had to do! And to shatter the strong, to cast suspicion on the delight in beauty, to break down everything autonomous, manly, conquering, and imperious— all instincts which are natural to the highest and most successful type of ‘man’— into uncertainty, distress of conscience, and self-destruction; forsooth, to invert all love of the earthly and of supremacy over the earth, into hatred of the earth and earthly things—THAT is the task the Church imposed on itself, and was obliged to impose, until, according to its standard of value, ‘unworldliness,’ ‘unsensuousness,’ and ‘higher man’ fused into one sentiment.

CHAPTER V:
ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MORALS

Apart from the value of such assertions as ‘there is a categorical imperative in us,’ one can always ask: What does such an assertion indicate about him who makes it? There are systems of morals which are meant to justify their author in the eyes of other people; other systems of morals are meant to tranquilize him, and make him self-satisfied; with other systems he wants to crucify and humble himself, with others he wishes to take revenge, with others to conceal himself, with others to glorify himself and gave superiority and distinction,—this system of morals helps its author to forget, that system makes him, or something of him, forgotten, many a moralist would like to exercise power and creative arbitrariness over mankind, many another, perhaps, Kant especially, gives us to understand by his morals that ‘what is estimable in me, is that I know how to obey—and with you it SHALL not be otherwise than with me!’ In short, systems of morals are only a SIGN-LANGUAGE OF THE EMOTIONS.

In contrast to laisser-aller, every system of morals is a sort of tyranny against ‘nature’ and also against ‘reason’, that is, however, no objection, unless one should again decree by some system of morals, that all kinds of
tyranny and unreasonableness are unlawful. What is essential and invaluable in every system of morals, is that it is a long constraint. In order to understand Stoicism, or Port Royal, or Puritanism, one should remember the constraint under which every language has attained to strength and freedom—the metrical constraint, the tyranny of rhyme and rhythm. How much trouble have the poets and orators of every nation given themselves!—not excepting some of the prose writers of today, in whose ear dwells an inexorable conscientiousness—‘for the sake of a folly,’ as utilitarian bunglers say, and thereby deem themselves wise—‘from submission to arbitrary laws,’ as the anarchists say, and thereby fancy themselves ‘free,’ even free-spirited. The singular fact remains, however, that everything of the nature of freedom, elegance, boldness, dance, and masterly certainty, which exists or has existed, whether it be in thought itself, or in administration, or in speaking and persuading, in art just as in conduct, has only developed by means of the tyranny of such arbitrary law, and in all seriousness, it is not at all improbable that precisely this is ‘nature’ and ‘natural’—and not laisser-aller! Every artist knows how different from the state of letting himself go, is his ‘most natural’ condition, the free arranging, locating, disposing, and constructing in the moments of ‘inspiration’—and how strictly and delicately he then obeys a thousand laws, which, by their very rigidness and precision, defy all formulation by means of ideas (even the most stable idea has, in comparison therewith, something floating, manifold, and ambiguous in it). The essential thing ‘in heaven and in earth’ is, apparently (to repeat it once more), that there should be long OBEDIENCE in the same direction, there thereby results, and has always resulted in the long run, something which has made life worth living; for instance, virtue, art, music, dancing, reason, spirituality—anything whatever that is transfiguring, refined, foolish, or divine. The long bondage of the spirit, the distrustful constraint in the communicability of ideas, the discipline which the thinker imposed on himself to think in accordance with the rules of a church or a court, or conformable to Aristotelian premises, the persistent spiritual will to interpret everything that happened according to a Christian scheme, and in every occurrence to rediscover and justify the Christian God:—all this violence, arbitrariness, severity, dreadfulness, and unreasonableness, has proved itself the disciplinary means whereby the European spirit has attained its strength, its remorseless curiosity and subtle mobility; granted also that much irrecoverable strength and spirit had to be stifled, suffocated, and spoilt in the process (for here, as everywhere, ‘nature’ shows herself as she is, in all her extravagant and INDIFFERENT magnificence, which is shocking, but nevertheless noble). That for centuries European thinkers only thought in order to prove something—nowadays, on the contrary, we are suspicious of every thinker who ‘wishes to prove something’—that it was always settled beforehand what WAS TO BE the result of their strictest thinking, as it was perhaps in the Asiatic astrology of former times, or as it is still at the present day in the innocent, Christian-moral explanation of immediate personal events ‘for the glory of God,’ or ‘for the good of the soul’;—this tyranny, this arbitrariness, this severe and magnificent stupidity, has EDUCATED the spirit; slavery, both in the coarser and the finer sense, is apparently an indispensable means even of spiritual education and discipline. One may look at every system of morals in this light: it is ‘nature’ therein which teaches to hate the laisser-aller, the too great freedom, and
implants the need for limited horizons, for immediate duties—it teaches the NARROWING OF PERSPECTIVES, and thus, in a certain sense, that stupidity is a condition of life and development. ‘Thou must obey some one, and for a long time; OTHERWISE thou wilt come to grief, and lose all respect for thyself’—this seems to me to be the moral imperative of nature, which is certainly neither ‘categorical,’ as old Kant wished (consequently the ‘otherwise’), nor does it address itself to the individual (what does nature care for the individual!), but to nations, races, ages, and ranks; above all, however, to the animal ‘man’ generally, to MANKIND.

192. Whoever has followed the history of a single science, finds in its development a clue to the understanding of the oldest and commonest processes of all ‘knowledge and cognizance’: there, as here, the premature hypotheses, the fictions, the good stupid will to ‘belief,’ and the lack of distrust and patience are first developed—our senses learn late, and never learn completely, to be subtle, reliable, and cautious organs of knowledge. Our eyes find it easier on a given occasion to produce a picture already often produced, than to seize upon the divergence and novelty of an impression: the latter requires more force, more ‘morality.’ It is difficult and painful for the ear to listen to anything new; we hear strange music badly. When we hear another language spoken, we involuntarily attempt to form the sounds into words with which we are more familiar and conversant— it was thus, for example, that the Germans modified the spoken word ARCUBALISTA into ARMBRUST (crossbow). Our senses are also hostile and averse to the new; and generally, even in the ‘simplest’ processes of sensation, the emotions DOMINATE—such as fear, love, hatred, and the passive emotion of indolence.—As little as a reader nowadays reads all the single words (not to speak of syllables) of a page—he rather takes about five out of every twenty words at random, and ‘guesses’ the probably appropriate sense to them—just as little do we see a tree correctly and completely in respect to its leaves, branches, colour, and shape; we find it so much easier to fancy the chance of a tree. Even in the midst of the most remarkable experiences, we still do just the same; we fabricate the greater part of the experience, and can hardly be made to contemplate any event, EXCEPT as ‘inventors’ thereof. All this goes to prove that from our fundamental nature and from remote ages we have been—ACCUSTOMED TO LYING. Or, to express it more politely and hypocritically, in short, more pleasantly— one is much more of an artist than one is aware of.—In an animated conversation, I often see the face of the person with whom I am speaking so clearly and sharply defined before me, according to the thought he expresses, or which I believe to be evoked in his mind, that the degree of distinctness far exceeds the STRENGTH of my visual faculty—the delicacy of the play of the muscles and of the expression of the eyes MUST therefore be imagined by me. Probably the person put on quite a different expression, or none at all.

199. Inasmuch as in all ages, as long as mankind has existed, there have also been human herds (family alliances, communities, tribes, peoples, states, churches), and always a great number who obey in proportion to the small number who command—in view, therefore, of the fact that obedience has been most practiced and fostered among mankind hitherto, one may reasonably suppose that, generally speaking, the need thereof is now innate in
every one, as a kind of FORMAL CONSCIENCE which gives the command ‘Thou shalt unconditionally do something, unconditionally refrain from something’, in short, ‘Thou shalt’. This need tries to satisfy itself and to fill its form with a content, according to its strength, impatience, and eagerness, it at once seizes as an omnivorous appetite with little selection, and accepts whatever is shouted into its ear by all sorts of commanders—parents, teachers, laws, class prejudices, or public opinion. The extraordinary limitation of human development, the hesitation, protractedness, frequent retrogression, and turning thereof, is attributable to the fact that the herd-instinct of obedience is transmitted best, and at the cost of the art of command. If one imagine this instinct increasing to its greatest extent, commanders and independent individuals will finally be lacking altogether, or they will suffer inwardly from a bad conscience, and will have to impose a deception on themselves in the first place in order to be able to command just as if they also were only obeying. This condition of things actually exists in Europe at present—I call it the moral hypocrisy of the commanding class. They know no other way of protecting themselves from their bad conscience than by playing the role of executors of older and higher orders (of predecessors, of the constitution, of justice, of the law, or of God himself), or they even justify themselves by maxims from the current opinions of the herd, as ‘first servants of their people,’ or ‘instruments of the public weal’. On the other hand, the gregarious European man nowadays assumes an air as if he were the only kind of man that is allowable, he glorifies his qualities, such as public spirit, kindness, deference, industry, temperance, modesty, indulgence, sympathy, by virtue of which he is gentle, endurable, and useful to the herd, as the peculiarly human virtues. In cases, however, where it is believed that the leader and bell-wether cannot be dispensed with, attempt after attempt is made nowadays to replace commanders by the summing together of clever gregarious men all representative constitutions, for example, are of this origin. In spite of all, what a blessing, what a deliverance from a weight becoming unendurable, is the appearance of an absolute ruler for these gregarious Europeans—of this fact the effect of the appearance of Napoleon was the last great proof the history of the influence of Napoleon is almost the history of the higher happiness to which the entire century has attained in its worthiest individuals and periods.

CHAPTER VII:
OUR VIRTUES

232. Woman wishes to be independent, and therefore she begins to enlighten men about ‘woman as she is’—THIS is one of the worst developments of the general UGLIFYING of Europe. For what must these clumsy attempts of feminine scientificity and self-exposure bring to light! Woman has so much cause for shame; in woman there is so much pedantry, superficiality, schoolmasterliness, petty presumption, unbridledness, and indiscretion concealed—study only woman’s behaviour towards children!—which has
really been best restrained and dominated hitherto by the FEAR of man. Alas, if ever the ‘eternally tedious in woman’—she has plenty of it!—is allowed to venture forth! if she begins radically and on principle to unlearn her wisdom and art-of charming, of playing, of frightening away sorrow, of alleviating and taking easily; if she forgets her delicate aptitude for agreeable desires! Female voices are already raised, which, by Saint Aristophanes! make one afraid:—with medical explicitness it is stated in a threatening manner what woman first and last REQUIRES from man. Is it not in the very worst taste that woman thus sets herself up to be scientific? Enlightenment hitherto has fortunately been men’s affair, men’s gift—we remained therewith ‘among ourselves’; and in the end, in view of all that women

238. To be mistaken in the fundamental problem of ‘man and woman,’ to deny here the profoundest antagonism and the necessity for an eternally hostile tension, to dream here perhaps of equal rights, equal training, equal claims and obligations: that is a TYPICAL sign of shallow-mindedness; and a thinker who has proved himself shallow at this dangerous spot—shallow in instinct!—may generally be regarded as suspicious, nay more, as betrayed, as discovered; he will probably prove too ‘short’ for all fundamental questions of life, future as well as present, and will be unable to descend into ANY of the depths. On the other hand, a man who has depth of spirit as well as of desires, and has also the depth of benevolence which is capable of severity and harshness, and easily confounded with them, can only think of woman as ORIENTALS do: he must conceive of her as a possession, as confinable property, as a being predestined for service and accomplishing her mission therein—he must take his stand in this matter upon the immense rationality of Asia, upon the superiority of the instinct of Asia, as the Greeks did formerly; those best heirs and scholars of Asia—who, as is well known, with their INCREASING culture and amplitude of power, from Homer to the time of Pericles, became gradually STRICTER towards woman, in short, more Oriental. HOW necessary, HOW logical, even HOW humanely desirable this was, let us consider for ourselves!

239. The weaker sex has in no previous age been treated with so much respect by men as at present—this belongs to the tendency and fundamental taste of democracy, in the same way as disrespectfulness to old age—what wonder is it that abuse should be immediately made of this respect? They want more, they learn to make claims, the tribute of respect is at last felt to be well-nigh galling; rivalry for rights, indeed actual strife itself, would be preferred: in a word, woman is losing modesty. And let us immediately add that she is also losing taste. She is unlearning to FEAR man: but the woman who ‘unlearns to fear’ sacrifices her most womanly instincts. That woman should venture forward when the fear-inspiring quality in man—or more definitely, the MAN in man—is no longer either desired or fully developed, is reasonable enough and also intelligible enough; what is more difficult to understand is that precisely thereby—woman deteriorates. This is what is happening nowadays: let us not deceive ourselves about it! Wherever the industrial spirit has triumphed over the military and aristocratic spirit, woman strives for the economic and legal independence of a clerk: ‘woman as clerkess’ is inscribed on the portal of the modern society which is in course of formation. While she thus appropriates new rights, aspires to be ‘master,’ and inscribes ‘progress’ of
woman on her flags and banners, the very opposite realises itself with terrible obviousness: WOMAN RETROGRADES. Since the French Revolution the influence of woman in Europe has DE 175 CLINED in proportion as she has increased her rights and claims; and the ‘emancipation of woman,’ insofar as it is desired and demanded by women themselves (and not only by masculine shallow-pates), thus proves to be a remarkable symptom of the increased weakening and deadening of the most womanly instincts. There is STUPIDITY in this movement, an almost masculine stupidity, of which a wellreared woman—who is always a sensible woman—might be heartily ashamed. To lose the intuition as to the ground upon which she can most surely achieve victory; to neglect exercise in the use of her proper weapons; to let-herself-go before man, perhaps even ‘to the book,’ where formerly she kept herself in control and in refined, artful humility; to neutralize with her virtuous audacity man’s faith in a VEILED, fundamentally different ideal in woman, something eternally, necessarily feminine; to emphatically and loquaciously dissuade man from the idea that woman must be preserved, cared for, protected, and indulged, like some delicate, strangely wild, and often pleasant domestic animal; the clumsy and indignant collection of everything of the nature of servitude and bondage which the position of woman in the hitherto existing order of society has entailed and still entails (as though slavery were a counter-argument, and not rather a condition of every higher culture, of every elevation of culture):—what does all this betoken, if not a disintegration of womanly instincts, a defeminising? Certainly, there are enough of idiotic friends and corrupters of woman among the learned asses of the masculine sex, who advise woman to defeminize herself in this manner, and to imitate all the stupidities from which ‘man’ in Europe, European ‘manliness,’ suffers,—who would like to lower woman to ‘general culture,’ indeed even to newspaper reading and meddling with politics. Here and there they wish even to make women into free spirits and literary workers: as though a woman without piety would not be something perfectly obnoxious or ludicrous to a profound and godless man;—almost everywhere her nerves are being ruined by the most morbid and dangerous kind of music (our latest German music), and she is daily being made more hysterical and more incapable of fulfilling her first and last function, that of bearing robust children. They wish to ‘cultivate’ her in general still more, and intend, as they say, to make the ‘weaker sex’ STRONG by culture: as if history did not teach in the most emphatic manner that the ‘cultivating’ of mankind and his weakening—that is to say, the weakening, dissipating, and languishing of his FORCE OF WILL—have always kept pace with one another, and that the most powerful and influential women in the world (and lastly, the mother of Napoleon) had just to thank their force of will—and not their schoolmasters—for their power and ascendancy over men. That which inspires respect in woman, and often enough fear also, is her NATURE, which is more ‘natural’ than that of man, her genuine, carnivoralike, cunning flexibility, her tiger-claws beneath the glove, her NAIVETE in egoism, her untrainableness and innate wildness, the incomprehensibleness, extent, and deviation of her desires and virtues. That which, in spite of fear, excites one’s sympathy for the dangerous and beautiful cat, 177 ‘woman,’ is that she seems more afflicted, more vulnerable, more necessitous of love, and more condemned to disillusionment than any other creature. Fear and sympathy it is with these feelings that man has hitherto
stood in the presence of woman, always with one foot already in tragedy, which rends while it delights—What? And all that is now to be at an end? And the DISENCHANTMENT of woman is in progress? The tediousness of woman is slowly evolving? Oh Europe! Europe! We know the horned animal which was always most attractive to thee, from which danger is ever again threatening thee! Thy old fable might once more become ‘history’—an immense stupidity might once again overmaster thee and carry thee away! And no God concealed beneath it—no! only an ‘idea,’ a ‘modern idea’!

CHAPTER IX:
WHAT IS NOBLE?

257. EVERY elevation of the type ‘man,’ has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society and so it will always be—a society believing in a long scale of gradations of rank and differences of worth among human beings, and requiring slavery in some form or other. Without the PATHOS OF DISTANCE, such as grows out of the incarnated difference of classes, out of the constant out-looking and down-looking of the ruling caste on subordinates and instruments, and out of their equally constant practice of obeying and commanding, of keeping down and keeping at a distance—that other more mysterious pathos could never have arisen, the longing for an ever new widening of distance within the soul itself, the formation of ever higher, rarer, further, more extended, more comprehensive states, in short, just the elevation of the type ‘man,’ the continued ‘self-surmounting of man,’ to use a moral formula in a supermoral sense. To be sure, one must not resign oneself to any humanitarian illusions about the history of the origin of an aristocratic society (that is to say, of the preliminary condition for the elevation of the type ‘man’): the truth is hard. Let us acknowledge unprejudicedly how every higher civilization hitherto has ORIGINATED! Men with a still natural nature, barbarians 209 in every terrible sense of the word, men of prey, still in possession of unbroken strength of will and desire for power, threw themselves upon weaker, more moral, more peaceful races (perhaps trading or cattle-rearing communities), or upon old mellow civilizations in which the final vital force was flickering out in brilliant fireworks of wit and depravity. At the commencement, the noble caste was always the barbarian caste: their superiority did not consist first of all in their physical, but in their psychical power—they were more COMPLETE men (which at every point also implies the same as ‘more complete beasts’).

260. In a tour through the many finer and coarser moralities which have hitherto prevailed or still prevail on the earth, I found certain traits recurring regularly together, and connected with one another, until finally two primary types revealed themselves to me, and a radical distinction was brought to light. There is MASTER-MORALITY and SLAVE-MORALITY,—I would at once add, however, that in all higher and mixed civilizations, there are also attempts at the reconciliation of the two moralities, but one finds still oftener the confusion and mutual misunderstanding of them, indeed sometimes their close
juxtaposition—even in the same man, within one soul. The distinctions of moral values have either originated in a ruling caste, pleasantly conscious of being different from the ruled—or among the ruled class, the slaves and dependents of all sorts. In the first case, when it is the rulers who determine the conception ‘good,’ it is the exalted, proud disposition which is regarded as the distinguishing feature, and that which determines the order of rank. The noble type of man separates from himself the beings in whom the opposite of this exalted, proud disposition displays itself he despises them. Let it at once be noted that in this first kind of morality the antithesis ‘good’ and ‘bad’ means practically the same as ‘noble’ and ‘despicable’,—the antithesis ‘good’ and ‘EVIL’ is of a different origin. The cowardly, the timid, the insignificant, and those thinking merely of narrow utility are despised; moreover, also, the distrustful, with their constrained glances, the self-abasing, the dog-like kind of men who let themselves be abused, the mendicant flatterers, and above all the liars:—it is a fundamental belief of all aristocrats that the common people are untruthful. ‘We truthful ones’—the nobility in ancient Greece called themselves. It is obvious that everywhere the designations of moral value 213 were at first applied to MEN; and were only derivatively and at a later period applied to ACTIONS; it is a gross mistake, therefore, when historians of morals start with questions like, ‘Why have sympathetic actions been praised?’ The noble type of man regards HIMSELF as a determiner of values; he does not require to be approved of; he passes the judgment: ‘What is injurious to me is injurious in itself;’ he knows that it is he himself only who confers honour on things; he is a CREATOR OF VALUES. He honours whatever he recognizes in himself: such morality equals self-glorification. In the foreground there is the feeling of plenitude, of power, which seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of a wealth which would fain give and bestow:—the noble man also helps the unfortunate, but not—or scarcely—out of pity, but rather from an impulse generated by the super-abundance of power. The noble man honours in himself the powerful one, him also who has power over himself, who knows how to speak and how to keep silence, who takes pleasure in subjecting himself to severity and hardness, and has reverence for all that is severe and hard. ‘Wotan placed a hard heart in my breast,’ says an old Scandinavian Saga: it is thus rightly expressed from the soul of a proud Viking. Such a type of man is even proud of not being made for sympathy; the hero of the Saga therefore adds warmingly: ‘He who has not a hard heart when young, will never have one.’ The noble and brave who think thus are the furthest removed from the morality which sees precisely in sympathy, or in acting for the good of others, or in DESINTERESSEMENT, the characteristic of the moral; faith in oneself, pride in oneself, a radical enmity and irony towards ‘selflessness,’ belong as definitely to noble morality, as do a careless scorn and precaution in presence of sympathy and the ‘warm heart.’—It is the powerful who KNOW how to honour, it is their art, their domain for invention. The profound reverence for age and for tradition—all law rests on this double reverence,—the belief and prejudice in favour of ancestors and unfavourable to newcomers, is typical in the morality of the powerful; and if, reversely, men of ‘modern ideas’ believe almost instinctively in ‘progress’ and the ‘future,’ and are more and more lacking in respect for old age, the ignoble origin of these ‘ideas’ has complacently betrayed itself thereby. A morality of the ruling class, however,
is more especially foreign and irritating to present-day taste in the sternness of its principle that one has duties only to one’s equals; that one may act towards beings of a lower rank, towards all that is foreign, just as seems good to one, or ‘as the heart desires,’ and in any case ‘beyond good and evil’; it is here that sympathy and similar sentiments can have a place. The ability and obligation to exercise prolonged gratitude and prolonged revenge—both only within the circle of equals,—artfulness in retaliation, RAFFINEMENT of the idea in friendship, a certain necessity to have enemies (as outlets for the emotions of envy, quarrelsomeness, arrogance—in fact, in order to be a good FRIEND): all these are typical characteristics of the noble morality, which, as has been pointed out, is not the morality of ‘modern ideas,’ and is therefore at present 215 difficult to realize, and also to unearth and disclose.—It is otherwise with the second type of morality, SLAVE-MORALITY. Supposing that the abused, the oppressed, the suffering, the unemancipated, the weary, and those uncertain of themselves should moralize, what will be the common element in their moral estimates? Probably a pessimistic suspicion with regard to the entire situation of man will find expression, perhaps a condemnation of man, together with his situation. The slave has an unfavourable eye for the virtues of the powerful; he has a skepticism and distrust, a RAFFINEMENT of distrust of everything ‘good’ that is there honoured—he would fain persuade himself that the very happiness there is not genuine. On the other hand, THOSE qualities which serve to alleviate the existence of sufferers are brought into prominence and flooded with light; it is here that sympathy, the kind, helping hand, the warm heart, patience, diligence, humility, and friendliness attain to honour; for here these are the most useful qualities, and almost the only means of supporting the burden of existence. Slave-morality is essentially the morality of utility. Here is the seat of the origin of the famous antithesis ‘good’ and ‘evil’;—power and dangerousness are assumed to reside in the evil, a certain dreadfulness, subtlety, and strength, which do not admit of being despised. According to slave-morality, therefore, the ‘evil’ man arouses fear; according to master-morality, it is precisely the ‘good’ man who arouses fear and seeks to arouse it, while the bad man is regarded as the despicable being. The contrast attains its maximum when, in accordance with the logical consequences of slave-morality, a shade of depreciation—it may be slight and well-intentioned—at last attaches itself to the ‘good’ man of this morality; because, according to the servile mode of thought, the good man must in any case be the SAFE man: he is good-natured, easily deceived, perhaps a little stupid, un bonhomme. Everywhere that slave-morality gains the ascendancy, language shows a tendency to approximate the significations of the words ‘good’ and ‘stupid.’ A last fundamental difference: the desire for FREEDOM, the instinct for happiness and the refinements of the feeling of liberty belong as necessarily to slave-morals and morality, as artifice and enthusiasm in reverence and devotion are the regular symptoms of an aristocratic mode of thinking and estimating. Hence we can understand without further detail why love AS A PASSION—it is our European specialty—must absolutely be of noble origin; as is well known, its invention is due to the Provencal poet cavaliers, those brilliant, ingenious men of the ‘gai saber,’ to whom Europe owes so much, and almost owes itself.
I

THE impression forces itself upon one that men measure by false standards, that everyone seeks power, success, riches for himself and admires others who attain them, while undervaluing the truly precious things in life. And yet, in making any general judgment of this kind, one is in danger of forgetting the manifold variety of humanity and its mental life.

There are certain men from whom their contemporaries do not withhold veneration, although their greatness rests on attributes and achievements which are completely foreign to the aims and ideals of the multitude. One might well be inclined to suppose that after all it is only a minority who appreciate these great men, while the majority cares nothing for them. But the discrepancy between men’s opinions and their behavior is so wide and their desires so many-sided that things are probably not so simple. One of these exceptional men calls himself my friend in his letters to me. I had sent him my little book which treats of religion as an illusion and he answered that he agreed entirely with my views on religion, but that he was sorry I had not properly appreciated the ultimate source of religious sentiments. This consists in a peculiar feeling, which never leaves him personally, which he finds shared by many others, and which he may suppose millions more also experience. It is a feeling which he would like to call a sensation of eternity, a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded, something “oceanic.” It is, he says, a purely subjective experience, not an article of belief; it implies no assurance of personal immortality, but it is the source of the religious spirit and is taken hold of by the various Churches and religious systems, directed by them into definite channels, and also, no doubt, used up in them. One may rightly call oneself religious on the ground of this oceanic feeling alone, even though one rejects all beliefs and all illusions.

These views, expressed by my friend whom I so greatly honor and who himself once in poetry described the magic of illusion, put me in a difficult position. I cannot discover this “oceanic” feeling in myself. It is not easy to deal scientifically with feelings. One may attempt to describe their physiological signs. Where that is impossible — I am afraid the oceanic feeling, too, will defy this kind of classification — nothing remains but to turn to the ideational content which most readily associates itself with the feeling.
If I have understood my friend aright, he means the same thing as that consolation offered by an original and somewhat unconventional writer to his hero, contemplating suicide: “Out of this world we cannot fall.” So it is a feeling of indissoluble connection, of belonging inseparably to the external world as a whole. To me, personally, I may remark, this seems something more in the nature of an intellectual judgment, not. it is true, without any accompanying feeling-tone, but with one of a kind which characterizes other equally far-reaching reflections as well. I could not in my own person convince myself of the primary nature of such a feeling. But I cannot on that account deny that it in fact occurs in other people. One can only wonder whether it has been correctly interpreted and whether it is entitled to be acknowledged as the *fons et origo* [Source and Origin] of the whole need for religion.

1 Christian Grabbe, Hannibal: “Ja, aus der Welt werden wir nicht fallen. Wir sind einmal darin.”

I have nothing to suggest which could effectively settle the solution of this problem. The idea that man should receive intimation of his connection with the surrounding world by a direct feeling which aims from the outset at serving this purpose sounds so strange and is so incongruous with the structure of our psychology that one is justified in attempting a psycho-analytic, that is, genetic explanation of such a feeling. Whereupon the following lines of thought present themselves. Normally there is nothing we are more certain of than the feeling of our self, our own ego. It seems to us an independent unitary thing, sharply outlined against everything else. That this is a deceptive appearance, and that on the contrary the ego extends inwards without any sharp delimitation, into an unconscious mental entity which we call the *id* and to which it forms a facade, was first discovered by psycho-analytic research, and the latter still has much to tell us about the relations of the ego to the id. But towards the outer world, at any rate, the ego seems to keep itself clearly and sharply outlined and delimited. There is only one state of mind in which it fails to do this.—an unusual state, it is true, but not one that can be judged as pathological. At its height, the state of - being in love threatens to obliterate the boundaries between ego and object. Against all the evidence of his senses, the man in love declares that he and his beloved are one, and is prepared to behave as if it were a fact. A thing that can be temporarily effaced by a physiological function must also of course be liable to disturbance by morbid processes. From pathology we have come to know a large number of states in which the boundary line between ego and outer world become uncertain, or in which they are actually incorrectly perceived.—cases in which parts of a man’s own body, even component parts of his own mind, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, appear to him alien and not belonging to himself; other cases in which a man ascribes to the external world things that clearly originate in himself, and that ought to be acknowledged by him.

So the ego’s cognizance of itself is subject to disturbance, and the boundaries between it and the outer world are not immovable. Further reflection shows that the adult’s sense of his own ego cannot have been the same from the beginning. It must have undergone a development, which naturally cannot be demonstrated, but which admits of reconstruction with a fair degree of
probability. 3 When the infant at the breast receives stimuli, he cannot as yet distinguish whether they come from his ego or from the outer world. He learns it gradually as the result of various exigencies. It must make the strongest impression on him that many sources of excitation, which later on he will recognize as his own bodily organs, can provide him at any time with sensations, whereas others become temporarily out of his reach.—amongst these what he wants most of all, his mother’s breast.—and reappear only as a result of his cries for help. Thus an object first presents itself to the ego as something existing outside, which is only induced to appear by a particular act. A further stimulus to the growth and formation of the ego, so that it becomes something more than a bundle of sensations, i.e., recognizes an outside, the external world, is afforded by the frequent, unavoidable and manifold pains and unpleasant sensations which the pleasure-principle, still in unrestricted domination, bids it abolish or avoid. The tendency arises to dissociate from the ego everything which can give rise to pain, to cast it out and create a pure pleasure-ego, in contrast to a threatening outside, not-self. The limits of this primitive pleasure-ego cannot escape readjustment through experience. Much that the individual wants to retain because it is pleasure-giving is nevertheless part not of the ego but of an object; and much that he wishes to eject because it torments him yet proves to be inseparable from the ego, arising from an inner source. He learns a method by which, through deliberate use of the sensory organs and suitable muscular movements, he can distinguish between internal and external,—what is part of the ego and what originates in the outer world.—and thus he makes the first step towards the introduction of the reality-principle which is to control his development further.

This capacity for distinguishing which he learns of course serves a practical purpose, that of enabling him to defend himself against painful sensations felt by him or threatening him. Against certain painful excitations from within the ego has only the same means of defense as that employed against pain coming from without, and this is the starting-point of important morbid disturbances.

3 Cf. the considerable volume of work on this topic dating from that of Ferenczi (Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality, 1913) up to Federn’s contributions. 1926, 1927 and later.

In this way the ego detaches itself from the external world. It is more correct to say: Originally the ego includes everything, later it detaches from itself the external world. The ego-feeling we are aware of now is thus only a shrunken vestige of a far more extensive feeling.—a feeling which embraced the universe and expressed an inseparable connection of the ego with the external world. If we may suppose that this primary ego-feeling has been preserved in the minds of many people.—to a greater or lesser extent.—it would co-exist like a sort of counterpart with the narrower and more sharply outlined ego-feeling of maturity, and the ideational content belonging to it would be precisely the notion of limitless extension and oneness with the universe.—the same feeling as that described by my friend as “oceanic.” But have we any right to assume that the original type of feeling survives alongside the later one which has developed from it?
Undoubtedly we have: there is nothing unusual in such a phenomenon, whether in the psychological or in other spheres. Where animals are concerned, we hold the view that the most highly developed have arisen from the lowest. Yet we still find all the simple forms alive today. The great saurians are extinct and have made way for the mammals, but a typical representative of them, the crocodile, is still living among us. The analogy may be too remote, and it is also weakened by the fact that the surviving lower species are not as a rule the true ancestors of the present-day more highly developed types. The intermediate members have mostly died out and are known to us only through reconstruction. In the realm of mind, on the other hand, the primitive type is so commonly preserved alongside the transformations which have developed out of it that it is superfluous to give instances in proof of it. When this happens, it is usually the result of a bifurcation in development. One quantitative part of an attitude or an impulse has survived unchanged while another has undergone further development.

This brings us very close to the more general problem of conservation in the mind, which has so far hardly been discussed, but is so interesting and important that we may take the opportunity to pay it some attention, even though its relevance is not immediate. Since the time when we recognized the error of supposing that ordinary forgetting signified destruction or annihilation of the memory-trace, we have been inclined to the opposite view that nothing once formed in the mind could ever perish, that everything survives in some way or other, and is capable under certain conditions of being brought to light again, as, for instance, when regression extends back far enough. One might try to picture to oneself what this assumption signifies by a comparison taken from another field. Let us choose the history of the Eternal City as an example.

4 Historians tell us that the oldest Rome of all was the Roma quadrata, a fenced settlement on the Palatine. Then followed the phase of the Septimontium, when the colonies on the different hills united together; then the town which was bounded by the Servian wall; and later still, after all the transformations in the periods of the republic and the early Caesars, the city which the Emperor Aurelian enclosed by his walls. We will not follow the changes the city went through any further, but will ask ourselves what traces of these early stages in its history a visitor to Rome may still find today, if he goes equipped with the most complete historical and topographical knowledge.


[...] I can imagine that the “oceanic” feeling could become connected with religion later on. That feeling of oneness with the universe which is its ideational content sounds very like a first attempt at the consolations of religion, like another way taken by the ego of denying the dangers it sees threatening it in the external world. I must again confess that I find it very difficult to work with these intangible quantities. Another friend of mine, whose insatiable scientific curiosity has impelled him to the most out-of-the-way researches and to the acquisition of encyclopaedic knowledge, has assured me that the Yogi by their practices of withdrawal from the world, concentrating attention on
bodily functions, peculiar methods of breathing, actually are able to produce new sensations and diffused feelings in themselves which he regards as regressions to primordial, deeply buried mental states. He sees in them a physiological foundation, so to speak, of much of the wisdom of mysticism. There would be connections to be made here with many obscure modifications of mental life, such as trance and ecstasy. But I am moved to exclaim, in the words of Schiller’s diver: *Who breathes overhead in the rosetinted light may be glad!*

### II

**IN** my *Future of an Illusion* 5 I was concerned much less with the deepest sources of religious feeling than with what the ordinary man understands by his religion, that system of doctrines and pledges that on the one hand explains the riddle of this world to him with an enviable completeness, and on the other assures him that a solicitous Providence is watching over him and will make up to him in a future existence for any shortcomings in this life. The ordinary man cannot imagine this Providence in any other form but that of a greatly exalted father, for only such a one could understand the needs of the sons of men, or be softened by their prayers and placated by the signs of their remorse. The whole thing is so patently infantile, so incongruous with reality, that to one whose attitude to humanity is friendly it is painful to think that the great majority of mortals will never be able to rise above this view of life. It is even more humiliating to discover what a large number of those alive today, who must see that this religion is not tenable, yet try to defend it inch by inch, as if with a series of pitiable rearguard actions. One would like to count oneself among the believers, so as to admonish the philosophers who try to preserve the God of religion by substituting for him an impersonal, shadowy, abstract principle, and say, “Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain!” Some of the great men of the past did the same, but that is no justification for us; we know why they had to do so.


We will now go back to the ordinary man and his religion.—the only religion that ought to bear the name. The well-known words of one of our great and wise poets come to mind in which he expresses his view of the relation of religion to art and science. They run:

*He who has Science and has Art,*  
*Religion, too, has he;*  
*Who has not Science, has not Art,*  
*Let him religious be!*

On the one hand, these words contrast religion with the two highest achievements of man, and on the other, they declare that in respect of their
value in life they can represent or replace each other. If we wish to deprive even the ordinary man, too, of his religion, we shall clearly not have the authority of the poet on our side. We will seek to get in touch with the meaning of his utterance by a special way. Life as we find it is too hard for us; it entails too much pain, too many disappointments, impossible tasks. We cannot do without palliative remedies. We cannot dispense with auxiliary constructions, as Theodor Fontane said. There are perhaps three of these means: powerful diversions of interest, which lead us to care little about our misery; substitutive gratification, which lessen it; and intoxicating substances, which make us insensitive to it.

Something of this kind is indispensable. 7 Voltaire is aiming at a diversion of interest when he brings his Candide to a close with the advice that people should cultivate their gardens; scientific work is another deflection of the same kind. The substitute gratifications, such as art offers, are illusions in contrast to reality, but none the less satisfying to the mind on that account, thanks to the place which phantasy has reserved for herself in mental life. The intoxicating substances affect our body, alter its chemical processes. It is not so simple to find the place where religion belongs in this series. We must look further afield.

6 Goethe, Zahmen Xenien IX (Gedichte aus dem Nachlass).
7 Wilhelm Busch, in Die fromme Helene, says the same thing on a lower level: “The man who has cares has brandy too.”

The question, “What is the purpose of human life?” has been asked times without number; it has never received a satisfactory answer; perhaps it does not admit of such an answer. Many a questioner has added that if it should appear that life has no purpose, then it would lose all value for him. But these threats alter nothing. It looks, on the contrary, as though one had a right to dismiss this question, for it seems to presuppose that belief in the superiority of the human race with which we are already so familiar in its other expressions. Nobody asks what is the purpose of the lives of animals, unless peradventure they are designed to be of service to man. But this, too, will not hold, for with many animals man can do nothing.—except describe, classify, and study them; and countless species have declined to be put even to this use, by living and dying and becoming extinct before men had set eyes upon them. So again, only religion is able to answer the question of the purpose of life. One can hardly go wrong in concluding that the idea of a purpose in life stands and falls with the religious system.

We will turn, therefore, to the less ambitious problem: what the behaviour of men themselves reveals as the purpose and object of their lives, what they demand of life and wish to attain in it. The answer to this can hardly be in doubt: they seek happiness, they want to become happy and to remain so. There are two sides to this striving, a positive and a negative; it aims on the one hand at eliminating pain and discomfort, on the other at the experience of intense pleasures. In its narrower sense, the word happiness relates only to the last. Thus human activities branch off in two directions.—corresponding to this double goal.—according to which of the two they aim at realizing, either predominantly or even exclusively.
As we see, it is simply the pleasure-principle which draws up the program of life’s purpose. This principle dominates the operation of the mental apparatus from the very beginning; there can be no doubt about its efficiency, and yet its program is in conflict with the whole world, with the macrocosm as much as with the microcosm. It simply cannot be put into execution, the whole constitution of things runs counter to it; one might say the intention that man should be happy is not included in the scheme of Creation. What is called happiness in its narrowest sense comes from the satisfaction—most often instantaneous—of pent-up needs which have reached great intensity, and by its very nature can only be a transitory experience. When any condition desired by the pleasure-principle is protracted, it results in a feeling only of mild comfort; we are so constituted that we can only intensely enjoy contrasts, much less intensely states in themselves. 8

Our possibilities of happiness are thus limited from the start by our very constitution. It is much less difficult to be unhappy. Suffering comes from three quarters: from our own body, which is destined to decay and dissolution, and cannot even dispense with anxiety and pain as danger-signals; from the outer world, which can rage against us with the most powerful and pitiless forces of destruction; and finally from our relations with other men. The unhappiness which has this last origin we find perhaps more painful than any other; we tend to regard it more or less as a gratuitous addition, although it cannot be any less an inevitable fate than the suffering that proceeds from other sources.

8 Goethe even warns us that “nothing is so hard to bear as a train of happy days.” This may be an exaggeration all the same.

It is no wonder if, under the pressure of these possibilities of suffering, humanity is wont to reduce its demands for happiness, just as even the pleasure-principle itself changes into the more accommodating reality-principle under the influence of external environment; if a man thinks himself happy if he has merely escaped unhappiness or weathered trouble; if in general the task of avoiding pain forces that of obtaining pleasure into the background. Reflection shows that there are very different ways of attempting to perform this task; and all these ways have been recommended by the various schools of wisdom in the art of life and put into practice by men. Unbridled gratification of all desires forces itself into the foreground as the most alluring guiding principle in life, but it entails preferring enjoyment to caution and penalizes itself after short indulgence. The other methods, in which avoidance of pain is the main motive, are differentiated according to the source of the suffering against which they are mainly directed. Some of these measures are extreme and some moderate, some are one-sided and some deal with several aspects of the matter at once. Voluntary loneliness, isolation from others, is the readiest safeguard against the unhappiness that may arise out of human relations. We know what this means: the happiness found along this path is that of peace. Against the dreaded outer world one can defend oneself only by turning away in some other direction, if the difficulty is to be solved single-handed. There is indeed another and better way: that of combining with the rest of the human community and taking up the attack on nature, thus forcing it to obey human will, under the guidance of science. One is working, then, with all for the good
of all. But the most interesting methods for averting pain are those which aim in influencing the organism itself. In the last analysis, all pain is but a sensation; it only exists in so far as we feel it, and we feel it only in consequence of certain characteristics of our organism.

The crudest of these methods of influencing the body, but also the most effective, is the chemical one: that of intoxication. I do not think anyone entirely understands their operation, but it is a fact that there are certain substances foreign to the body which, when present in the blood or tissues, directly cause us pleasurable sensations, but also so change the conditions of our perceptivity that we become insensible of disagreeable sensations. The two effects not only take place simultaneously, they seem to be closely bound up with each other. But there must be substances in the chemical composition of our bodies which can do the same, for we know of at least one morbid state, that of mania, in which a condition similar to this intoxication arises without any drug being absorbed. Besides this, our normal mental life shows variations, according to which pleasure is experienced with more or less ease, and along with this goes a diminished or increased sensitivity to pain. It is greatly to be regretted that this toxic aspect of mental processes has so far eluded scientific research. The services rendered by intoxicating substances in the struggle for happiness and in warding off misery rank so highly as a benefit that both individuals and races have given them an established position within their libido-economy. It is not merely the immediate gain in pleasure which one owes to them, but also a measure of that independence of the outer world which is so sorely craved. Men know that with the help they can get from “drowning their cares” they can at any time slip away from the oppression of reality and find a refuge in a world of their own where painful feelings do not enter. We are aware that it is just this property which constitutes the danger and injuriousness of intoxicating substances. In certain circumstances they are to blame when valuable energies which could have been used to improve the lot of humanity are uselessly wasted.

The complicated structure of our mental apparatus admits, however, of a whole series of other kinds of influence. The gratification of instincts is happiness, but when the outer world lets us starve, refuses us satisfaction of our needs, they become the cause of very great suffering. So the hope is born that by influencing these impulses one may escape some measure of suffering. This type of defence against pain no longer relates to the sensory apparatus; it seeks to control the internal sources of our needs themselves. An extreme form of it consists in annihilation of the instincts, as taught by the wisdom of the East and practised by the Yogi. When it succeeds, it is true, it involves giving up all other activities as well (sacrificing the whole of life), and again, by another path, the only happiness it brings is that of peace. The same way is taken when the aim is less extreme and only control of the instincts is sought. When this is so, the higher mental systems which recognize the reality-principle have the upper hand. The aim of gratification is by no means abandoned in this case; a certain degree of protection against suffering is secured, in that lack of satisfaction causes less pain when the instincts are kept in check than when they are unbridled. On the other hand, this brings with it an undeniable reduction in the degree of enjoyment obtainable. The feeling of happiness produced by indulgence of a wild, untamed craving is incomparably
more intense than is the satisfying of a curbed desire. The irresistibility of perverted impulses, perhaps the charm of forbidden things generally, may in this way be explained economically.

Another method of guarding against pain is by using the libido-displacements that our mental equipment allows of, by which it gains so greatly in flexibility. The task is then one of transferring the instinctual aims into such directions that they cannot be frustrated by the outer world. Sublimation of the instincts lends an aid in this. Its success is greatest when a man knows how to heighten sufficiently his capacity for obtaining pleasure from mental and intellectual work. Fate has little power against him then. This kind of satisfaction, such as the artist’s joy in creation, in embodying his phantasies, or the scientist’s in solving problems or discovering truth, has a special quality which we shall certainly one day be able to define metapsychologically. Until then we can only say metaphorically it seems to us higher and finer, but, compared with that of gratifying gross primitive instincts, its intensity is tempered and diffused; it does not overwhelm us physically. The weak point of this method, however, is that it is not generally applicable; it is only available to the few. It presupposes special gifts and dispositions which are not very commonly found in a sufficient degree. And even to these few it does not secure complete protection against suffering; it gives no invulnerable armour against the arrows of fate, and it usually fails when a man’s own body becomes a source of suffering to him. 9 -10-

9 When there is no special disposition in a man imperatively prescribing the direction of his life-interest, the ordinary work all can do for a livelihood can play the part which Voltaire wisely advocated it should do in our lives. It is not possible to discuss the significance of work for the economics of the libido adequately within the limits of a short survey. Laying stress upon importance of work has a greater effect than any other technique of living in the direction of binding the individual more closely to reality; in his work he is at least securely attached to a part of reality, the human community. Work is no less valuable for the opportunity it and the human relations connected with it provide for a very considerable discharge of libidinal component impulses, narcissistic, aggressive, and even erotic, than because it is indispensable for subsistence and justifies existence in a society. The daily work of earning a livelihood affords particular satisfaction when it has been selected by free choice, i.e., when through sublimation it enables use to be made of existing inclinations, of instinctual impulses that have retained their strength or are more intense than usual for constitutional reasons. And yet as a path to happiness work is not valued very highly by men. They do not run after it as they do after other opportunities for gratification. The great majority work only when forced by necessity, and this natural human aversion to work gives rise to the most difficult social problems.

This behaviour reveals clearly enough its aim—that of making oneself independent of the external world, by looking for happiness in the inner things of the mind; in the next method the same features are even more marked. The connection with reality is looser still; satisfaction is obtained through illusions, which are recognized as such, without the discrepancy between them and reality being allowed to interfere with the pleasure they give. These illusions
are derived from the life of phantasy which, at the time when the sense of reality developed, was expressly exempted from the demands of the reality-test and set apart for the purpose of fulfilling wishes which would be very hard to realize. At the head of these phantasy pleasures stands the enjoyment of works of art which through the agency of the artist is opened to those who cannot themselves create. 10 Those who are sensitive to the influence of art do not know how to rate it high enough as a source of happiness and consolation in life. Yet art affects us but as a mild narcotic and can provide no more than a temporary refuge for us from the hardships of life; its influence is not strong enough to make us forget real misery.

10 Cf. “Formulations regarding the Two Principles in Mental Functioning” (1911), Collected Papers, IV; and General Introduction to Psycho-Analysis (1915-17). Lecture XXIII.

Another method operates more energetically and thoroughly; it regards reality as the source of all suffering, as the one and only enemy, with whom life is intolerable and with whom, therefore, all relations must be broken off if one is to be happy in any way at all. The hermit turns his back on this world; he will have nothing to do with it. But one can do more than that; one can try to recreate it, try to build up another instead, from which the most unbearable features are eliminated and replaced by others corresponding to one’s own wishes. He who in his despair and defiance sets out on this path will not as a rule get very far; reality will be too strong for him. He becomes a madman and usually finds no one to help him in carrying through his delusion. It is said, however, that each one of us behaves in some respect like the paranoiac, substituting a wish-fulfilment for some aspect of the world which is unbearable to him, and carrying this delusion through into reality. When a large number of people make this attempt together and try to obtain assurance of happiness and protection from suffering by a delusional transformation of reality, it acquires special significance. The religions of humanity, too, must be classified as mass-delusions of this kind. Needless to say, no one who shares a delusion recognizes it as such.

I do not suppose that I have enumerated all the methods by which men strive to win happiness and keep suffering at bay, and I know, too, that the material might have been arranged differently. One of these methods I have not yet mentioned at all.—not because I had forgotten it, but because it will interest us in another connection. How would it be possible to forget this way of all others of practicing the art of life! It is conspicuous for its remarkable capacity to combine characteristic features. Needless to say, it, too, strives to bring about independence of fate — as we may best call it — and with this object it looks for satisfaction within the mind, and uses the capacity for displacing libido which we mentioned before, but it does not turn away from the outer world; on the contrary, it takes a firm hold of its objects and obtains happiness from an emotional relation to them. Nor is it content to strive for avoidance of pain — that goal of weary resignation; rather it passes that by heedlessly and holds fast to the deep-rooted, passionate striving for a positive fulfillment of happiness. Perhaps it really comes nearer to this goal than any other method. I am -11- speaking, of course, of that way of life which makes love the centre of all things and anticipates all happiness from loving and being loved. This
attitude is familiar enough to all of us; one of the forms in which love manifests itself, sexual love, gives us our most intense experience of an overwhelming pleasurable sensation and so furnishes a prototype for our strivings after happiness. What is more natural than that we should persist in seeking happiness along the path by which we first encountered it? The weak side of this way of living is clearly evident; and were it not for this, no human being would ever have thought of abandoning this path to happiness in favor of any other. We are never so defenseless against suffering as when we love, never so forlornly unhappy as when we have lost our love-object or its love. But this does not complete the story of that way of life which bases happiness on love; there is much more to be said about it.

We may here go on to consider the interesting case in which happiness in life is sought first and foremost in the enjoyment of beauty, wherever it is to be found by our senses and our judgment, the beauty of human forms and movements, of natural objects, of landscapes, of artistic and even scientific creations. As a goal in life, this aesthetic attitude offers little protection against the menace of suffering, but it is able to compensate for a great deal. The enjoyment of beauty produces a particular, mildly intoxicating kind of sensation. There is no very evident use in beauty; the necessity of it for cultural purposes is not apparent, and yet civilization could not do without it. The science of aesthetics investigates the conditions in which things are regarded as beautiful; it can give no explanation of the nature or origin of beauty: as usual, its lack of results is concealed under a flood of resounding and meaningless words. Unfortunately, psycho-analysis, too, has less to say about beauty than about most things. Its derivation from the realms of sexual sensation is all that seems certain; the love of beauty is a perfect example of a feeling with an inhibited aim. Beauty and attraction are first of all the attributes of a sexual object. It is remarkable that the genitals themselves, the sight of which is always exciting, are hardly ever regarded as beautiful; the quality of beauty seems, on the other hand, to attach to certain secondary sexual characters. In spite of the incompleteness of these considerations, I will venture on a few remarks in conclusion of this discussion. The goal towards which the pleasure-principle impels us —of becoming happy—is not attainable; yet we may not—nay, cannot—give up the effort to come nearer to realization of it by some means or other. Very different paths may be taken towards it: some pursue the positive aspect of the aim, attainment of pleasure; others the negative, avoidance of pain. By none of these ways can we achieve all that we desire. In that modified sense in which we have seen it to be attainable, happiness is a problem of the economics of the libido in each individual. There is no sovereign recipe in this matter which suits all; each one must find out for himself by which particular means he may achieve felicity. All kinds of different factors will operate to influence his choice. It depends on how much real gratification he is likely to obtain in the external world, and how far he will find it necessary to make himself independent of it; finally, too, on the belief he has in himself of his power to alter it in accordance with his wishes. Even at this stage the mental constitution of the individual will play a decisive part, aside from any external considerations. The man who is predominantly erotic will choose emotional relationships with others before all else; the narcissistic type, who is more self-sufficient, will seek his essential satisfactions in the inner workings of his own soul; the man of action will
never abandon the external world in which he can essay his power. The interests of narcissistic types will be determined by their particular gifts and the degree of instinctual sublimation of which they are capable. When any choice is pursued to an extreme, it penalizes itself, in that it exposes the individual to the dangers accompanying any one exclusive life-interest which may always prove inadequate. Just as a cautious businessman avoids investing all his capital in one concern, so wisdom would probably admonish us also not to anticipate all our happiness from one quarter alone. Success is never certain; it depends on the co-operation of many factors, perhaps on none more than the capacity of the mental constitution to adapt itself to the outer world and then utilize this last for obtaining pleasure. Any one who is born with a specially unfavorable instinctual constitution and whose libido-components do not go through the transformation and modification necessary for successful achievement in later life, will find it hard to obtain happiness from his external environment, especially if he is faced with the more difficult tasks. One last possibility of dealing with life remains to such people and it offers them at least substitute-gratifications; it takes the form of the flight into neurotic illness, and they mostly adopt it while they are still young. Those whose efforts to obtain happiness come to naught in later years still find consolation in the pleasure of chronic intoxication, or else they embark upon that despairing attempt at revolt — psychosis.

Religion circumscribes these measures of choice and adaptation by urging upon everyone alike its single way of achieving happiness and guarding against pain. Its method consists in decrying the value of life and promulgating a view of the real world that is distorted like a delusion, and both of these imply a preliminary intimidating influence upon intelligence. At such a cost — by the forcible imposition of mental infantilism and inducing a mass-delusion — religion succeeds in saving many people from individual neuroses. But little more. There are, as we have said, many paths by which the happiness attainable for man can be reached, but none which is certain to take him to it. Nor can religion keep her promises either. When the faithful find themselves reduced in the end to speaking of God’s inscrutable decree, they thereby avow that all that is left to them in their sufferings is unconditional submission as a last-remaining consolation and source of happiness. And if a man is willing to come to this, he could probably have arrived there by a shorter road.

III

Our discussion of happiness has so far not taught us much that is not already common knowledge. Nor does the prospect of discovering anything new seem much greater if we go on with the problem of why it is so hard for mankind to be happy. We gave the answer before, when we cited the three sources of human sufferings, namely, the superior force of nature, the disposition to decay of our bodies, and the inadequacy of our methods of regulating human relations in the family, the community, and the state. In regard to the first two,
our judgment cannot hesitate: it forces us to recognize these sources of suffering and to submit to the inevitable. We shall never completely subdue nature; our body, too, is an organism, itself a part of nature, and will always contain the seeds of dissolution, with its limited power of adaptation and achievement. The effect of this recognition is in no way disheartening; on the contrary, it points out the direction for our efforts. If we cannot abolish all suffering, yet a great deal of it we can, and can mitigate more; the experience of several thousand years has convinced us of this. To the third, the social source of our distresses, we take up a different attitude. We prefer not to regard it as one at all; we cannot see why the systems we have ourselves created should not rather ensure protection and well-being for us all. To be sure, when we consider how unsuccessful our efforts to safeguard against suffering in this particular have proved, the suspicion dawns upon us that a bit of unconquerable nature lurks concealed behind this difficulty as well — in the shape of our own mental constitution.

When we start to consider this possibility, we come across a point of view which is so amazing that we will pause over it. According to it, our so-called civilization itself is to blame for a great part of our misery, and we should be much happier if we were to give it up and go back to primitive conditions. I call this amazing because —however one may define culture — it is undeniable that every means by which we try to guard ourselves against menaces from the several sources of human distress is a part of this same culture.

How has it come about that so many people have adopted this strange attitude of hostility to civilization? In my opinion, it arose from a background of profound long-standing discontent with the existing state of civilization, which finally crystallized into this judgment as a result of certain historical happenings. I believe I can identify the last two of these; I am not learned enough to trace the links in the chain back into the history of the human species. At the time when Christianity conquered the pagan religions, some such antagonism to culture must already have been actively at work. It is closely related to the low estimation put upon earthly life by Christian doctrine. The earlier of the last two historical developments was when, as a result of voyages of discovery, men came into contact with primitive peoples and races. To the Europeans, who failed to observe them carefully and misunderstood what they saw, these people seemed to lead simple, happy lives — wanting for nothing — such as the travelers who visited them, with all their superior culture, were unable to achieve. Later experience has corrected this opinion on many points; in several instances the ease of life was due to the bounty of nature and the possibilities of ready satisfaction for the great human needs, but it was erroneously attributed to the absence of the complicated conditions of civilization. The last of the two historical events is especially familiar to us; it was when people began to understand the nature of the neuroses which threaten to undermine the modicum of happiness open to civilized man. It was found that men become neurotic because they cannot tolerate the degree of privation that society imposes on them in virtue of its cultural ideals, and it was supposed that a return to greater possibilities of happiness would ensue if these standards were abolished or greatly relaxed.
And there exists an element of disappointment, in addition. In the last generations, man has made extraordinary strides in knowledge of the natural sciences and technical application of them, and has established his dominion over nature in a way never before imagined. The details of this forward progress are universally known: it is unnecessary to enumerate them. Mankind is proud of its exploits and has a right to be. But men are beginning to perceive that all this newly-won power over space and time, this conquest of the forces of nature, this fulfillment of age-old longings, has not increased the amount of pleasure they can obtain in life, has not made them feel any happier. The valid conclusion from this is merely that power over nature is not the only condition of human happiness, just as it is not the only goal of civilization’s efforts, and there is no ground for inferring that its technical progress is worthless from the standpoint of happiness. It prompts one to exclaim: Is it not then a positive pleasure, an unequivocal gain in happiness, to be able to hear, whenever I like, the voice of a child living hundreds of miles away, or to know directly a friend of mine arrives at his destination that he has come well and safely through the long and troublesome voyage? And is it nothing that medical science has succeeded in enormously reducing the mortality of young children, the dangers of infection for women in childbirth, indeed, in very considerably prolonging the average length of human life? And there is still a long list one could add to these benefits that we owe to the much-despised era of scientific and practical progress — but a critical, pessimistic voice makes itself heard, saying that most of these advantages follow the model of those “cheap pleasures” in the anecdote. One gets this enjoyment by sticking one’s bare leg outside the bedclothes on a cold winter’s night and then drawing it in again. If there were no railway to make light of distances, my child would never have left home, and I should not need the telephone to hear his voice. If there were no vessels crossing the ocean, my friend would never have embarked on his voyage, and I should not need the telegraph to relieve my anxiety about him. What is the use of reducing the mortality of children, when it is precisely this reduction which imposes the greatest moderation on us in begetting them, so that taken all round we do not rear more children than in the days before the reign of hygiene, while at the same time we have created difficult conditions for sexual life in marriage and probably counteracted the beneficial effects of natural selection? And what do we gain by a long life when it is full of hardship and starved of joys and so wretched that we can only welcome death as our deliverer?

It seems to be certain that our present-day civilization does not inspire in us a feeling of well-being, but it is very difficult to form an opinion whether in earlier times people felt any happier and what part their cultural conditions played in the question. We always tend to regard trouble objectively, i. e., to place ourselves with our own wants and our own sensibilities in the same conditions, so as to discover what opportunities for happiness or unhappiness we should find in them. This method of considering the problem, which appears to be objective because it ignores the varieties of subjective sensitivity, is of course the most subjective possible, for by applying it one substitutes one’s own mental attitude for the unknown attitude of other men. Happiness, on the contrary, is something essentially subjective. However we may shrink in horror at the thought of certain situations, that of the galley-slaves in antiquity, of the peasants in the Thirty Years’ War, of the victims of
the Inquisition, of the Jews awaiting a pogrom, it is still impossible for us to feel ourselves into the position of these people, to imagine the differences which would be brought about by constitutional obtuseness of feeling, gradual stupefaction, the cessation of all anticipation, and by all the grosser and more subtle ways in which insensibility to both pleasurable and painful sensations can be induced. Moreover, on occasions when the most extreme forms of suffering have to be endured, special mental protective devices come into operation. It seems to me unprofitable to follow up this aspect of the problem further.

It is time that we should turn our attention to the nature of this culture, the value of which is so much disputed from the point of view of happiness. Until we have learnt something by examining it for ourselves, we will not look round for formulas which express its essence in a few words. We will be content to repeat 11 that the word culture describes the sum of the achievements and institutions which differentiate our lives from those of our animal forebears and serve two purposes, namely, that of protecting humanity against nature and of regulating the relations of human beings among themselves. In order to learn more than this, we must bring together the individual features of culture as they are manifested in human communities. We shall have no hesitation in allowing ourselves to be guided by the common usages of language, or, as one might say, the feeling of language, confident that we shall thus take into account inner attitudes which still resist expression in abstract terms.

11 Cf. The Future of an Illusion.

The beginning is easy. We recognize as belonging to culture all the activities and possessions which men use to make the earth serviceable to them, to protect them against the tyranny of natural forces, and so on. There is less doubt about this aspect of civilization than any other. If we go back far enough, we find that the first acts of civilization were the use of tools, the gaining of power over fire, and the construction of dwellings. Among these the acquisition of power over fire stands out as a quite exceptional achievement, without a prototype; 12 while the other two opened up paths which have ever since been pursued by man, -15- the stimulus towards which is easily imagined. By means of all his tools, man makes his own organs more perfect — both the motor and the sensory — or else removes the obstacles in the way of their activity. Machinery places gigantic power at his disposal which, like his muscles, he can employ in any direction; ships and aircraft have the effect that neither air nor water can prevent his traversing them. With spectacles he corrects the defects of the lens in his own eyes; with telescopes he looks at far distances; with the microscope he overcomes the limitations in visibility due to the structure of his retina. With the photographic camera he has created an instrument which registers transitory visual impressions, just as the gramophone does with equally transient auditory ones; both are at bottom materializations of his own power of memory. With the help of the telephone he can hear at distances which even fairy-tales would treat as insuperable; writing to begin with was the voice of the absent; dwellings were a substitute for the mother's womb, that first abode, in which he was safe and felt so content, for which he probably yearns ever after.
Psycho-analytic material, as yet incomplete and not capable of unequivocal interpretation, nevertheless admits of a surmise—which sounds fantastic enough—about the origin of this human feat. It is as if primitive man had had the impulse, when he came in contact with fire, to gratify an infantile pleasure in respect of it and put it out with a stream of urine. The legends that we possess leave no doubt that flames shooting upwards like tongues were originally felt to have a phallic sense. Putting out fire by urinating—which is also introduced in the later fables of Gulliver in Lilliput and Rabelais’s Gargantua—therefore represented a sexual act with a man, an enjoyment of masculine potency in homosexual rivalry. Whoever was the first to deny himself this pleasure and spare the fire was able to take it with him and break it in to his own service. By curbing the fire of his own sexual passion, he was able to tame fire as a force of nature. This great cultural victory was thus a reward for refraining from gratification of an instinct. Further, it is as if man had placed woman by the hearth as the guardian of the fire he had taken captive, because her anatomy makes it impossible for her to yield to such a temptation. It is remarkable how regularly analytic findings testify to the close connection between the ideas of ambition, fire, and urethral erotism.

It sounds like a fairy-tale, but not only that; this story of what man by his science and practical inventions has achieved on this earth, where he first appeared as a weakly member of the animal kingdom, and on which each individual of his species must ever again appear as a helpless infant — 0 inch of nature! — is a direct fulfillment of all, or of most, of the dearest wishes in his fairy-tales. All these possessions he has acquired through culture. Long ago he formed an ideal conception of omnipotence and omniscience which he embodied in his gods. Whatever seemed unattainable to his desires — or forbidden to him — he attributed to these gods. One may say, therefore, that these gods were the ideals of his culture. Now he has himself approached very near to realizing this ideal, he has nearly become a god himself. But only, it is true, in the way that ideals are usually realized in the general experience of humanity. Not completely; in some respects not at all, in others only by halves. Man has become a god by means of artificial limbs, so to speak, quite magnificent when equipped with all his accessory organs; but they do not grow on him and they still give him trouble at times. However, lie is entitled to console himself with the thought that this evolution will not come to an end in A. D. 1930. Future ages will produce further great advances in this realm of culture, probably inconceivable now, and will increase man’s likeness to a god still more. But with the aim of our study in mind, we will not forget, all the same, that the human being of today is not happy with all his likeness to a god.

[...]
THIS task seems too big a one; one may well confess oneself diffident. Here follows what little I have been able to elicit about it. Once primitive man had made the discovery that it lay in his own hands — speaking literally — to improve his lot on earth by working, it cannot have been a matter of indifference to him whether another man worked with him or against him. The other acquired the value of a fellow-worker, and it was advantageous to live with him. Even earlier, in his ape-like prehistory, man had adopted the habit of forming families: his first helpers were probably the members of his family. One may suppose that the founding of families was in some way connected with the period when the need for genital satisfaction, no longer appearing like an occasional guest who turns up suddenly and then vanishes without letting one hear anything of him for long intervals, had settled down with each man like a permanent lodger. When this happened, the male acquired a motive for keeping the female, or rather, his sexual objects, near him; while the female, who wanted not to be separated from her helpless young, in their interests, too, had to stay by the stronger male. 14 In this primitive family one essential feature of culture is lacking; the will of the father, the head of it, was unfettered. I have endeavored in Totem and Taboo to show how the way led from this family-life to the succeeding phase of communal existence in the form of a band of brothers. By overpowering the father, the sons had discovered that several men united can be stronger than a single man. The totemic stage of culture is founded upon the restrictions that the band were obliged to impose on one another in order to maintain the new system. These taboos were the first right or law. The life of human beings in common therefore had a twofold foundation, i. e., the compulsion to work, created by external necessity, and the power of love, causing the male to wish to keep his sexual object, the female, near him, and the female to keep near her that part of herself which has become detached from her, her child. Eros and Ananke were the parents of human culture, too. The first result of culture was that a larger number of human beings could then live together in common. And since the two great powers were here cooperating together, one might have expected that further cultural evolution would have proceeded smoothly towards even greater mastery over the external world, as well as towards greater extension in the numbers of men sharing the life in common. Nor is it easy to understand how this culture can be felt as anything but satisfying by those who partake of it.

[...] 

A small minority are enabled by their constitution, nevertheless, to find happiness along the path of love; but far-reaching mental transformations of the erotic function are necessary before this is possible. These people make themselves independent of their object’s acquiescence by transferring the main value from the fact of being loved to their own act of loving; they protect themselves against loss of it by attaching their love not to individual objects but to all men equally, and they avoid the uncertainties and disappointments of genital love by turning away from its sexual aim and modifying the instinct into an impulse with an inhibited aim. The state which they induce in themselves by this process — an unchangeable, undeviating, tender attitude — has little superficial likeness to the stormy vicissitudes of genital love, from which it is nevertheless derived. It seems that Saint Francis of Assisi may have
carried this method of using love to produce an inner feeling of happiness as far as anyone; what we are thus characterizing as one of the procedures by which the pleasure-principle fulfils itself has in fact been linked up in many ways with religion; the connection between them may lie in those remote fastnesses of the mind where the distinctions between the ego and objects, and between the various objects, become matters of indifference. From one ethical standpoint, the deeper motivation of which will later become clear to us, this inclination towards an all-embracing love of others and of the world at large is regarded as the highest state of mind of which man is capable. Even at this early stage in the discussion. I will not withhold the two principal objections we have to raise against this view. A love that does not discriminate seems to us to lose some of its own value, since it does an injustice to its object. And secondly, not all men are worthy of love.

The love that instituted the family still retains its power; in its original form it does not stop short of direct sexual satisfaction, and in its modified form, as aim-inhibited friendliness, it influences our civilization. In both these forms it carries on its task of binding men and women to one another, and it does this with greater intensity than can be achieved through the interest of work in common. The casual and undifferentiated way in which the word love is employed by language has its genetic justification. In general usage, the relation between a man and a woman whose genital desires have led them to found a family is called love; but the positive attitude of feeling between parents and children, between brothers and sisters in a family, is also called love, although to us this relation merits the description of aim-inhibited love or affection. Love with an inhibited aim was indeed originally full sensual love and in men’s unconscious minds is so still. Both of them, the sensual and the aim-inhibited forms, reach out beyond the family and create new bonds with others who before were strangers. Genital love leads to the forming of new families; aim-inhibited love to friendships, which are valuable culturally because they do not entail many of the limitations of genital love — for instance, its exclusiveness. But the interrelations between love and culture lose their simplicity as development proceeds. On the one hand, love opposes the interests of culture; on the other, culture menaces love with grievous restrictions. -21-

[...]

V

PSYCHO-ANALYTIC work has shown that these frustrations in respect of sexual life are especially unendurable to the so-called neurotics among us. These persons manufacture substitute-gratifications for themselves in their symptoms, which, however, are either painful in themselves or become the cause of suffering owing to the difficulties they create with the person’s environment and society at large. It is easy to understand the latter fact, but the former presents us with a new problem. But culture demands other sacrifices besides that of sexual gratifications. We have regarded the difficulties in the
development of civilization as part of the general difficulty accompanying all
evolution, for we have traced them to the inertia of libido, its disinclination to
relinquish an old position in favor of a new one. It is much the same thing if
we say that the conflict between civilization and sexuality is caused by the
circumstance that sexual love is a relationship between two people, in which a
third can only be superfluous or disturbing, whereas civilization is founded on
relations between larger groups of persons. When a love-relationship is at its
height, no room is left for any interest in the surrounding world; the pair of
lovers are sufficient unto themselves, do not even need the child they have in
common to make them happy. In no other case does Eros so plainly betray the
core of his being, his aim of making one out of many; but when he has
achieved it in the proverbial way through the love of two human beings, he is
not willing to go further.

From all this we might well imagine that a civilized community could consist
of pairs of individuals such as this, libidinally satisfied in each other, and
linked to all the others by work and common interests. If this were so, culture
would not need to levy energy from sexuality. But such a desirable state of
things does not exist and never has existed; in actuality, culture is not content
with such limited ties as these; we see that it endeavors to bind the members of
the community to one another by libidinal ties as well, that it makes use of
every means and favors every avenue by which powerful identifications can
be created among them, and that it exacts a heavy toll of aim-inhibited libido
in order to strengthen communities by bonds of friendship between the
members. Restrictions upon sexual life are unavoidable if this object is to be
attained. But we cannot see the necessity that forces culture along this path
and gives rise to its antagonism to sexuality. It must be due to some disturbing
influence not yet detected by us.

We may find the clue in one of the so-called *ideal standards* of civilized
society. It runs: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” It is world-
renowned, undoubtedly older than Christianity which parades it as its proudest
profession, yet certainly not very old; in historical times, men still knew
nothing of it. We will adopt a naive attitude towards it, as if we were meeting
it for the first time. Thereupon, we find ourselves unable to suppress a feeling
of astonishment, as at something unnatural. Why should we do this? What
good is it to us? Above all, how can we do such a thing? How could it possibly
be done? My love seems to me a valuable thing that I have no right to throw
away without reflection. It imposes obligations on me which I must be
prepared to make sacrifices to fulfill. If I love someone, he must be worthy of
it in some way or other. (I am leaving out of account now the use he may be to
me, as well as his possible significance to me as a sexual object; neither of
these two kinds of relationship between us come into question where the
injunction to love my neighbor is concerned.) He will be worthy of it if he is
so like me in important respects that I can love myself in him; worthy of it if
he is so much more perfect than I that I can love my ideal of myself in him; I
must love him if he is the son of my friend, since the pain my friend would
feel if anything untoward happened to him would be my pain.—I should have
to share it. But if he is a stranger to me and cannot attract me by any value he
has in himself or any significance he may have already acquired in my
emotional life, it will be hard for me to love him. I shall even be doing wrong
if I do, for my love is valued as a privilege by all those belonging to me; it is an injustice to them if I put a stranger on a level with them. But if I am to love him (with that kind of universal love) simply because he, too, is a denizen of the earth, like an insect or an earthworm or a grass-snake, then I fear that but a small modicum of love will fall to his lot and it would be impossible for me to give him as much as by all the laws of reason I am entitled to retain for myself. What is the point of an injunction promulgated with such solemnity, if reason does not recommend it to us? -24- When I look more closely. I find still further difficulties. Not merely is this stranger on the whole not worthy of love, but, to be honest, I must confess he has more claim to my hostility, even to my hatred. He does not seem to have the least trace of love for me, does not show me the slightest consideration. If it will do him any good, he has no hesitation in injuring me, never even asking himself whether the amount of advantage he gains by it bears any proportion to the amount of wrong done to me. What is more, he does not even need to get an advantage from it; if he can merely get a little pleasure out of it, he thinks nothing of jeering at me, insulting me, slandering me, showing his power over me; and the more secure he feels himself, or the more helpless I am, with so much more certainty can I expect this behavior from him towards me. If he behaved differently, if he showed me consideration and did not molest me, I should in any case, without the aforesaid commandment, be willing to treat him similarly. If the high-sounding ordinance had run: “Love thy neighbor as thy neighbor loves thee, “ I should not take objection to it. And there is a second commandment that seems to me even more incomprehensible, and arouses still stronger opposition in me. It is: “Love thine enemies. “ When I think it over, however, I am wrong in treating it as a greater imposition. It is at bottom the same thing.

17 A great poet may permit himself, at least in jest, to give utterance to psychological truths that are heavily censured. Thus Heine: “Mine is the most peaceable disposition. My wishes are a humble dwelling with a thatched roof, but a good bed, good food, milk and butter of the freshest, flowers at my windows, some fine tall trees before my door; and if the good God wants to make me completely happy, he will grant me the joy of seeing some six or seven of my enemies hanging from these trees. With my heart full of deep emotion I shall forgive them before they die all the wrong they did me in their lifetime.—true, one must forgive one’s enemies, but not until they are brought to execution. “—Heine, Gedanken und Einfälle.

I imagine now I hear a voice gravely adjuring me: “Just because thy neighbor is not worthy of thy love, is probably full of enmity towards thee, thou shouldst love him as thyself. “ I then perceive the case to be like that of Credo, quid absurdum. [I believe it, because it is absurd.]

Now it is, of course, very probable that my neighbor, when he is commanded to love me as himself, will answer exactly as I have done and reject me for the same reasons. I hope he will not have the same objective grounds for doing so, but he will hope so as well. Even so, there are variations in men’s behavior which ethics, disregarding the fact that they are determined, classifies as good and evil. As long as these undeniable variations have not been abolished,
conformity to the highest ethical standards constitutes a betrayal of the interests of culture, for it puts a direct premium on wickedness. One is irresistibly reminded here of an incident in the French Chamber when capital punishment was being discussed; the speech of a member who had passionately supported its abolition was being applauded with loud acclamation, when suddenly a voice was heard calling out from the back of the room, “Que messieurs les assassins commencent!” [Let the murderers begin!]

The bit of truth behind all this — one so eagerly denied — is that men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, who simply defend themselves if they are attacked, but that a powerful measure of desire for aggression has to be reckoned as part of their instinctual endowment. The result is that their neighbor is to them not only a possible helper or sexual object, but also a temptation to them to gratify their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without recompense, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and kill him. *Homo homini lupus:* [Man is to man a wolf] who has the courage to dispute it in the face of all the evidence in his own life and in history?

This aggressive cruelty usually lies in wait for some provocation, or else it steps into the service of some other purpose, the aim of which might as well have been achieved by milder measures. In circumstances that favor it, when those forces in the mind which ordinarily inhibit it cease to operate, it also manifests itself spontaneously and reveals men as savage beasts to whom the thought of sparing their own kind is alien. Anyone who calls to mind the atrocities of the early migrations, of the invasion by the Huns, or by the so-called Mongols under Jenghiz Khan and Tamurlane, of the sack of Jerusalem by the pious Crusaders, -25- even indeed the horrors of the last World War, will have to bow his head humbly before the truth of this view of man.

The existence of this tendency to aggression which we can detect in ourselves and rightly presume to be present in others is the factor that disturbs our relations with our neighbors and makes it necessary for culture to institute its high demands. Civilized society is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another. Their interests in their common work would not hold them together; the passions of instinct are stronger than reasoned interests. Culture has to call up every possible reinforcement in order to erect barriers against the aggressive instincts of men and hold their manifestations in check by reaction-formations in men’s minds. Hence its system of methods by which mankind is to be driven to identifications and aim-inhibited love-relationships; hence the restrictions on sexual life; and hence, too. its ideal command to love one’s neighbor as oneself, which is really justified by the fact that nothing is so completely at variance with original human nature as this. With all its striving, this endeavor of culture’s has so far not achieved very much. Civilization expects to prevent the worst atrocities of brutal violence by taking upon itself the right to employ violence against criminals, but the law is not able to lay hands on the more discreet and subtle forms in which human aggressions are expressed.
The time comes when every one of us has to abandon the illusory anticipations with which in our youth we regarded our fellow-men, and when we realize how much hardship and suffering we have been caused in life through their ill-will. It would be unfair, however, to reproach culture with trying to eliminate all disputes and competition from human concerns. These things are undoubtedly indispensable; but opposition is not necessarily enmity, only it may be misused to make an opening for it.

The Communists believe they have found a way of delivering us from this evil. Man is whole-heartedly good and friendly to his neighbor, they say, but the system of private property has corrupted his nature. The possession of private property gives power to the individual and thence the temptation arises to ill-treat his neighbor; the man who is excluded from the possession of property is obliged to rebel in hostility against the oppressor. If private property were abolished, all valuables held in common and all allowed to share in the enjoyment of them, ill-will and enmity would disappear from among men. Since all needs would be satisfied, none would have any reason to regard another as an enemy; all would willingly undertake the work which is necessary. I have no concern with any economic criticisms of the communistic system; I cannot enquire into whether the abolition of private property is advantageous and expedient.

[...]

VI

NEVER before in any of my previous writings have I had the feeling so strongly as I have now that what I am describing is common knowledge, that I am requisitioning paper and ink, and in due course the labor of compositors and printers, in order to expound things that in themselves are obvious. For this reason, if it should appear that the recognition of a special independent instinct of aggression would entail a modification of the psycho-analytical theory of instincts, I should be glad enough to seize upon the idea. We shall see that this is not so, that it is merely a matter of coming to closer quarters with a conclusion to which we long ago committed ourselves and following it out to its logical consequences. The whole of analytic theory has evolved gradually enough, but the theory of instincts has groped its way forward under greater difficulties than any other part of it. And yet a theory of instincts was so indispensable for the rest that something had to be adopted in place of it. In my utter perplexity at the beginning, I took as my starting-point the poet-philosopher Schiller’s aphorism that hunger and love make the world go round.

Hunger would serve to represent those instincts which aim at preservation of the individual; love seeks for objects: its chief function, which is favored in every way by nature, is preservation of the species. Thus first arose the contrast between ego instincts and object instincts. For the energy of the latter instincts, and exclusively for them, I introduced the term libido; an antithesis
was thus formed between the ego instincts and the libidinal instincts directed towards objects, i.e., love in its widest sense. One of these object instincts, the sadistic, certainly stood out from the rest in that its aim was so very unloving; moreover, it clearly allied itself in many of its aspects with the ego instincts, and its close kinship with instincts of mastery without any libidinal purpose could not be concealed, but these ambiguities could be overcome; in spite of them, sadism plainly belonged to sexual life — the game of cruelty could take the place of the game of love. Neurosis appeared as the outcome of a struggle between the interests of self-preservation and the claims of libido, a struggle in which the ego was victorious, but at the price of great suffering and renunciations.

Every analyst will admit that none of this even now reads like a statement long since recognized as erroneous. All the same, modifications had to be made as our researches advanced from the repressed to the repressing, from the object instincts to the ego. A cardinal point in this advance was the introduction of the concept of narcissism, i.e., the idea that libido cathects the ego itself, that its first dwelling-place was in the ego, and that the latter remains to some extent its permanent headquarters. This narcissistic libido turns in the direction of objects, thus becoming object-libido, and can transform itself back into narcissistic libido. The concept of narcissism made it possible to consider the traumatic neuroses, as well as many diseases bordering on the psychoses, and also the latter themselves, from the psycho-analytic angle. It was not necessary to abandon the view that the transference-neuroses are attempts on the part of the ego to guard itself against sexuality, but the concept of the libido was jeopardized. Since the ego-instincts were found to be libidinal as well, it seemed for a time inevitable that libido should become synonymous with instinctual energy in general, as C. G. Jung had previously advocated. Yet there still remained in me a kind of conviction, for which as yet there were no grounds, that the instincts could not all be of the same nature. I made the next step in Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920), when the repetition-compulsion and the conservative character of instinctual life first struck me. On the basis of speculations concerning the origin of life and of biological parallels, I drew the conclusion that, beside the instinct preserving the organic substance and binding it into ever larger units, there must exist another in antithesis to this, which would seek to dissolve these units and reinstate their antecedent inorganic state. That is to say, a death instinct as well as Eros; the phenomena of life would then be explicable from the interplay of the two and their counteracting effects on each other. It was not easy, however, to demonstrate the working of this hypothetical death instinct. The manifestations of Eros were conspicuous and audible enough; one might assume that the death instinct worked silently within the organism towards its disintegration, but that, of course, was no proof. The idea that part of the instinct became directed towards the outer world and then showed itself as an instinct of aggression and destruction carried us a step further. The instinct would thus itself have been pressed into the service of Eros, in that the organism would be destroying something animate or inanimate outside itself instead of itself. Conversely, any cessation of this flow outwards must have the effect of intensifying the self-destruction which in any case would always be going on within. From this example one could then surmise that the two kinds of instincts seldom,—perhaps never.—appear in isolation, but always mingle with each other in
different, very varying proportions, and so make themselves unrecognizable to us. Sadism, long since known to us as a component-instinct of sexuality, would represent a particularly strong admixture of the instinct of destruction into the love impulse; while its counterpart, masochism, would be an alliance between sexuality and the destruction at work within the self, in consequence of which the otherwise imperceptible destructive trend became directly evident and palpable.

23 The contradiction between the tireless tendency of Eros to spread ever further and the general conservative nature of the instincts here becomes very noticeable; it would serve as the starting-point of enquiries into further problems.

The assumption of the existence of a death instinct or a destruction instinct has roused opposition even in analytical circles; I know that there is a great tendency to ascribe all that is dangerous and hostile in love rather to a fundamental bipolarity in its own nature. The conceptions I have summarized here I first put forward only tentatively, but in the course of time they have won such a hold over me that I can no longer think in any other way. To my mind they are theoretically far more fruitful than any others it is possible to employ; they provide us with that simplification, without either ignoring or doing violence to the facts, which is what we strive after in scientific work. I know that we have always had before our eyes manifestations of the destruction instinct fused with erotism, directed outwards and inwards in sadism and masochism; but I can no longer understand how we could have overlooked the universality of non-erotic aggression and destruction, and could have omitted to give it its due significance in our interpretation of life. (It is true that the destructive trend that is directed inwards, when it is not erotically tinged, usually eludes our perceptions.) I can remember my own defensive attitude when the idea of an instinct of destruction first made its appearance in psycho-analytical literature and how long it took until I became accessible to it. That others should have shown the same resistance, and still show it, surprises me less.

Those who love fairy-tales do not like it when people speak of the innate tendencies in mankind towards aggression, destruction, and, in addition, cruelty. For God has made them in his own image, with his own perfections; no one wants to be reminded how hard it is to reconcile the undeniable existence — in spite of all the protestations of Christian Science — of evil with His omnipotence and supreme goodness. The devil is, in fact, the best way out in acquittal of God; he can be used to play the same economic role of outlet as Jews in the world of Aryan ideals. But even so, one can just as well hold God responsible for the existence of the devil as for the evil he personifies. In view of these difficulties, it is expedient for every man to make humble obeisance on suitable occasions in honor of the high-minded nature of men; it will assist him to become universally beloved and much shall be forgiven unto him on account of it. 24

24 In Goethe’s Mephistopheles we have a quite exceptionally striking identification of the principle of evil with the instinct of destruction: All entities that be Deserve their end.—nonentity. So all that you name sin, destruction.— Wickedness, briefly.— proves to be The native element for me. As his adversary, the
The name *libido* can again be used to denote the manifestations of the power of Eros in contradistinction to the energy of the death instinct. We must confess that it is more difficult for us to detect the latter, and to a great extent we can merely conjecture its existence as a background to Eros, also that it eludes us wherever it is not betrayed by a fusion with Eros. In sadism, where it bends the erotic aim to its own will and yet at the same time gratifies the sexual craving completely, we can obtain the clearest insight into its nature and its relation to Eros. But even where it shows itself without any sexual purpose, even in the blindest frenzy of destructiveness, one cannot ignore the fact that satisfaction of it is accompanied by an extraordinarily intense narcissistic enjoyment, due to the fulfillment it brings to the ego of its oldest omnipotence-wishes. The instinct of destruction, when tempered and harnessed (as it were, inhibited in its aim) and directed towards objects, is compelled to provide the ego with satisfaction of its needs and with power over nature. Since the assumption of its existence is based essentially on theoretical grounds, it must be confessed that it is not entirely proof against theoretical objections. But this is how things appear to us now in the present state of our knowledge; future research and reflection will undoubtedly bring further light which will decide the question.

25 Our present point of view can be roughly expressed in the statement that libido participates in every instinctual manifestation, but that not everything in that manifestation is libido.

In all that follows, I take up the standpoint that the tendency to aggression is an innate, independent, instinctual disposition in man, and I come back now to the statement that it constitutes the most powerful obstacle to culture. At one point in the course of this discussion, the idea took possession of us that culture was a peculiar process passing over human life and we are still under the influence of this idea. We may add to this that the process proves to be in the service of Eros, which aims at binding together single human individuals, then families, then tribes, races, nations, into one great unity, that of humanity. Why this has to be done we do not know; it is simply the work of Eros. These masses of men must be bound to one another libidinally; necessity alone, the advantages of common work, would not hold them together. The natural instinct of aggressiveness in man, the hostility of each one against all and of all against each one opposes this program of civilization. This instinct of aggression is the derivative and main representative of the death instinct we have found alongside of Eros, sharing his rule over the earth. And now, it seems to me, the meaning of the evolution of culture is no longer a riddle to us. It must present to us the struggle between Eros and death, between the instincts of life and the instincts of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species. This struggle is what all life essentially consists of and so the evolution of civilization may be simply described as the struggle of the human
species for existence. 26 And it is this battle of the Titans that our nurses and governesses try to compose with their lullaby-song of Heaven!

26 And we may probably add more precisely that its form was necessarily determined after some definite event which still remains to be discovered. -30-

VII

WHY do the animals, kin to ourselves, not manifest any such cultural struggle? Oh, we don’t know. Very probably certain of them, bees, ants, termites, had to strive for thousands of centuries before they found the way to those state institutions, that division of functions, those restrictions upon individuals, which we admire them for today. It is characteristic of our present state that we know by our own feelings that we should not think ourselves happy in any of these communities of the animal world, or in any of the roles they delegate to individuals. With other animal species it may be that a temporary deadlock has been reached between the influences of their environment and the instincts contending within them, so that a cessation of development has taken place. In primitive man, a fresh access of libido may have kindled a new spurt of energy on the part of the instinct of destruction. There are a great many questions in all this to which as yet we have no answer.

Another question concerns us more closely now. What means does civilization make use of to hold in check the aggressiveness that opposes it, to make it harmless, perhaps to get rid of it? Some of these measures we have already come to know, though not yet the one that is apparently the most important. We can study it in the evolution of the individual. What happens in him to render his craving for aggression innocuous? Something very curious, that we should never have guessed and that yet seems simple enough. The aggressiveness is introjected, internalized; in fact, it is sent back where it came from, i. e., directed against the ego. It is there taken over by a part of the ego that distinguishes itself from the rest as a super-ego, and now, in the form of conscience, exercises the same propensity to harsh aggressiveness against the ego that the ego would have liked to enjoy against others. The tension between the strict super-ego and the subordinate ego we call the sense of guilt; it manifests itself as the need for punishment. Civilization, therefore, obtains the mastery over the dangerous love of aggression in individuals by enfeebling and disarming it and setting up an institution within their minds to keep watch over it, like a garrison in a conquered city.

As to the origin of the sense of guilt, analysts have different views from those of the psychologists; nor is it easy for analysts to explain it either. First of all, when one asks how a sense of guilt arises in anyone, one is told something one cannot dispute: people feel guilty (pious people call it “sinful”) when they have done something they know to be bad. But then one sees how little this answer tells one. Perhaps, after some hesitation, one will add that a person
who has not actually committed a bad act, but has merely become aware of the intention to do so, can also hold himself guilty; and then one will ask why in this case the intention is counted as equivalent to the deed. In both cases, however, one is presupposing that wickedness has already been recognized as reprehensible, as something that ought not to be put into execution. How is this judgment arrived at? One may reject the suggestion of an original.—as one might say, natural.—capacity for discriminating between good and evil. Evil is often not at all that which would injure or endanger the ego; on the contrary, it can also be something that it desires, that would give it pleasure. An extraneous influence is evidently at work; it is this that decides what is to be called good and bad. Since their own feelings would not have led men along the same path, they must have had a motive for obeying this extraneous influence. It is easy to discover this motive in man’s helplessness and dependence upon others, it can best be designated the dread of losing love. If he loses the love of others on whom he is dependent, he will forfeit also their protection against many dangers, and above all he runs the risk that this stronger person will show his superiority in the form of punishing him. What is bad is, therefore, to begin with, whatever causes one to be threatened with a loss of love; because of the dread of this loss, one must desist from it. That is why it makes little difference whether one has already committed the bad deed or only intends to do so; in either case the danger begins only when the authority has found it out, and the latter would behave in the same way in both cases.

We call this state of mind a bad conscience but actually it does not deserve this name, for at this stage the sense of guilt is obviously only the dread of losing love, social anxiety. In a little child it can never be anything else, but in many adults too it has only changed in so far as the larger human community takes the place of the father or of both parents. Consequently, such people habitually permit themselves to do any bad deed that procures them something they want, if only they are sure that no authority will discover it or make them suffer for it; their anxiety relates only to the possibility of detection. 27 Present-day society has to take into account the prevalence of this state of mind.

27 One is reminded of Rousseau’s famous mandarin!

A great change takes place as soon as the authority has been internalized by the development of a super-ego. The manifestations of conscience are then raised to a new level; to be accurate, one should not call them conscience and sense of guilt before this. 28 At this point the dread of discovery ceases to operate and also once for all any difference between doing evil and wishing to do it, since nothing is hidden from the superego, not even thoughts. The real seriousness of the situation has vanished, it is true: for the new authority, the super-ego, has no motive, as far as we know, for ill-treating the ego with which it is itself closely bound up. But the influence of the genetic derivation of these things, which causes what has been outlived and surmounted to be relived, manifests itself so that on the whole things remain as they were at the beginning. The super-ego torments the sinful ego with the same feelings of
dread and watches for opportunities whereby the outer world can be made to punish it.

28 Every reasonable person will understand and take into account that in this descriptive survey things that in reality occur by gradual transitions are sharply differentiated and that the mere existence of a super-ego is not the only factor concerned, but also its relative strength and sphere of influence. All that has been said above in regard to conscience and guilt, moreover, is common knowledge and practically undisputed.

At this second stage of development, conscience exhibits a peculiarity which was absent in the first and is not very easy to account for. That is, the more righteous a man is, the stricter and more suspicious will his conscience be, so that ultimately it is precisely those people who have carried holiness farthest who reproach themselves with the deepest sinfulness. This means that virtue forfeits some of her promised reward; the submissive and abstemious ego does not enjoy the trust and confidence of its mentor, and, as it seems, strives in vain to earn it. Now, to this some people will be ready to object that these difficulties are artificialities. A relatively strict and vigilant conscience is the very sign of a virtuous man, and though saints may proclaim themselves sinners, they are not so wrong, in view of the temptations of instinctual gratifications to which they are peculiarly liable.—since, as we know, temptations do but increase under constant privation, whereas they subside, at any rate temporarily, if they are sometimes gratified. The field of ethics is rich in problems, and another of the facts we find here is that misfortune, i.e., external deprivation, greatly intensifies the strength of conscience in the super-ego. As long as things go well with a man, his conscience is lenient and lets the ego do all kinds of things; when some calamity befalls, he holds an inquisition within, discovers his sin, heightens the standards of his conscience, imposes abstinences on himself and punishes himself with penances. 29 Whole peoples have acted in this way and still do so. But this is easily explained from the original infantile stage of conscience which, as we thus see, is not abandoned after the introjection into the super-ego, but persists alongside and behind the latter. Fate is felt to be a substitute for the agency of the parents: adversity means that one is no longer loved by this highest power of all, and, threatened by this loss of love, one humbles oneself again before the representative of the parents in the super-ego which in happier days one had tried to disregard. This becomes especially clear when destiny is looked upon in the strictly religious sense as the expression of God’s will and nothing else. The people of Israel believed themselves to be God’s favourite children, and when the great Father hurled visitation after visitation upon them, it still never shook them in this belief or caused them to doubt His power and His justice; they proceeded instead to bring their prophets into the world to declare their sinfulness to them and out of their sense of guilt they constructed the stringent commandments of their priestly religion. It is curious how differently a savage behaves! If he has had bad fortune, he does not throw the blame on himself, but on his fetish, who has plainly not done his duty by him, and he belabors it instead of punishing himself.
This increased sensitivity of morals in consequence of ill-luck has been illustrated by Mark Twain in a delicious little story: The First Melon I ever Stole. This melon, as it happened, was unripe. I heard Mark Twain tell the story himself in one of his lectures. After he had given out the title, he stopped and asked himself in a doubtful way: “Was it the first?” This was the whole story.

Hence we know of two sources for feelings of guilt: that arising from the dread of authority and the later one from the dread of the superego. The first one compels us to renounce instinctual gratification; the other presses over and above this towards punishment, since the persistence of forbidden wishes cannot be concealed from the superego. We have also heard how the severity of the superego, the rigor of conscience, is to be explained. It simply carries on the severity of external authority which it has succeeded and to some extent replaced. We see now how renunciation of instinctual gratification is related to the sense of guilt. Originally, it is true, renunciation is the consequence of a dread of external authority; one gives up pleasures so as not to lose its love. Having made this renunciation, one is quits with authority, so to speak; no feeling of guilt should remain. But with the dread of the superego the case is different. Renunciation of gratification does not suffice here, for the wish persists and is not capable of being hidden from the superego. In spite of the renunciations made, feelings of guilt will be experienced and this is a great disadvantage economically of the erection of the superego, or, as one may say, of the formation of conscience.

Renunciation no longer has a completely absolving effect; virtuous restraint is no longer rewarded by the assurance of love; a threatened external unhappiness.—loss of love and punishment meted out by external authority.—has been exchanged for a lasting inner unhappiness, the tension of a sense of guilt.

These inter-relations are so complicated and at the same time so important that, in spite of the dangers of repetition, I will consider them again from another angle. The chronological sequence would thus be as follows: first, instinct-renunciation due to dread of an aggression by external authority — this is, of course, tantamount to the dread of loss of love, for love is a protection against these punitive aggressions. Then follows the erection of an internal authority, and instinctual renunciation due to dread of it — that is, dread of conscience. In the second case, there is the equivalence of wicked acts and wicked intentions; hence comes the sense of guilt, the need for punishment. The aggressiveness of conscience carries on the aggressiveness of authority. Thus far all seems to be clear; but how can we find a place in this scheme for the effect produced by misfortune (i. e. renunciations externally imposed), for the effect it has of increasing the rigour of conscience? How account for the exceptional stringency of conscience in the best men, those least given to rebel against it? We have already explained both these peculiarities of conscience, but probably we still have an impression that these explanations do not go to the root of the matter, and that they leave something still unexplained. And here at last comes in an idea which is quite peculiar to psycho-analysis and alien to ordinary ways of thinking. Its nature enables us to understand why the whole matter necessarily seemed so confused and obscure.
to us. It tells us this: in the beginning conscience (more correctly, the anxiety which later became conscience) was the cause of instinctual renunciation, but later this relation is reversed. Every renunciation then becomes a dynamic fount of conscience; every fresh abandonment of gratification increases its severity and intolerance; and if we could only bring it better into harmony with what we already know about the development of conscience, we should be tempted to make the following paradoxical statement: Conscience is the result of instinctual renunciation, or: Renunciation (externally imposed) gives rise to conscience, which then demands further renunciations.

The contradiction between this proposition and our previous knowledge about the genesis of conscience is not in actual fact so very great, and we can see a way in which it may be still further reduced. In order to state the problem more easily, let us select the example of the instinct of aggression, and let us suppose that the renunciation in question is always a renunciation of aggression. This is, of course, merely a provisional assumption. The effect of instinctual renunciation on conscience then operates as follows: every impulse of aggression which we omit to gratify is taken over by the super-ego and goes to heighten its aggressiveness (against the ego). It does not fit in well with this that the original aggressiveness of conscience should represent a continuance of the rigour of external authority, and so have nothing to do with renunciation. But we can get rid of this discrepancy if we presume a different origin for the first quantum of aggressiveness with which the super-ego was endowed.

When authority prevented the child from enjoying the first but most important gratifications of all, aggressive impulses of considerable intensity must have been evoked in it, irrespective of the particular nature of the instinctual deprivations concerned. The child must necessarily have had to give up the satisfaction of these revengeful aggressive wishes. In this situation, in which it is economically so hard pressed, it has recourse to certain mechanisms well known to us; by the process of identification it absorbs -33- into itself the invulnerable authority, which then becomes the super-ego and comes into possession of all the aggressiveness which the child would gladly have exercised against it. The child’s ego has to content itself with the unhappy role of the authority.—the father.—who has been thus degraded. It is, as so often, a reversal of the original situation, “If I were father and you my child, I would treat you badly. “ The relation between superego and ego is a reproduction, distorted by a wish, of the real relations between the ego, before it was subdivided, and an external object. That is also typical. The essential difference, however, is that the original severity of the super-ego does not.—or not so much.—represent the severity which has been experienced or anticipated from the object, but expresses the child’s own aggressiveness towards the latter.

If this is correct, one could truly assert that conscience is formed in the beginning from the suppression of an aggressive impulse and strengthened as time goes on by each fresh suppression of the kind. Now, which of these two theories is the true one? The earlier, which seemed genetically so unassailable, or the new one, which rounds off our theories in such a welcome manner? Clearly, they are both justified, and by the evidence, too, of direct observation; they do not contradict each other, and even coincide at one point, for the
child’s revengeful aggressiveness will be in part provoked by the amount of punishing aggression that it anticipates from the father. Experience has shown, however, that the severity which a child’s superego develops in no way corresponds to the severity of the treatment it has itself experienced. 30 It seems to be independent of the latter; a child which has been very leniently treated can acquire a very strict conscience. But it would also be wrong to exaggerate this independence; it is not difficult to assure oneself that strict upbringing also has a strong influence on the formation of a child’s super-ego. It comes to this, that the formation of the super-ego and the development of conscience are determined in part by innate constitutional factors and in part by the influence of the actual environment; and that is in no way surprising.— on the contrary, it is the invariable aetiological condition of all such processes. 31

30 As has rightly been emphasized by Melanie Klein and other English writers.
31 In his Psychoanalyse der Gesamtpersonlichkeit, 1927, Franz Alexander has, in connection with Aichhorn’s study of dissocial behaviour in children, discussed the two main types of pathogenic methods of training, that of excessive severity and of spoiling. The unduly lenient and indulgent father fosters the development of an over-strict super-ego because, in face of the love which is showered on it, the child has no other way of disposing of its aggressiveness than to turn it inwards. In neglected children who grow up without any love, the tension between ego and super-ego is lacking; their aggressions can be directed externally. Apart from any constitutional factor which may be present, therefore, one may say that a strict conscience arises from the co-operation of two factors in the environment: the deprivation of instinctual gratification which evokes the child’s aggressiveness, and the love it receives which turns this aggressiveness inwards, where it is taken over by the super-ego.

It may also be said that when a child reacts to the first great instinctual deprivations with an excessive aggressiveness and a corresponding strictness of its super-ego, it is thereby following a phylogenetic prototype, unheedful of what reaction would in reality be justified; for the father of primitive times was certainly terrifying, and one may safely attribute the utmost degree of aggressiveness to him. The differences between the two theories of the genesis of conscience are thus still further diminished, if one passes from individual to phylogenetic development. But then, on the other hand, we find a new important difference between the two processes. We cannot disregard the conclusion that man’s sense of guilt has its origin in the Oedipus complex and was acquired when the father was killed by the association of the brothers. At that time the aggression was not suppressed but carried out, and it is this same act of aggression whose suppression in the child we regard as the source of feelings of guilt. Now, I should not be surprised if a reader were to cry out angrily: “So it makes no difference whether one does kill one’s father or does not, one gets a feeling of guilt in either case! Here I should think one may be allowed some doubts. Either it is not true that guilt is evoked by suppressed aggressiveness or else the whole story about the father-murder is a romance, and primeval man did not kill his father any more often than people do nowadays. Besides this, if it is not a romance but a plausible piece of history, it would only be an instance of what we all expect to happen, namely, that one
feels guilty because one has really done something which cannot be justified. And what we are all waiting for is for psycho-analysis to give us an explanation of this reaction, which at any rate is something that happens every day. “-34-

This is true, and we must make good the omission. There is no great mystery about it either. When one has feelings of guilt after one has committed some crime and because of it, this feeling should more properly be called remorse. It relates only to the one act, and clearly it presupposes that conscience, the capacity for feelings of guilt, was already in existence before the deed. Remorse of this kind can, therefore, never help us to find out the source of conscience and feelings of guilt in general. In these everyday instances the course of events is usually as follows: an instinctual need acquires the strength to achieve fulfillment in spite of conscience, the strength of which also has its limits, whereupon the inevitable reduction of the need after satisfaction restores the earlier balance of forces. Psycho-analysis is quite justified, therefore, in excluding the case of a sense of guilt through, remorse from this discussion, however frequently it may occur and however great its importance may be practically.

But if man’s sense of guilt goes back to the murder of the father, that was undoubtedly an instance of remorse, and yet are we to suppose that there were no conscience and feelings of guilt before the act on that occasion? If so, where did the remorse come from then? This instance must explain to us the riddle of the sense of guilt and so make an end of our difficulties. And it will do so, as I believe. This remorse was the result of the very earliest primal ambivalence of feelings towards the father: the sons hated him, but they loved him too; after their hate against him had been satisfied by their aggressive acts, their love came to expression in their remorse about the deed, set up the super-ego by identification with the father, gave it the father’s power to punish as he would have done the aggression they had performed, and created the restrictions which should prevent a repetition of the deed. And since impulses to aggressions against the father were repeated in the next generations, the feelings of guilt, too, persisted, and were further reinforced every time an aggression was suppressed anew and made over to the super-ego. At this point, it seems to me, we can at last clearly perceive the part played by love in the origin of conscience and the fatal inevitableness of the sense of guilt. It is not really a decisive matter whether one has killed one’s father or abstained from the deed; one must feel guilty in either case, for guilt is the expression of the conflict of ambivalence, the eternal struggle between Eros and the destructive or death instinct. This conflict is engendered as soon as man is confronted with the task of living with his fellows; as long as he knows no other form of life in common but that of the family, it must express itself in the Oedipus complex, cause the development of conscience, and create the first feelings of guilt. When mankind tries to institute wider forms of communal life, the same conflict continues to arise—in forms derived from the past—and intensified so that a further reinforcement of the sense of guilt results. Since culture obeys an inner erotic impulse which bids it bind mankind into a closely-knit mass, it can achieve this aim only by means of its vigilance in fomenting an ever increasing sense of guilt. That which began in relation to the father ends in relation to the community. If civilization is an inevitable
course of development from the group of the family to the group of humanity as a whole, then an intensification of the sense of guilt.—resulting from the innate conflict of ambivalence, from the eternal struggle between the love and the death trends.—will be inextricably bound up with it, until perhaps the sense of guilt may swell to a magnitude that individuals can hardly support. One is reminded of the telling accusation made by the great poet against the **heavenly forces**:

*Ye set our feet on this life’s road,*

*Ye watch our guilty, erring courses,*

*Then leave us, bowed beneath our load,*

*For earth its every debt enforces.*


And one may heave a sigh at the thought that it is vouchsafed to a few, with hardly an effort, to salve from the whirlpool of their own emotions the deepest truths, to which we others have to force our way, ceaselessly groping amid torturing uncertainties. -35-

**VIII**

ON reaching the end of such a journey as this, the author must beg his readers to pardon him for not having been a more skilful guide, not sparing them bleak stretches of country at times and laborious detours at others. There is no doubt that it could have been done better. I will now try to make some amends.

**First** of all, I suspect the reader feels that the discussion about the sense of guilt oversteps its proper boundaries in this essay and takes up too much space so that the rest of the subject-matter, which is not always closely connected with it, gets pushed to one side. This may have spoilt the composition of the work; but it faithfully corresponds to my intention to represent the sense of guilt as the most important problem in the evolution of culture, and to convey that the price of progress in civilization is paid in forfeiting happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt. 33 What sounds puzzling in this statement, which is the final conclusion of our whole investigation, is probably due to the quite peculiar relation.—as yet completely unexplained.— the sense of guilt has to our consciousness. In the common cases of remorse which we think normal, it becomes clearly perceptible to consciousness; indeed, we often speak of **consciousness of guilt** instead of sense of guilt. In our study of the neuroses, in which we have found invaluable clues towards an understanding of normal people, we find some very contradictory states of affairs in this respect. In one of these maladies, the obsessional neurosis, the sense of guilt makes itself loudly heard in consciousness; it dominates the clinical picture as well as the patient’s life and lets hardly anything else appear alongside of it. But in most of the other types and forms of neurosis it remains
completely unconscious, without its effect being any less great, however. Our patients do not believe us when we ascribe an *unconscious sense of guilt* to them; in order to become even moderately intelligible to them, we have to explain that the sense of guilt expresses itself in an unconscious seeking for punishment. But its connection with the form of the neurosis is not to be overestimated; even in the obsessional neurosis there are people who are not aware of their sense of guilt or who perceive it only as a tormenting uneasiness or kind of anxiety and then not until they are prevented from carrying out certain actions. We ought some day to be able at last to understand these things; as yet we cannot. Here perhaps is the place to remark that at bottom the sense of guilt is nothing but a topographical variety of anxiety, and that in its later phases it coincides completely with the dread of the super-ego. The relation of anxiety to consciousness, moreover, is characterized by the same extraordinary variations. Somewhere or other there is always anxiety hidden behind all symptoms; at one moment, however, it sweeps into consciousness, drowning everything else with its clamor, and at the next it secretes itself so completely that we are forced to speak of unconscious anxiety.—or if we want to have a cleaner conscience psychologically, since anxiety is after all only a perception.—of possibilities of anxiety. Consequently it is very likely that the sense of guilt produced by culture is not perceived as such and remains to a great extent unconscious, or comes to expression as a sort of uneasiness or discontent for which other motivations are sought. The different religions, at any rate, have never overlooked the part played by the sense of guilt in civilization. What is more, they come forward with a claim, which I have not considered elsewhere, to save mankind from this sense of guilt, which they call *sin*. We indeed have drawn our conclusions, from the way in which in Christianity this salvation is won.—the sacrificial death of one who therewith takes the whole of the common guilt of all upon himself.—about the occasion on which this primal sense of guilt was first acquired, that is, the occasion which was also the inception of culture. 35

33 “Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.... “ That the upbringing of young people at the present day conceals from them the part sexuality will play in their lives is not the only reproach we are obliged to bring against it. It offends too in not preparing them for the aggressions of which they are destined to become the objects. Sending the young out into life with such a false psychological orientation is as if one were to equip people going on a Polar expedition with summer clothing and maps of the Italian lakes. One can clearly see that ethical standards are being misused in a way. The strictness of these standards would not do much harm if education were to say: “This is how men ought to be in order to be happy and make others happy, but you have to reckon with their not being so.” Instead of this the young are made to believe that everyone else conforms to the standard of ethics, i. e., that everyone else is good. And then on this is based the demand that the young shall be so too. 34 I mean in *The Future of an Illusion* -36-

35 Totem and Taboo (1912).

It will not be very important, but it may be just as well to go more precisely into the meaning of certain words like *super-ego*, *conscience*, *sense of guilt*, *need for punishment*, *remorse*, which we have perhaps often used too loosely and in place of one another. They all relate to the same situation, but they
denote different aspects of it. The super-ego is an agency or institution in the mind whose existence we have inferred: Conscience is a function we ascribe, among others, to the superego; it consists of watching over and judging the actions and intentions of the ego, exercising the functions of a censor. The sense of guilt, the severity of the super-ego, is therefore the same thing as the rigour of conscience; it is the perception the ego has that it is watched in this way, the ego’s appreciation of the tension between its strivings and the standards of the super-ego; and the anxiety that lies behind all these relations, the dread of that critical institution, the need for punishment, is an instinctual manifestation on the part of the ego, which has become masochistic under the influence of the sadistic super-ego, i.e., which has brought a part of the instinct of destruction at work within itself into the service of an erotic attachment to the super-ego. We ought not to speak of conscience before a super-ego is demonstrable; as to consciousness of guilt, we must admit that it comes into being before the super-ego, therefore before conscience. At that time it is the direct expression of the dread of external authority, the recognition of the tension between the ego and this latter; it is the direct derivative of the conflict between the need for parental love and the urgency towards instinctual gratification, and it is the thwarting of this urgency that provokes the tendency to aggression. It is because these two different versions of the sense of guilt,—one arising from dread of the external and the other from dread of the inner authority,—are superimposed one on the other that our insight into the relations of conscience has been hampered in so many ways. Remorse is a general term denoting the ego’s reaction under a special form of the sense of guilt; it includes the almost unaltered sensory material belonging to the anxiety that is at work behind the sense of guilt; it is itself a punishment and may include the need for punishment; it too, therefore, may occur before conscience has developed.

Further, it will do no harm for us to review once more the contradictions which have confused us at times during our enquiries. The sense of guilt, we said at one point, was the consequence of uncommitted aggressions; but another time and, in particular, in the case of its historical beginning, the murder of the father, it was the consequence of an aggression that was carried out. We also found a way out of this difficulty. The development of the inner authority, the super-ego, was precisely what radically altered the whole situation. Before this, the sense of guilt coincided with remorse; we observe, in saying this, that the term remorse is to be reserved for the reaction after an actual performance of an aggressive deed. After this, the omniscience of the superego robbed the distinction between intended aggressions and aggressions committed of its significance; a mere intention to commit an act of violence could then evoke a sense of guilt.—as psycho-analysis has found.—as well as one which has actually been committed.—as all the world knows. The conflict of ambivalence between the two primal instincts leaves the same impress on the psychological situation, irrespective of the change that has taken place in this. A temptation arises to look here for an explanation of the mystery of the varying relation between the sense of guilt and consciousness.

The sense of guilt which is due to remorse for an evil deed must always have been conscious; that due to a perception of an evil impulse could have remained unconscious. But it cannot be as simple as that: the obsessional
neurosis contradicts it emphatically. The second contradiction was that the aggressive energy with which one imagined the super-ego to be endowed was, according to one view, merely a continuation of the punitive energy belonging to external authority, preserved within the mind; whereas according to another view it consisted, on the contrary, of aggressive energy originating in the self, leveled against this inhibiting authority but not allowed to discharge itself in actions. The first view seemed to accord better with the history of the sense of guilt, the second with the theory of it. More searching reflection has resolved this apparently irreconcilable contradiction almost too completely; what remained as essential and common to both was that in both cases we were dealing with an aggression that had been turned inward. Clinical observation, moreover, really permits us to distinguish two sources for the aggressiveness we ascribe to the super-ego, each of which in any given case may be operating predominantly, but which usually are both at work together. -37- This, I think, is the place to suggest that a proposal which I previously put forward as a provisional assumption should be taken in earnest. In the latest analytical literature, 36 a predilection has been shown for the view that any kind of privation, any thwarted instinctual gratification, results in a heightening of the sense of guilt, or may do so. I believe one obtains a great simplification of theory if one regards this as valid only for the aggressive instincts, and that little will be found to contradict this assumption. How then is it to be explained dynamically and economically that a heightening of the sense of guilt should appear in place of an unfulfilled erotic desire? This can surely only happen in a roundabout way: the thwarting of the erotic gratification provokes an access of aggressiveness against the person who interfered with the gratification, and then this tendency to aggression in its turn has itself to be suppressed. So then it is, after all, only the aggression which is changed into guilt, by being suppressed and made over to the superego. I am convinced that very many processes will admit of much simpler and clearer explanation if we restrict the findings of psychoanalysis in respect of the origin of the sense of guilt to the aggressive instincts. Reference to the clinical material here gives us no unequivocal answer, because, according to our own hypothesis, the two kinds of instincts hardly ever appear in a pure form, unmixed with each other; but the investigation of extreme cases would probably point in the direction I anticipate. I am tempted to extract our first advantage from this narrower conception by applying it to the repression-process. The symptoms of neurosis, as we have learned, are essentially substitutive gratifications for unfulfilled sexual wishes. In the course of our analytic work we have found to our surprise that perhaps every neurosis masks a certain amount of unconscious sense of guilt, which in its turn reinforces the symptoms by exploiting them as punishment.

One is now inclined to suggest the following statement as a possible formulation: when an instinctual trend undergoes repression, its libidinal elements are transformed into symptoms and its aggressive components into a sense of guilt. Even if this statement is only accurate as an approximation, it merits our interest.

36 In particular, in contributions by Ernest Jones, Susan Isaacs, Melanie Klein; also, as I understand, in those of Reik and Alexander.
Some readers of this essay, too, may be under the impression that the formula of the struggle between Eros and the death instinct has been reiterated too often. It is supposed to characterize the cultural process which evolves in humanity; but it has been related also to the development of the individual, and, besides this, is supposed to have revealed the secret of organic life in general. It becomes necessary for us to examine the relation of these three processes to one another. Now, the repetition of the same formula is vindicated by the consideration that the cultural processes, both in humanity and in the development of an individual, are life-processes; consequently they must both partake of the most universal characteristic of life. On the other hand, evidence of the presence of this universal characteristic does not help us to discriminate, unless it is further narrowed down by special qualifications. We can therefore set our minds at rest only if we say that the cultural process is the particular modification undergone by the life-process under the influence of the task set before it by Eros and stimulated by Ananke, external necessity; and this task is that of uniting single human beings into a larger unity with libidinal attachments between them. When, however, we compare the cultural process in humanity with the process of development or upbringing in an individual human being, we shall conclude without much hesitation that the two are very similar in nature, if not in fact the same process applied to a different kind of object. The civilizing process in the human species is naturally more of an abstraction than the development of an individual, and therefore harder to apprehend in concrete terms, nor should the discovery of analogies be pushed to extremes; but in view of the similar character of the aims of the two processes,—in one the incorporation of an individual as a member of a group and in the other the creation of a single group out of many individuals,—the similarity of the means employed and of the results obtained in the two cases is not surprising. In view of its exceptional importance, we must no longer postpone mention of one feature differentiating the two processes. The development of the individual is ordered according to the program laid down by the pleasure-principle, namely, the attainment of happiness, and to this main objective it holds firmly; the incorporation of the individual as a member of a community, or his adaptation to it, seems like an almost unavoidable condition which has to be filled before he can attain this objective of happiness. If he could achieve it without fulfilling this condition, it would perhaps be better. To express it differently, we may say: Individual development seems to us a product of the interplay of two trends, the striving for happiness, generally called egoistic, and the impulse towards merging with others in the community, which we call altruistic. Neither of these descriptions goes far beneath the surface. In individual development, as we have said, the main accent falls on the egoistic trend, the striving for happiness; while the other tendency, which may be called the cultural one, usually contents itself with instituting restrictions. But things are different in the development of culture: here far the most important aim is that of creating a single unity out of individual men and women, while the objective of happiness, though still present, is pushed into the background; it almost seems as if humanity could be most successfully united into one great whole if there were no need to trouble about the happiness of individuals.
The process of development in individuals must therefore be admitted to have its special features which are not repeated in the cultural evolution of humanity; the two processes only necessarily coincide in so far as the first also includes the aim of incorporation into the community.

Just as a planet circles round its central body, while at the same time rotating on its own axis, so the individual man takes his part in the course of humanity’s development as he goes on his way through life. But to our dull eyes the play of forces in the heavens seems set fast in a never-varying scheme, though in organic life we can still see how the forces contend with one another and the results of the conflict change from day to day. So in every individual the two trends, one towards personal happiness and the other towards unity with the rest of humanity, must contend with each other; so must the two processes of individual and of cultural development oppose each other and dispute the ground against each other. This struggle between individual and society, however, is not derived from the antagonism of the primal instincts, Eros and death, which are probably irreconcilable; it is a dissension in the camp of the libido itself, comparable to the contest between the ego and its objects for a share of the libido; and it does eventually admit of a solution in the individual, as we may hope it will also do in the future of civilization.—however greatly it may oppress the lives of individuals at the present time.

The analogy between the process of cultural evolution and the path of individual development may be carried further in an important respect. It can be maintained that the community, too, develops a super-ego, under whose influence cultural evolution proceeds. It would be an enticing task for an authority on human systems of culture to work out this analogy in specific cases. I will confine myself to pointing out certain striking details. The super-ego of any given epoch of civilization originates in the same way as that of an individual; it is based on the impression left behind them by great leading personalities, men of outstanding force of mind, or men in whom some one human tendency has developed in unusual strength and purity, often for that reason very disproportionately. In many instances the analogy goes still further, in that during their lives,—often enough, even if not always,—such persons are ridiculed by others, ill-used, or even cruelly done to death, just as happened with the primal father who also rose again to become a deity long after his death by violence. The most striking example of this double fate is the figure of Jesus Christ, if indeed it does not itself belong to the realm of mythology which called it into being out of a dim memory of that primordial event. Another point of agreement is that the cultural super-ego, just like that of an individual, sets up high ideals and standards, and that failure to fulfil them is punished by both with anxiety of conscience. In this particular, indeed, we come across the remarkable circumstance that the mental processes concerned here are actually more familiar to us and more accessible to consciousness when they proceed from the group than they can be in the individual. In the latter, when tension arises, the aggressions of the super-ego voicing its noisy reproaches are all that is perceived, while its injunctions themselves often remain unconscious in the background. If we bring them to the knowledge of consciousness, we find that they coincide with the demands of the prevailing cultural super-ego. At this point the two processes, that of the
evolution of the group and the development of the individual, are always firmly mortised together, so to speak. Consequently many of the effects and properties of the super-ego can be more easily detected through its operations in the group than in the individual.

The cultural super-ego has elaborated its ideals and erected its standards. Those of its demands which deal with the relations of human beings to one another are comprised under the name of ethics. The greatest value has at all times been set upon systems of ethics, as if men had expected them in particular to achieve something especially important. And ethics does in fact deal predominantly with the point which is easily seen to be the sorest of all in any scheme of civilization. Ethics must be regarded, therefore, as a therapeutic effort: as an endeavor to achieve something through the standards imposed by the super-ego which had not been attained by the work of civilization in other ways. We already know.—it is what we have been discussing.—that the question is how to dislodge the greatest obstacle to civilization, the constitutional tendency in men to aggressions against one another; and for that very reason the commandment to love one’s neighbour as oneself.—probably the most recent of the cultural super-ego’s demands.—is especially interesting to us. In our investigations and our therapy of the neuroses we cannot avoid finding fault with the super-ego of the individual on two counts: in commanding and prohibiting with such severity it troubles too little about the happiness of the ego, and it fails to take into account sufficiently the difficulties in the way of obeying it.—the strength of instinctual cravings in the id and the hardships of external environment.

Consequently, in our therapy we often find ourselves obliged to do battle with the super-ego and work to moderate its demands. Exactly the same objections can be made against the ethical standards of the cultural super-ego. It, too, does not trouble enough about the mental constitution of human beings; it enjoins a command and never asks whether or not it is possible for them to obey it. It presumes, on the contrary, that a man’s ego is psychologically capable of anything that is required of it.—that his ego has unlimited power over his id. This is an error; even in so-called normal people the power of controlling the id cannot be increased beyond certain limits. If one asks more of them, one produces revolt or neurosis in individuals or makes them unhappy. The command to love our neighbours as ourselves is the strongest defence against human aggressiveness and it is a superlative example of the unpsycho-logical attitude of the cultural super-ego. The command is impossible to fulfill; such an enormous inflation of love can only lower its value and not remedy the evil. Civilization pays no heed to all this; it merely prates that the harder it is to obey the more laudable the obedience. The fact remains that anyone who follows such preaching in the present state of civilization only puts himself at a disadvantage beside all those who set it at naught. What an overwhelming obstacle to civilization aggression must be if the defense against it can cause as much misery as aggression itself! Natural ethics, as it is called, has nothing to offer here beyond the narcissistic satisfaction of thinking oneself better than others. The variety of ethics that links itself with religion brings in at this point its promises of a better future life. I should imagine that as long as virtue is not rewarded in this life ethics will preach in vain. I too think it unquestionable that an actual change in
men’s attitude to property would be of more help in this direction than any ethical commands; but among the Socialists this proposal is obscured by new idealistic expectations disregarding human nature, which detract from its value in actual practice.

It seems to me that the point of view which seeks to follow the phenomena of cultural evolution as manifestations of a super-ego promises to yield still further discoveries. I am coming quickly to an end. There is one question, however, which I can hardly ignore. If the evolution of civilization has such a far reaching similarity with the development of an individual, and if the same methods are employed in both, would not the diagnosis be justified that many systems of civilization—or epochs of it—possibly even the whole of humanity—have become neurotic under the pressure of the civilizing trends? To analytic dissection of these neuroses, therapeutic recommendations might follow which could claim a great practical interest. I would not say that such an attempt to apply psychoanalysis to civilized society would be fanciful or doomed to fruitlessness. But it behooves us to be very careful, not to forget that after all we are dealing only with analogies, and that it is dangerous, not only with men but also with concepts, to drag them out of the region where they originated and have matured. The diagnosis of collective neuroses, moreover, will be confronted by a special difficulty. In the neurosis of an individual we can use as a starting point the contrast presented to us between the patient and his environment which we assume to be normal. No such background as this would be available for any society similarly affected; it would have to be supplied in some other way. And with regard to any therapeutic application of our knowledge, what would be the use of the most acute analysis of social neuroses, since no one possesses power to compel the community to adopt the therapy? In spite of all these difficulties, we may expect that one day someone will venture upon this research into the pathology of civilized communities.

For various reasons, it is very far from my intention to express any opinion concerning the value of human civilization. I have endeavored to guard myself against the enthusiastic partiality which believes our civilization to be the most precious thing that we possess or could acquire, and thinks it must inevitably lead us to undreamed-of heights of perfection. I can at any rate listen without taking umbrage to those critics who aver that when one surveys the aims of civilization and the means it employs, one is bound to conclude that the whole thing is not worth the effort and that in the end it can only produce a state of things which no individual will be able to bear. My impartiality is all the easier to me since I know very little about these things and am sure only of one thing, that the judgments of value made by mankind are immediately determined by their desires for happiness: in other words, that those judgments are attempts to prop up their illusions with arguments. I could understand it very well if anyone were to point to the inevitable nature of the process of cultural development and say, for instance, that the tendency to institute restrictions upon sexual life, or to carry humanitarian ideals into effect at the cost of natural selection, are developmental trends which it is impossible to avert or divert, and to which it is best for us to submit as though they were natural necessities. I know, too, the objection that can be raised against this: that tendencies such as these, which are believed to have insuperable power
behind them, have often in the history of man been thrown aside and replaced by others. My courage fails me, therefore, at the thought of rising up as a prophet before my fellow-men, and I bow to their reproach that I have no consolation to offer them; for at bottom this is what they all demand.— the frenzied revolutionary as passionately as the most pious believer.

The fateful question of the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent the cultural process developed in it will succeed in mastering the derangements of communal life caused by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. In this connection, perhaps the phase through which we are at this moment passing deserves special interest. Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this.— hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension. And now it may be expected that the other of the two heavenly forces, eternal Éros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself alongside of his equally immortal adversary.
Wrapped in his cloak, a book in his lap, our traveller rested; the hours slipped by unawares. It stopped raining, the canvas was taken down. The horizon was visible right round; beneath the sombre dome of the sky stretched the vast plain of empty sea. But immeasurable unarticulated space weakens our power to measure time as well: the time-sense falters and grows dim. Strange, shadowy figures passed and repassed—the elderly coxcomb, the goat-bearded man from the bowels of the ship—with vague gesturings and muttered through the traveller's mind as he lay. He fell asleep.

At midday he was summoned to luncheon in a corridor-like saloon with the sleeping-cabins giving off it. He ate at the head of the long table; the party of clerks, including the old man, sat with the jolly captain at the other end, where they had been carousing since ten o'clock. The meal was wretched, and soon done. Aschenbach was driven to seek the open and look at the sky—perhaps it would lighten presently above Venice.

He had not dreamed it could be otherwise, for the city had ever given him a brilliant welcome. But sky and sea remained leaden, with spurts of fine, mistlike rain; he reconciled himself to the idea of seeing a different Venice from that he had always approached on the landward side. He stood by the foremast, his gaze on the distance, alert for the first glimpse of the coast. And he thought of the melancholy and susceptible poet who had once seen the towers and turrets of his dreams rise out of these waves; repeated the rhythms born of his awe, his mingled emotions of joy and suffering—and easily susceptible to a prescience already shaped within him, he asked his own sober, weary heart if a new enthusiasm, a new preoccupation, some late adventure of the feelings could still be in store for the idle traveller.

The flat coast showed on the right, the sea was soon populous with fishing-boats. The Lido appeared and was left behind as the ship glided at half speed through the narrow harbour of the same name, coming to a full stop on the lagoon in sight of garish, badly built houses. Here it waited for the boat bringing the sanitary inspector.

An hour passed. One had arrived—and yet not. There was no conceivable haste—yet one felt harried. The youths from Pola were on deck, drawn hither by the martial sound of horns coming across the water from the direction of the Public Gardens. They had drunk a good deal of Asti and were moved to shout and hurrah at the drilling bersaglieri. But the young-old man was a truly
repressive sight in the condition to which his company with youth had brought him. He could not carry his wine like them: he was pitiably drunk. He swayed as he stood-watery-eyed, a cigarette between his shaking fingers, keeping upright with difficulty. He could not have taken a step without falling and knew better than to stir, but his spirits were deplorably high. He buttonholed anyone who came within reach, he stuttered, he giggled, he leered, he fatuously shook his beringed old forefinger; his tongue kept seeking the corner of his mouth in a suggestive motion ugly to behold. Aschenbach's brow darkened as he looked, and there came over him once more a dazed sense, as though things about him were just slightly losing their ordinary perspective, beginning to show a distortion that might merge into the grotesque. He was prevented from dwelling on the feeling, for now the machinery began to thud again, and the ship took up its passage through the Canale di San Marco which had been interrupted so near the goal.

He saw it once more, that landing-place that takes the breath away, that amazing group of incredible structures the Republic set up to meet the awe-struck eye of the approaching seafarer: the airy splendour of the palace and Bridge of Sighs, the columns of lion and saint on the shore, the glory of the projecting flank of the fairy temple, the vista of gateway and clock. Looking, he thought that to come to Venice by the station is like entering a palace by the back door. No one should approach, save by the high seas as he was doing now, this most improbable of cities.

The engines stopped. Gondolas pressed alongside, the landing-stairs were let down, customs officials came on board and did their office, people began to go ashore. Aschenbach ordered a gondola. He meant to take up his abode by the sea and needed to be conveyed with his luggage to the landing-stage of the little steamers that ply between the city and the Lido. They called down his order to the surface of the water where the gondoliers were quarrelling in dialect. Then came another delay while his trunk was worried down the ladder-like stairs. Thus he was forced to endure the importunities of the ghastly young-old man, whose drunken state obscurely urged him to pay the stranger the honour of a formal farewell. “We wish you a very pleasant sojourn,” he babbled, bowing and scraping. “Pray keep us in mind. Au revoir, excusez et bon jour, votre Excellence.” He drooled, he blinked, he licked the corner of his mouth, the little imperial bristled on his elderly chin. He put the tips of two fingers to his mouth and said thickly: “Give her our love, will you, the p-pretty little dear”-here his upper plate came away and fell down on the lower one.... Aschenbach escaped. “Little sweety-sweety-sweetheart” he heard behind him, gurgled and stuttered, as he climbed down the rope stair into the boat.

Is there anyone but must repress a secret thrill, on arriving in Venice for the first time-or returning thither after long absence-and stepping into a Venetian gondola? That singular conveyance, come down unchanged from ballad times, black as nothing else on earth except a coffin-what pictures it calls up of lawless, silent adventures in the plashing night; or even more, what visions of death itself, the bier and solemn rites and last soundless voyage! And has anyone remarked that the seat in such a bark, the arm-chair lacquered in coffin-black and dully black-upholstered, is the softest, most luxurious, most relaxing seat in the world? Aschenbach realized it when he had let himself
down at the gondolier's feet, opposite his luggage, which lay neatly composed
on the vessel's beak. The rowers still gestured fiercely; he heard their harsh,
inaudible tones. But the strange stillness of the water-city seemed to take up
their voices gently, to disembowel and scatter them over the sea. It was warm
here in the harbour. The lukewarm air of the sirocco breathed upon him, he
leaned back among his cushions and gave himself to the yielding element,
closing his eyes for very pleasure in an indolence as unaccustomed as sweet.
“The trip will be short,” he thought, and wished it might last forever. They
gently swayed away from the boat with its bustle and clamour of voices.
It grew still and stiller all about. No sound but the splash of the oars, the
hollow slap of the wave against the steep, black, halbert-shaped beak of the
vessel, and one sound more—a muttering by fits and starts, expressed as it were
by the motion of his arms, from the lips of the gondolier. He was talking to
himself, between his teeth. Aschenbach glanced up and saw with surprise that
the lagoon was widening, his vessel was headed for the open sea. Evidently it
would not do to give himself up to sweet far niente; he must see his wishes
carried out.
“You are to take me to the steamboat landing, you know,” he said, half turning
round towards it. The muttering stopped. There was no reply.
“Take me to the steamboat landing,” he repeated, and this time turned quite
round and looked up into the face of the gondolier as he stood there on his
little elevated deck, high against the pale grey sky. The man had an
unpleasing, even brutish face, and wore blue clothes like a sailor's, with a
yellow sash; a shapeless straw hat with the braid torn at the brim perched
rakishly on his head. His facial structure, as well as the curling blond
moustache under the short snub nose, showed him to be of non Italian stock.
Physically rather undersized, so that one would not have expected him to be
very muscular, he pulled vigorously at the oar, putting all his body-weight
behind each stroke. Now and then the effort he made curled back his lips and
bared his white teeth to the gums. He spoke in a decided, almost curt voice,
looking out to sea over his fare's head: “The signore is going to the Lido.”
Aschenbach answered: “Yes, I am. But I only took the gondola to cross over
to San Marco. I am using the vaporetto from there.”
“But the signore cannot use the vaporetto.”
“And why not?”
“Because the vaporetto does not take luggage.”
It was true. Aschenbach remembered it. He made no answer. But the man's
gruff, overbearing manner, so unlike the usual courtesy of his countrymen
towards the stranger, was intolerable. Aschenbach spoke again: “That is my
own affair. I may want to give my luggage in deposit. You will turn round.”
No answer. The oar splashed, the wave struck dull against the prow. And the
muttering began anew, the gondolier talked to himself, between his teeth.
What should the traveller do? Alone on the water with this tongue-tied,
obstinate, uncanny man, he saw no way of enforcing his will. And if only he
did not excite himself, how pleasantly he might rest! Had he not wished the
voyage might last forever? The wisest thing—and how much the pleasantest!
was to let matters take their own course. A spell of indolence was upon him; it
came from the chair he sat in—this low, black upholstered arm-chair, so gently
rocked at the hands of the despotic boatman in his rear. The thought passed
dreamily through Aschenbach's brain that perhaps he had fallen into the
clutches of a criminal; it had not power to rouse him into action. More
annoying was the simpler explanation: that the man was only trying to extort
money. A sense of duty, a recollection, as it were, that this ought to be
prevented, made him collect himself to say: “How much do you ask for the
trip?”

And the gondolier, going out over his head, replied: “The signore will pay.”

There was an established reply to this; Aschenbach made it, mechanically: “I
will pay nothing whatever if you do not take me where I want to go.”

“The signore wants to go to the Lido.”

“But not with you.”

“I am a good rower, signore. I will row you well.”

“So much is true,” thought Aschenbach, and again he relaxed. “That is true,
you row me well. Even if you mean to rob me, even if you hit me in the back
with your oar and send me down to the kingdom of Hades, even then you will
have rowed me well.”

But nothing of the sort happened. Instead, they fell in with company: a boat
came alongside and waylaid them, full of men and women singing to guitar
and mandolin. They rowed persistently bow for bow with the gondola and
filled the silence that had rested on the waters with their lyric love of gain.
Aschenbach tossed money into the hat they held out. The music stopped at
once, they rowed away. And once more the gondolier's mutter became audible
as he talked to himself in fits and snatches.

Thus they rowed on, rocked by the wash of a steamer returning citywards. At
the landing two municipal officials were walking up and down with their
hands behind their backs and their faces turned towards the lagoon.
Aschenbach was helped on shore by the old man with a boat-hook who is the
permanent feature of every landing-stage in Venice; and having no small
change to pay the boatman, crossed over into the hotel opposite. His wants
were supplied in the lobby; but when he came back his possessions were
already on a hand-car on the quay, and gondola and gondolier were gone.

“He ran away, signore,” said the old boatman. “A bad lot, a man without a
licence. He is the only gondolier without one. The others telephoned over, and
he knew we were on the lookout, so he made off.”

Aschenbach shrugged.

“The signore has had a ride for nothing,” said the old man, and held out his
hat. Aschenbach dropped some coins. He directed that his luggage be taken to
the Hotel des Bains and followed the hand-car through the avenue, that white-
blossoming avenue with taverns, booths, and pensions on either side it, which
runs across the island diagonally to the beach.

He entered the hotel from the garden terrace at the back and passed through
the vestibule and hail into the office. His arrival was expected, and he was
served with courtesy and dispatch. The manager, a small, soft, dapper man with a black moustache and a caressing way with him, wearing a French frock-coat, himself took him up in the lift and showed him his room. It was a pleasant chamber, furnished in cherry-wood, with lofty windows looking out to sea. It was decorated with strong-scented flowers. Aschenbach, as soon as he was alone, and while they brought in his trunk and bags and disposed them in the room, went up to one of the windows and stood looking out upon the beach in its afternoon emptiness, and at the sunless sea, now full and sending long, low waves with rhythmic beat upon the sand.

A solitary, unused to speaking of what he sees and feels, has mental experiences which are at once more intense and less articulate than those of a gregarious man. They are sluggish, yet more wayward, and never without a melancholy tinge. Sights and impressions which others brush aside with a glance, a light comment, a smile, occupy him more than their due; they sink silently in, they take on meaning, they become experience, emotion, adventure. Solitude gives birth to the original in us, to beauty unfamiliar and perilous-to poetry. But also, it gives birth to the opposite: to the perverse, the illicit, the absurd. Thus the traveller's mind still dwelt with disquiet on the episodes of his journey hither: on the horrible old fop with his drivel about a mistress, on the outlaw boatman and his lost tip. They did not offend his reason, they hardly afforded food for thought; yet they seemed by their very nature fundamentally strange, and thereby vaguely disquieting. Yet here was the sea; even in the midst of such thoughts he saluted it with his eyes, exulting that Venice was near and accessible. At length he turned round, disposed his personal belongings and made certain arrangements with the chambermaid for his comfort, washed up, and was conveyed to the ground floor by the green-uniformed Swiss who ran the lift.

He took tea on the terrace facing the sea and afterwards went down and walked some distance along the shore promenade in the direction of Hotel Excelsior. When he came back it seemed to be time to change for dinner. He did so, slowly and methodically as his way was, for he was accustomed to work while he dressed; but even so found himself a little early when he entered the hail, where a large number of guests had collected-strangers to each other and affecting mutual indifference, yet united in expectancy of the meal. He picked up a paper, sat down in a leather arm-chair, and took stock of the company, which compared most favourably with that he had just left.

This was a broad and tolerant atmosphere, of wide horizons. Subdued voices were speaking most of the principal European tongues. That uniform of civilization, the conventional evening dress, gave outward conformity to the varied types. There were long, dry Americans, large-familied Russians, English ladies, German children with French bonnes. The Slavic element predominated, it seemed. In Aschenbach's neighbourhood Polish was being spoken.

Round a wicker table next him was gathered a group of young folk in charge of a governess or companion-three young girls, perhaps fifteen to seventeen years old, and a long-haired boy of about fourteen. Aschenbach noticed with astonishment the lad's perfect beauty. His face recalled the noblest moment of Greek sculpture-pale, with a sweet reserve, with clustering honeycoloured
ringlets, the brow and nose descending in one line, the winning mouth, the expression of pure and godlike serenity. Yet with all this chaste perfection of form it was of such unique personal charm that the observer thought he had never seen, either in nature or art, anything so utterly happy and consummate. What struck him further was the strange contrast the group afforded, a difference in educational method, so to speak, shown in the way the brother and sisters were clothed and treated. The girls, the eldest of whom was practically grown up, were dressed with an almost disfiguring austerity. All three wore half-length slate-coloured frocks of cloister-line plainness, arbitrarily unbecoming in cut, with white turn-over collars as their only adornment. Every grace of outline was wilfully suppressed; their hair lay smoothly plastered to their heads, giving them a vacant expression, like a nun's. All this could only be by the mother's orders; but there was no trace of the same pedagogic severity in the case of the boy. Tenderness and softness, it was plain, conditioned his existence. No scissors had been put to the lovely hair that (like the Spinnario's) curled about his brows, above his ears, longer still in the neck. He wore an English sailor suit, with quilted sleeves that narrowed round the delicate wrists of his long and slender though still childish hands. And this suit, with its breast-knot, lacings, and embroideries, lent the slight figure something “rich and strange,” a spoilt, exquisite air. The observer saw him in half profile, with one foot in its black patent leather advanced, one elbow resting on the arm of his basketchair, the cheek nestled into the closed hand in a pose of easy grace, quite unlike the stiff subservient mien which was evidently habitual to his sisters. Was he delicate? His facial tint was ivory white against the golden darkness of his clustering locks. Or was he simply a pampered darling, the object of a self-willed and partial love? Aschenbach inclined to think the latter. For in almost every artist nature is inborn a wanton and treacherous proneness to side with the beauty that breaks hearts, to single out aristocratic pretensions and pay them homage.

A waiter announced, in English, that dinner was served. Gradually the company dispersed through the glass doors into the dining-room. Late-comers entered from the vestibule or the lifts. Inside, dinner was being served; but the young Poles still sat and waited about their wicker table. Aschenbach felt comfortable in his deep arm-chair, he enjoyed the beauty before his eyes, he waited with them.

The governess, a short, stout, red-faced person, at length gave the signal. With lifted brows she pushed back her chair and made a bow to the tall woman, dressed in palest grey, who now entered the hall. This lady's abundant jewels were pearls, her manner was cool and measured; the fashion of her gown and the arrangement of her lightly powdered hair had the simplicity prescribed in certain circles whose piety and aristocracy are equally marked. She might have been, in Germany, the wife of some high official. But there was something faintly fabulous, after all, in her appearance, though lent it solely by the pearls she wore: they were well-nigh priceless, and consisted of earrings and a three-stranded necklace, very long, with gems the size of cherries.

The brother and sisters had risen briskly. They bowed over their mother's hand to kiss it, she turning away from them, with a slight smile on her face, which was carefully preserved but rather sharp-nosed and worn. She addressed a few words in French to the governess, then moved towards the glass door. The
children followed, the girls in order of age, then the governess, and last the boy. He chanced to turn before he crossed the threshold, and as there was no one else in the room, his strange, twilit grey eyes met Aschenbach’s, as our traveller sat there with the paper on his knee, absorbed in looking after the group.

There was nothing singular, of course, in what he had seen. They had not gone in to dinner before their mother, they had waited, given her a respectful salute, and but observed the right and proper forms on entering the room. Yet they had done all this so expressly, with such self-respecting dignity, discipline, and sense of duty that Aschenbach was impressed. He lingered still a few minutes, then he, too, went into the dining-room, where he was shown a table far off the Polish family, as he noted at once, with a stirring of regret.

Tired, yet mentally alert, he beguiled the long, tedious meal with abstract, even with transcendent matters: pondered the mysterious harmony that must come to subsist between the individual human being and the universal law, in order that human beauty may result; passed on to general problems of form and art, and came at length to the conclusion that what seemed to him fresh and happy thoughts were like the flattering inventions of a dream, which the waking sense proves worthless and insubstantial. He spent the evening in the park, that was sweet with the odours of evening-sitting, smoking, wandering about; went to bed betimes, and passed the night in deep, unbroken sleep, visited, however, by varied and lively dreams.

The weather next day was no more promising. A land breeze blew. Beneath a colourless, overcast sky the sea lay sluggish, and as it were shrunken, so far withdrawn as to leave bare several rows of long sand-banks. The horizon looked close and prosaic. When Aschenbach opened his window he thought he smelt the stagnant odour of the lagoons.

He felt suddenly out of sorts and already began to think of leaving. Once, years before, after weeks of bright spring weather, this wind had found him out; it had been so bad as to force him to flee from the city like a fugitive. And now it seemed beginning again-the same feverish distaste, the pressure on his temples, the heavy eyelids. It would be a nuisance to change again; but if the wind did not turn, this was no place for him. To be on the safe side, he did not entirely unpack. At nine o’clock he went down to the buffet, which lay between the hall and the dining-room and served as breakfast-room.

A solemn stillness reigned here, such as it is the ambition of all large hotels to achieve. The waiters moved on noiseless feet. A rattling of tea-things, a whispered word-and no other sounds. In a corner diagonally to the door, two tables off his own, Aschenbach saw the Polish girls with their governess. They sat there very straight, in their stiff blue linen frocks with little turn-over collars and cuffs, their ash-blond hair newly brushed flat, their eyelids red from sleep; and handed each other the marmalade. They had nearly finished their meal. The boy was not there.

Aschenbach smiled. “Aha, little Phax,” he thought. “It seems you are privileged to sleep yourself out.” With sudden gaiety he quoted: “Oft veränderten Schmuck und warme Bader und Ruhe.”
He took a leisurely breakfast. The porter came up with his braided cap in his hand, to deliver some letters that had been sent on. Aschenbach lighted a cigarette and opened a few letters and thus was still seated to witness the arrival of the sluggard.

He entered through the glass doors and passed diagonally across the room to his sisters at their table. He walked with extraordinary grace—the carriage of the body, the action of the knee, the way he set down his foot in its white shoe—it was all so light, it was at once dainty and proud, it wore an added charm in the childish shyness which made him twice turn his head as he crossed the room, made him give a quick glance and then drop his eyes. He took his seat, with a smile and a murmured word in his soft and blury tongue; and Aschenbach, sitting so that he could see him in profile, was astonished anew, yes, startled, at the godlike beauty of the human being. The lad had on a light sailor suit of blue and white striped cotton, with a red silk breast-knot and a simple white standing collar round the neck—a not very elegant effect—yet above this collar the head was poised like a flower, in incomparable loveliness. It was the head of Eros, with the yellowish bloom of Parian marble, with fine serious brows, and dusky clustering ringlets standing out in soft plenteousness over temples and ears.

“Good, oh, very good indeed!” thought Aschenbach, assuming the patronizing air of the connoisseur to hide, as artists will, their ravishment over a masterpiece. “Yes,” he went on to himself, “if it were not that sea and beach were waiting for me, I should sit here as long as you do.” But he went out on that, passing through the hall, beneath the watchful eye of the functionaries, down the steps and directly across the board walk to the section of the beach reserved for the guests of the hotel. The bathing-master, a barefoot old man in linen trousers and sailor blouse, with a straw hat, showed him the cabin that had been rented for him, and Aschenbach had him set up table and chair on the sandy platform before it. Then he dragged the reclining chair through the pale yellow sand, closer to the sea, sat down, and composed himself.

He delighted, as always in the scene on the beach, the sight of sophisticated society giving itself over to a simple life at the edge of the element. The shallow grey sea was already gay with children wading, with swimmers, with figures in bright colours lying on the sand-banks with arms behind their heads. Some were rowing in little keelless boats painted red and blue, and laughing when they capsized. A long row of capanne ran down the beach, with platforms, where people sat as on verandas, and there was social life, with bustle and with indolent repose; visits were paid, amid much chatter, punctilious morning toilettes hobnobbed with comfortable and privileged dishabille. On the hard wet sand close to the sea figures in white bath-robes or loose wrappings in garish colours strolled up and down. A mammoth sand-hill had been built up on Aschenbach’s right, the work of children, who had stuck it full of tiny flags. Vendors of seashells, fruits, and cakes knelt beside their wares spread out on the sand. A row of cabins on the left stood obliquely to the others and to the sea, thus forming the boundary of the enclosure on this side; and on the little veranda in front of one of these a Russian family was encamped; bearded men with strong white teeth, ripe, indolent women, a Fräulein from the Baltic provinces, who sat at an easel painting the sea and tearing her hair in despair; two ugly but good-natured children and an old
maid servant in a head-cloth, with the caressing, servile manner of the born dependent. There they sat together in grateful enjoyment of their blessings: constantly shouting at their romping children, who paid not the slightest heed; making jokes in broken Italian to the funny old man who sold them sweetmeats, kissing each other on the cheeks—no jot concerned that their domesticity was overlooked.

"I'll stop," thought Aschenbach. "Where could it be better than here?" With his hands clasped in his lap he let his eyes swim in the wideness of the sea, his gaze lose focus, blur, and grow vague in the misty immensity of space. His love of the ocean had profound sources: the hard-worked artist's longing for rest, his yearning to seek refuge from the thronging manifold shapes of his fancy in the bosom of the simple and vast; and another yearning, opposed to his art and perhaps for that very reason a lure, for the unorganized, the immeasurable, the eternal—short for nothingness. He whose preoccupation is with excellence longs fervently to find rest in perfection; and is not nothingness a form of perfection? As he sat there dreaming thus, deep, deep into the void, suddenly the margin line of the shore was cut by a human form. He gathered up his gaze and withdrew it from the illimitable, and lo, it was the lovely boy who crossed his vision coming from the left along the sand. He was barefoot, ready for wading, the slender legs uncovered above the knee, and moved slowly, yet with such a proud, light tread as to make it seem he had never worn shoes. He looked towards the diagonal row of cabins; and the sight of the Russian family, leading their lives there in joyous simplicity, distorted his features in a spasm of angry disgust. His brow darkened, his lips curled, one corner of the mouth was drawn down in a harsh line that marred the curve of the cheek, his frown was so heavy that the eyes seemed to sink in as they uttered beneath the black and vicious language of hate. He looked down, looked threateningly back once more; then giving it up with a violent and contemptuous shoulder-shrug, he left his enemies in the rear.

A feeling of delicacy, a qualm, almost like a sense of shame, made Aschenbach turn away as though he had not seen, he felt unwilling to take advantage of having been, by chance, privy to this passionate reaction. But he was in truth both moved and exhilarated—that is to say, he was delighted. This childish exhibition of fanaticism, directed against the good-naturedest simplicity in the world—it gave to the godlike and inexpressive the final human touch. The figure of the half-grown lad, a masterpiece from nature's own hand, had been significant enough when it gratified the eye alone; and now it evoked sympathy as well—the little episode had set it off, lent it a dignity in the onlooker's eyes that was beyond its years.

Aschenbach listened with still averted head to the boy's voice announcing his coming to his companions at the sand-heap. The voice was clear, though a little weak, but they answered, shouting his name—or his nickname—again and again. Aschenbach was not without curiosity to learn it, but could make out nothing more exact than two musical syllables, something like Adgio—or, oftener still, Adjiu, with a long-drawn-out u at the end. He liked the melodious sound, and found it fitting; said it over to himself a few times and turned back with satisfaction to his papers.
Holding his travelling-pad on his knees, he took his fountainpen and began to answer various items of his correspondence. But presently he felt it too great a pity to turn his back, and the eyes of his mind, for the sake of mere commonplace correspondence, to this scene which was, after all, the most rewarding one he knew. He put aside his papers and swung round to the sea; in no long time, beguiled by the voices of the children at play, he had turned his head and sat resting it against the chair-back, while he gave himself up to contemplating the activities of the exquisite Adgio.

His eye found him out at once, the red breast-knot was unmistakable. With some nine or ten companions, boys and girls of his own age and younger, he was busy putting in place an old plank to serve as a bridge across the ditches between the sandpiles. He directed the work by shouting and motioning with his head, and they were all chattering in many tongues—French, Polish, and even some of the Balkan languages. But his was the name oftener on their lips, he was plainly sought after, wooed, admired. One lad in particular, a Pole like himself, with a name that sounded something like Jaschiu, a sturdy lad with brilliantined black hair, in a belted linen suit, was his particular liegeman and friend. Operations at the sand-pile being ended for the time, the two walked away along the beach, with their arms round each other's waists, and once the lad Jaschiu gave Adgio a kiss.

Aschenbach felt like shaking a finger at him. “But you, Critobulus,” he thought with a smile, “you I advise to take a year's leave. That long, at least, you will need for complete recovery.” A vendor came by with strawberries, and Aschenbach made his second breakfast of the great luscious, dead-ripe fruit. It had grown very warm, although the sun had not availed to pierce the heavy layer of mist. His mind felt relaxed, his senses revelled in this vast and soothing communion with the silence of the sea. The grave and serious man found sufficient occupation in speculating what name it could be that sounded like Adgio. And with the help of a few Polish memories he at length fixed on Tadzio, a shortened form of Thaddeus, which sounded, when called, like Tadziu or Adziu.

Tadzio was bathing. Aschenbach had lost sight of him for a moment, then descried him far out in the water, which was shallow a very long way-saw his head, and his arm striking out like an oar. But his watchful family were already on the alert; the mother and governess called from the veranda in front of their bathing-cabin, until the lad's name, with its softened consonants and long-drawn u-sound, seemed to possess the beach like a rallying-cry; the cadence had something sweet and wild: “Tadziu! Tadziu!” He turned and ran back against the water, churning the waves to a foam, his head flung high. The sight of this living figure, virginally pure and austere, with dripping locks, beautiful as a tender young god, emerging from the depths of sea and sky, outrunning the element—it conjured up mythologies, it was like a primeval legend, handed down from the beginning of time, of the birth of form, of the origin of the gods. With closed lids Aschenbach listened to this poesy hymning itself silently within him, and anon he thought it was good to be here and that he would stop awhile.

Afterwards Tadzio lay on the sand and rested from his bathe, wrapped in his white sheet, which he wore drawn underneath the right shoulder, so that his
head was cradled on his bare right arm. And even when Aschenbach read, without looking up, he was conscious that the lad was there; that it would cost him but the slightest turn of the head to have the rewarding vision once more in his purview. Indeed, it was almost as though he sat there to guard the youth's repose; occupied, of course, with his own affairs, yet alive to the presence of that noble human creature close at hand. And his heart was stirred, it felt a father's kindness: such an emotion as the possessor of beauty can inspire in one who has offered himself up in spirit to create beauty.

At midday he left the beach, returned to the hotel, and was carried up in the lift to his room. There he lingered a little time before the glass and looked at his own grey hair, his keen and weary face. And he thought of his fame, and how people gazed respectfully at him in the streets, on account of his unerring gift of words and their power to charm. He called up all the worldly successes his genius had reaped, all he could remember, even his patent of nobility. Then went to luncheon down in the diningroom, sat at his little table and ate. Afterwards he mounted again in the lift, and a group of young folk, Tadzio among them, pressed with him into the little compartment. It was the first time Aschenbach had seen him close at hand, not merely in perspective, and could see and take account of the details of his humanity. Someone spoke to the lad, and he, answering, with indescribably lovely smile, stepped out again, as they had come to the first floor, backwards, with his eyes cast down. “Beauty makes people self-conscious,” Aschenbach thought, and considered within himself imperatively why this should be. He had noted, further, that Tadzio's teeth were imperfect, rather jagged and bluish, without a healthy glaze, and of that peculiar brittle transparency which the teeth of chlorotic people often show.

He is delicate, he is sickly,” Aschenbach thought. “He will most likely not live to grow old.” He did not try to account for the pleasure the idea gave him.

In the afternoon he spent two hours in his room, then took the vaporerto to Venice, across the foul-smelling lagoon. He got out at San Marco, had his tea in the Piazza, and then, as his custom was, took a walk through the streets. But this walk of his brought about nothing less than a revolution in his mood and an entire change in all his plans.

There was a hateful sultriness in the narrow streets. The air was so heavy that all the manifold smells wafted out of houses, shops, and cook-shops-smells of oil, perfumery, and so forthhung low, like exhalations, not dissipating. Cigarette smoke seemed to stand in the air, it drifted so slowly away. Today the crowd in these narrow lanes oppressed the stroller instead of diverting him. The longer he walked, the more was he in tortures under that state, which is the product of the sea air and the sirocco and which excites and enervates at once. He perspired painfully. His eyes rebelled, his chest was heavy, he felt feverish, the blood throbbed in his temples. He fled from the huddled, narrow streets of the commercial city, crossed many bridges, and came into the poor quarter of Venice. Beggars waylaid him, the canals sickened him with their evil exhalations. He reached a quiet square, one of those that exist at the city's heart, forsaken of God and man; there he rested awhile on the margin of a fountain, wiped his brow, and admitted to himself that he must be gone.
For the second time, and now quite definitely, the city proved that in certain weathers it could be directly inimical to his health. Nothing but sheer unreasoning obstinacy would linger on, hoping for an unprophesiable change in the wind. A quick decision was in place. He could not go home at this stage, neither summer nor winter quarters would be ready. But Venice had not a monopoly of sea and shore; there were other spots where these were to be had without the evil concomitants of lagoon and fever-breeding vapours. He remembered a little bathing-place not far from Trieste of which he had had a good report. Why not go thither? At once, of course, in order that this second change might be worth the making. He resolved, he rose to his feet and sought the nearest gondola-landing, where he took a boat and was conveyed to San Marco through the gloomy windings of many canals, beneath balconies of delicate marble traceries flanked by carven lions; round slippery corners of wall, past melancholy façades with ancient business shields reflected in the rocking water. It was not too easy to arrive at his destination, for his gondolier, being in league with various lace-makers and glass-blowers, did his best to persuade his fare to pause, look, and be tempted to buy. Thus the charm of this bizarre passage through the heart of Venice, even while it played upon his spirit, yet was sensibly cooled by the predatory commercial spirit of the fallen queen of the seas. Once back in his hotel, he announced at the office, even before dinner, that circumstances unforeseen obliged him to leave early next morning. The management expressed its regret, it changed his money and receipted his bill. He dined, and spent the lukewarm evening in a rocking-chair on the rear terrace, reading the newspapers. Before he went to bed, he made his luggage ready against the morning.

His sleep was not of the best, for the prospect of another journey made him restless. When he opened his window next morning, the sky was still overcast, but the air seemed fresher and there and then his rue began. Had he not given notice too soon? Had he not let himself be swayed by a slight and momentary indisposition? If he had only been patient, not lost heart so quickly, tried to adapt himself to the climate, or even waited for a change in the weather before deciding! Then, instead of the hurry and flurry of departure, he would have before him now a morning like yesterday's on the beach. Too late! He must go on wanting what he had wanted yesterday. He dressed and at eight o'clock went down to breakfast.

When he entered the breakfast-room it was empty. Guests came in while he sat waiting for his order to be filled. As he sipped his tea he saw the Polish girls enter with their governess, chaste and morning-fresh, with sleep-redened eyelids. They crossed the room and sat down at their table in the window. Behind them came the porter, cap in hand, to announce that it was time for him to go. The car was waiting to convey him and other travellers to the Hotel Excelsior, whence they would go by motor-boat through the company's private canal to the station. Time pressed. But Aschenbach found it did nothing of the sort. There still lacked more than an hour of train-time. He felt irritated at the hotel habit of getting the guests out of the house earlier than necessary; and requested the porter to let him breakfast in peace. The man hesitated and withdrew, only to come back again five minutes later. The car could wait no longer. Good, then it might go, and take his trunk with it, Aschenbach answered with some heat. He would use the public conveyance, in his own
time; he begged them to leave the choice of it to him. The functionary bowed. Aschenbach, pleased to be rid of him, made a leisurely meal, and even had a newspaper of the waiter. When at length he rose, the time was grown very short. And it so happened that at that moment Tadzio came through the glass doors into the room.

To reach his own table he crossed the traveller's path, and modestly cast down his eyes before the grey-haired man of the lofty brows—only to lift them again in that sweet way he had and direct his full soft gaze upon Aschenbach's face. Then he was past. “For the last time, Tadzio,” thought the elder man. “It was all too brief!” Quite unusually for him, he shaped a farewell with his lips, he actually uttered it, and added: “May God bless you!” Then he went out, distributed tips, exchanged farewells with the mild little manager in the frock-coat, and, followed by the porter with his hand-luggage, left the hotel. On foot as he had come, he passed through the white-blossoming avenue, diagonally across the island to the boat-landing. He went on board at once—but the tale of his journey across the lagoon was a tale of woe, a passage through the very valley of regrets.

It was the well-known route: through the lagoon, past San Marco, up the Grand Canal. Aschenbach sat on the circular bench in the bows, with his elbow on the railing, one hand shading his eyes. They passed the Public Gardens, once more the princely charm of the Piazzetta rose up before him and then dropped behind, next came the great row of palaces, the canal curved, and the splendid marble arches of the Rialto came in sight. The traveller gazed—and his bosom was torn. The atmosphere of the city, the faintly rotten scent of swamp and sea, which had driven him to leave-in what deep, tender, almost painful draughts he breathed it in! How was it he had not known, had not thought, how much his heart was set upon it all! What this morning had been slight regret, some little doubt of his own wisdom, turned now to grief, to actual wretchedness, a mental agony so sharp that it repeatedly brought tears to his eyes, while he questioned himself how he could have foreseen it. The hardest part, the part that more than once it seemed he could not bear, was the thought that he should never more see Venice again. Since now for the second time the place had made him ill, since for the second time he had had to flee for his life, he must henceforth regard it as a forbidden spot, to be forever shunned; senseless to try it again, after he had proved himself unfit. Yes, if he fled it now, he felt that wounded pride must prevent his return to this spot where twice he had made actual bodily surrender. And this conflict between inclination and capacity all at once assumed, in this middle-aged man's mind, immense weight and importance; the physical defeat seemed a shameful thing, to be avoided at whatever cost; and he stood amazed at the ease with which on the day before he had yielded to it.

Meanwhile the steamer neared the station landing; his anguish of irresolution amounted almost to panic. To leave seemed to the sufferer impossible, to remain not less so. Torn thus between two alternatives, he entered the station. It was very late, he had not a moment to lose. Time pressed, it scourged him onward. He hastened to buy his ticket and looked round in the crowd to find the hotel porter. The man appeared and said that the trunk had already gone off. “Gone already?”
“Yes, it has gone to Como.”

“To Como?” A hasty exchange of words-angry questions from Aschenbach, and puzzled replies from the porter-at length made it clear that the trunk had been put with the wrong luggage even before leaving the hotel, and in company with other trunks was now well on its way in precisely the wrong direction.

Aschenbach found it hard to wear the right expression as he heard this news. A reckless joy, a deep incredible mirthfulness shook him almost as with a spasm. The porter dashed off after the lost trunk, returning very soon, of course, to announce that his efforts were unavailing. Aschenbach said he would not travel without his luggage; that he would go back and wait at the Hotel des Bains until it turned up. Was the company's motor-boat still outside? The man said yes, it was at the door. With his native eloquence he prevailed upon the ticket-agent to take back the ticket already purchased; he swore that he would wire, that no pains should be spared, that the trunk would be restored in the twinkling of an eye. And the unbelievable thing came to pass: the traveller, twenty minutes after he had reached the station, found himself once more on the Grand Canal on his way back to the Lido.

What a strange adventure indeed, this right-about face of destiny-incredible, humiliating, whimsical as any dream! To be passing again, within the hour, these scenes from which in profoundest grief he had but now taken leave forever! The little swift-moving vessel, a furrow of foam at its prow, tacking with droll agility between steamboats and gondolas, went like a shot to its goal; and he, its sole passenger, sat hiding the panic and thrills of a truant schoolboy beneath a mask of forced resignation. His breast still heaved from time to time with a burst of laughter over the contretemps. Things could not, he told himself, have fallen out more luckily. There would be the necessary explanations, a few astonished faces-then all would be well once more, a mischance prevented, a grievous error set right; and all he had thought to have left forever was his own once more, his for as long as he liked.... And did the boat's swift motion deceive him, or was the wind now coming from the sea?

The waves struck against the tiled sides of the narrow canal. At Hotel Excelsior the automobile omnibus awaited the returned traveller and bore him along by the crisping waves back to the Hotel des Bains. The little mustachioed manager in the frockcoat came down the steps to greet him. In dulcet tones he deplored the mistake, said how painful it was to the management and himself; applauded Aschenbach's resolve to stop on until the errant trunk came back; his former room, alas, was already taken, but another as good awaited his approval. “Pas de chance, monsieur,” said the Swiss lift-porter, with a smile as he conveyed him upstairs. And the fugitive was soon quartered in another room which in situation and furnishings almost precisely resembled the first.

He laid out the contents of his hand-bag in their wonted places; then, tired out, dazed by the whirl of the extraordinary forenoon, subsided into the arm-chair by the open window. The sea wore a pale-green cast, the air felt thinner and purer, the beach with its cabins and boats had more colour, notwithstanding the sky was still grey. Aschenbach, his hands folded in his lap, looked out. He
felt rejoiced to be back, yet displeased with his vacillating moods, his ignorance of his own real desires. Thus for nearly an hour he sat, dreaming, resting, barely thinking. At midday he saw Tadzio, in his striped sailor suit with red breastknot, coming, up from the sea, across the barrier and along the board walk to the hotel. Aschenbach recognized him, even at this height, knew it was he before he actually saw him, had it in mind to say to himself: “Well, Tadzio, so here you are again too!” But the casual greeting died away before it reached his lips, slain by the truth in his heart. He felt the rapture of his blood, the poignant pleasure, and realized that it was for Tadzio's sake the leavetaking had been so hard.

He sat quite still, unseen at his high post, and looked within himself. His features were lively, he lifted his brows; a smile, alert, inquiring, vivid, widened the mouth. Then he raised his head, and with both hands, hanging limp over the chair-arms, he described a slow motion, palms outward, a lifting and turning movement, as though to indicate a wide embrace. It was a gesture of welcome, a calm and deliberate acceptance of what might come.

Now daily the naked god with cheeks aflame drove his four firebreathing steeds through heaven's spaces; and with him streamed the strong east wind that fluttered his yellow locks. A sheen, like white satin, lay over all the idly rolling sea's expanse. The sand was burning hot. Awnings of rust-coloured canvas were spanned before the bathing-huts, under the ether's quivering silver-blue; one spent the morning hours within the small, sharp square of shadow they purveyed. But evening too was rarely lovely: balsamic with the breath of flowers and shrubs from the near-by park, while overhead the constellations circled in their spheres, and the murmuring of the night-girted sea swelled softly up and whispered to the soul. Such nights as these contained the joyful promise of a sunlit morrow, brim-full of sweetly ordered idleness, studded thick with countless precious possibilities.

The guest detained here by so happy a mischance was far from finding the return of his luggage a ground for setting out anew. For two days he had suffered slight inconvenience and had to dine in the large salon in his travelling-clothes. Then the lost trunk was set down in his room, and he hastened to unpack, filling presses and drawers with his possessions. He meant to stay on-and on; he rejoiced in the prospect of wearing a silk suit for the hot morning hours on the beach and appearing in acceptable evening dress at dinner.

He was quick to fall in with the pleasing monotony of this manner of life, readily enchanted by its mild soft brilliance and ease. And what a spot it is, indeed!-uniting the charms of a luxurious bathing-resort by a southern sea with the immediate nearness of a unique and marvellous city. Aschenbach was not pleasure-loving. Always, wherever and whenever it was the order of the day to be merry, to refrain from labour and make glad the heart, he would soon be conscious of the imperative summons-and especially was this so in his youth-back to the high fatigues, the sacred and fasting service that consumed his days. This spot and this alone had power to beguile him, to relax his resolution, to make him glad. At times-of a forenoon perhaps, as he lay in the shadow of his awning, gazing out dreamily over the blue of the southern sea, or in the mildness of the night, beneath the wide starry sky, ensconced among
the cushions of the gondola that bore him Lidowards after an evening on the
Piazza, while the gay lights faded and the melting music of the serenades died
away on his ear; he would think of his mountain home, the theatre of his
summer labours. There clouds hung low and trailed through the garden,
violent storms extinguished the lights of the house at night, and the ravens he
fed swung in the tops of the fir trees. And he would feel transported to
Elysium, to the ends of the earth, to a spot most carefree for the sons of men,
where no snow is, and no winter, no storms or downpours of rain; where
Oceanus sends a mild and cooling breath, and days flow on in blissful
idleness, without effort or struggle, entirely dedicated to the sun and the feasts
of the sun.

Aschenbach saw the boy Tadzio almost constantly. The narrow confines of
their world of hotel and beach, the daily round followed by all alike, brought
him in close, almost uninterrupted touch with the beautiful lad. He
encountered him everywhere in the salons of the hotel, on the cooling rides to
the city and back, among the splendours of the Piazza, and besides all this in
many another going and coming as chance vouchsafed. But it was the regular
morning hours on the beach which gave him his happiest opportunity to study
and admire the lovely apparition. Yes, this immediate happiness, this daily
recurring boon at the hand of circumstance, this it was that filled him with
content, with joy in life, enriched his stay, and lingered out the row of sunny
days that fell into place so pleasantly one behind the other. He rose early-as
early as though he had a panting press of work-and was among the first on the
beach, when the sun was still benign and the sea lay dazzling white in its
morning slumber. He gave the watchman a friendly good-morning and
chatted with the barefoot, white-haired old man who prepared his place,
spread the awning, trundled out the chair and table onto the little platform.
Then he settled down; he had three or four hours before the sun reached its
height and the fearful climax of its power; three or four hours while the sea
went deeper and deeper blue; three or four hours in which to watch Tadzio.

He would see him come up, on the left, along the margin of the sea; or from
behind, between the cabins; or, with a start of joyful surprise, would discover
that he himself was late, and Tadzio already down, in the blue and white
bathing-suit that was now his only wear on the beach; there and engrossed in
his usual activities in the sand, beneath the sun. It was a sweetly idle, trifling,
fitful life, of play and rest, of strolling, wading, digging, fishing, swimming,
lying on the sand. Often the women sitting on the platform would call out to
him in their high voices: “Tadziu! Tadziu!” and he would come running and
waving his arms, eager to tell them what he had done, show them what he had
found, what caught-shells, seahorses, jellyfish, and sideways-running crabs.
Aschenbach understood not a word he said; it might be the sheerest
commonplace, in his ear it became mingled harmonies. Thus the lad's foreign
birth raised his speech to music; a wanton sun showered splendour on him,
and the noble distances of the sea formed the background which set off his
figure.

Soon the observer knew every line and pose of this form that limned itself so
freely against sea and sky; its every loveliness, though conned by heart, yet
thrilled him each day afresh; his admiration knew no bounds, the delight of his
eye was unending. Once the lad was summoned to speak to a guest who was
waiting for his mother at their cabin. He ran up, ran dripping wet out of the sea, tossing his curls, and put out his hand, standing with his weight on one leg, resting the other foot on the toes; as he stood there in a posture of suspense the turn of his body was enchanting, while his features wore a look half shamefaced, half conscious of the duty breeding laid upon him to please. Or he would lie at full length, with his bath-robe around him, one slender young arm resting on the sand, his chin in the hollow of his hand; the lad they called Jaschiu squatting beside him, paying him court. There could be nothing lovelier on earth than the smile and look with which the playmate thus singled out rewarded his humble friend and vassal. Again, he might be at the water's edge, alone, removed from his family, quite close to Aschenbach; standing erect, his hands clasped at the back of his neck, rocking slowly on the balls of his feet, daydreaming away into blue space, while little waves ran up and bathed his toes. The ringlets of honey-coloured hair clung to his temples and neck, the fine down along the upper vertebra was yellow in the sunlight; the thin envelope of flesh covering the torso betrayed the delicate outlines of the ribs and the symmetry of the breaststructure. His armpits were still as smooth as a statue's, smooth the glistening hollows behind the knees, where the blue network of veins suggested that the body was formed of some stuff more transparent than mere flesh. What discipline, what precision of thought were expressed by the tense youthful perfection of this form! And yet the pure, strong will which had laboured in darkness and succeeded in bringing this godlike work of art to the light of day—was it not known and familiar to him, the artist? Was not the same force at work in himself when he strove in cold fury to liberate from the marble mass of language the slender forms of his art which he saw with the eye of his mind and would body forth to men as the mirror and image of spiritual beauty?

Mirror and image! His eyes took in the proud bearing of that figure there at the blue water's edge; with an outburst of rapture he told himself that what he saw was beauty's very essence; form as divine thought, the single and pure perfection which resides in the mind, of which an image and likeness, rare and holy, was here raised up for adoration. This was very frenzy—and without a scruple, nay, eagerly, the aging artist bade it come. His mind was in travail, his whole mental background in a state of flux. Memory flung up in him the primitive thoughts which are youth's inheritance, but which with him had remained latent, never leaping up into a blaze. Has it not been written that the sun beguiles our attention from things of the intellect to fix it on things of the sense? The sun, they say, dazzles; so bewitching reason and memory that the soul for very pleasure forgets its actual state, to cling with doting on the loveliest of all the objects she shines on. Yes, and then it is only through the medium of some corporeal being that it can raise itself again to contemplation of higher things. Amor, in sooth, is like the mathematician who in order to give children a knowledge of pure form must do so in the language of pictures; so, too, the god, in order to make visible the spirit, avails himself of the forms and colours of human youth, gilding it with all imaginable beauty that it may serve memory as a tool, the very sight of which then sets us afire with pain and longing.

Such were the devotee's thoughts, such the power of his emotions. And the sea, so bright with glancing sunbeams, wove in his mind a spell and
summoned up a lovely picture: there was the ancient plane-tree outside the walls of Athens, a hallowed, shady spot, fragrant with willow-blossom and adorned with images and votive offerings in honour of the nymphs and Achelous. Clear ran the smooth-pebbled stream at the foot of the spreading tree. Crickets were fiddling. But on the gentle grassy slope, where one could lie yet hold the head erect, and shelter from the scorching heat, two men reclined, an elder with a younger, ugliness paired with beauty and wisdom with grace. Here Socrates held forth to youthful Phdrus upon the nature of virtue and desire, wooing him with insinuating wit and charming turns of phrase. He told him of the shuddering and unwonted heat that come upon him whose heart is open, when his eye beholds an image of eternal beauty; spoke of the impious and corrupt, who cannot conceive beauty though they see its image, and are incapable of awe; and of the fear and reverence felt by the noble soul when he beholds a godlike face or a form which is a good image of beauty: how as he gazes he worships the beautiful one and scarcely dares to look upon him, but would offer sacrifice as to an idol or a god, did he not fear to be thought stark mad. “For beauty, my Phdrus, beauty alone, is lovely and visible at once. For, mark you, it is the sole aspect of the spiritual which we can perceive through our senses, or bear so to perceive. Else what should become of us, if the divine, if reason and virtue and truth, were to speak to us through the senses? Should we not perish and be consumed by love, as Semel aforetime was by Zeus? So beauty, then, is the beauty-lover's way to the spirit but only the way, only the means, my little Phdrus.”... And then, sly arch-lover that he was, he said the subtlest thing of all: that the lover was nearer the divine than the beloved; for the god was in the one but not in the other—perhaps the tenderest, most mocking thought that ever was thought, and source of all the guile and secret bliss the lover knows. Thought that can merge wholly into feeling, feeling that can merge wholly into thought—these are the artist's highest joy. And our solitary felt in himself at this moment power to command and wield a thought that thrilled with emotion, an emotion as precise and concentrated as thought: namely, that nature herself shivers with ecstasy when the mind bows down in homage before beauty. He felt a sudden desire to write. Eros, indeed, we are told, loves idleness, and for idle hours alone was he created. But in this crisis the violence of our sufferer's seizure was directed almost wholly towards production, its occasion almost a matter of indifference. News had reached him on his travels that a certain problem had been raised, the intellectual world challenged for its opinion on a great and burning question of art and taste. By nature and experience the theme was his own; and he could not resist the temptation to set it off in the glistering foil of his words. He would write, and moreover he would write in Tadzio's presence. This lad should be in a sense his model, his style should follow the lines of this figure that seemed to him divine; he would snatch up this beauty into the realms of the mind, as once the eagle bore the Trojan shepherd aloft. Never had the pride of the word been so sweet to him, never had he known so well that Eros is in the word, as in those perilous and precious hours when he sat at his rude table, within the shade of his awning, his idol full in his view and the music of his voice in his ears, and fashioned his little essay after the model Tadzio's beauty set: that page and a half of choicest prose, so chaste, so lofty, so poignant with feeling, which would shortly be the wonder and admiration of the multitude. Verily it is well for the world that it sees only the beauty of
the completed work and not its origins nor the conditions whence it sprang; since knowledge of the artist's inspiration might often but confuse and alarm and so prevent the full effect of its excellence. Strange hours, indeed, these were, and strangely unnerving the labour that filled them! Strangely fruitful intercourse this, between one body and another mind! When Aschenbach put aside his work and left the beach he felt exhausted, he felt broken-conscience reproached him, as it were after a debauch.

Next morning on leaving the hotel he stood at the top of the stairs leading down from the terrace and saw Tadzio in front of him on his way to the beach. The lad had just reached the gate in the railings, and he was alone. Aschenbach felt, quite simply, a wish to overtake him, to address him and have the pleasure of his reply and answering look; to put upon a blithe and friendly footing his relation with this being who all unconsciously had so greatly heightened and quickened his emotions. The lovely youth moved at a loitering pace-he might easily be overtaken; and Aschenbach hastened his own step. He reached him on the board walk that ran behind the bathing-cabins, and all but put out his hand to lay it on shoulder or head, while his lips parted to utter a friendly salutation in French. But-perhaps from the swift pace of his last few steps-he found his heart throbbing unpleasantly fast, while his breath came in such quick pants that he could only have gasped had he tried to speak. He hesitated, sought after self-control, was suddenly panic-stricken lest the boy notice him hanging there behind him and look round. Then he gave up, abandoned his plan, and passed him with bent head and hurried step.

“Too late! Too late!” he thought as he went by. But was it too late? This step he had delayed to take might so easily have put everything in a lighter key, have led to a sane recovery from his folly. But the truth may have been that the aging man did not want to be cured, that his illusion was far too dear to him. Who shall unriddle the puzzle of the artist nature? Who understands that mingling of discipline and licence in which it stands so deeply rooted? For not to be able to want sobriety is licentious folly. Aschenbach was no longer disposed to self-analysis. He had no taste for it; his selfesteem, the attitude of mind proper to his years, his maturity and single-mindedness, disinclined him to look within himself and decide whether it was constraint or puerile sensuality that had prevented him from carrying out his project. He felt confused, he was afraid someone, if only the watchman, might have been observing his behaviour and final surrender-very much he feared being ridiculous. And all the time he was laughing at himself for his serio-comic seizure. “Quite crestfallen,” he thought. “I was like the gamecock that lets his wings droop in the battle. That must be the Love-God himself, that makes us hang our heads at sight of beauty and weighs our proud spirits low as the ground.” Thus he played with the idea-he embroidered upon it, and was too arrogant to admit fear of an emotion.

The term he had set for his holiday passed by unheeded; he had no thought of going home. Ample funds had been sent him. His sole concern was that the Polish family might leave, and a chance question put to the hotel barber elicited the information that they had come only very shortly before himself. The sun browned his face and hands, the invigorating salty air heightened his emotional energies. Heretofore he had been wont to give out at once, in some new effort, the powers accumulated by sleep or food or outdoor air; but now
the strength that flowed in upon him with each day of sun and sea and idleness he let go up in one extravagant gush of emotional intoxication.

His sleep was fitful; the priceless, equable days were divided one from the next by brief nights filled with happy unrest. He went, indeed, early to bed, for at nine o'clock, with the departure of Tadzio from the scene, the day was over for him. But in the faint greyness of the morning a tender pang would go through him as his heart was minded of its adventure; he could no longer bear his pillow and, rising, would wrap himself against the early chill and sit down by the window to await the sunrise. Awe of the miracle filled his soul new-risen from its sleep. Heaven, earth, and its waters yet lay enfolded in the ghostly, glassy pallor of dawn; one paling star still swam in the shadowy vast. But there came a breath, a winged word from far and inaccessible abodes, that Eros was rising from the side of her spouse; and there was that first sweet reddening of the farthest strip of sea and sky that manifests creation to man's sense. She neared, the goddess, ravisher of youth, who stole away Cleitos and Cephalus and, defying all the envious Olympians, tasted beautiful Orion's love. At the world's edge began a strewing of roses, a shining and a blooming ineffably pure; baby cloudlets hung illumined, like attendant amoretti, in the blue and blushful haze; purple effulgence fell upon the sea, that seemed to heave it forward on its welling waves; from horizon to zenith went great quivering thrusts like golden lances, the gleam became a glare; without a sound, with godlike violence, glow and glare and rolling flames streamed upwards, and with flying hoof-beats the steeds of the sun-god mounted the sky. The lonely watcher sat, the splendour of the god shone on him, he closed his eyes and let the glory kiss his lids. Forgotten feelings, precious pangs of his youth, quenched long since by the stern service that had been his life and now returned so strangely metamorphosed—he recognized them with a puzzled, wondering smile. He mused, he dreamed, his lips slowly shaped a name; still smiling, his face turned seawards and his hands lying folded in his lap, he fell asleep once more as he sat.

But that day, which began so fierily and festally, was not like other days; it was transmuted and gilded with mythical significance. For whence could come the breath, so mild and meaningful, like a whisper from higher spheres, that played about temple and ear? Troops of small feathery white clouds ranged over the sky, like grazing herds of the gods. A stronger wind arose, and Poseidon's horses ran up, arching their manes, among them too the steers of him with the purpled locks, who lowered their horns and bellowed as they came on; while like prancing goats the waves on the farther strand leaped among the craggy rocks. It was a world possessed, peopled by Pan, that closed round the spell-bound man, and his doting heart conceived the most delicate fancies. When the sun was going down behind Venice, he would sometimes sit on a bench in the park and watch Tadzio, white-clad, with gay-coloured sash, at play there on the rolled gravel with his ball; and at such times it was not Tadzio whom he saw, but Hyacinthus, doomed to die because two gods were rivals for his love. Ah, yes, he tasted the envious pangs that Zephyr knew when his rival, bow and cithara, oracle and all forgot, played with the beauteous youth; he watched the discus, guided by torturing jealousy, strike the beloved head; paled as he received the broken body in his arms, and saw
the flower spring up, watered by that sweet blood and signed forevermore with his lament.

There can be no relation more strange, more critical, than that between two beings who know each other only with their eyes, who meet daily, yes, even hourly, eye each other with a fixed regard, and yet by some whim or freak of convention feel constrained to act like strangers. Uneasiness rules between them, unslaked curiosity, a hysterical desire to give rein to their suppressed impulse to recognize and address each other; even, actually, a sort of strained but mutual regard. For one human being instinctively feels respect and love for another human being so long as he does not know him well enough to judge him; and that he does not, the craving he feels is evidence.

Some sort of relation and acquaintanceship was perforce set up between Aschenbach and the youthful Tadzio; it was with a thrill of joy the older man perceived that the lad was not entirely unresponsive to all the tender notice lavished on him. For instance, what should move the lovely youth, nowadays when he descended to the beach, always to avoid the board walk behind the bathing-huts and saunter along the sand, passing Aschenbach's tent in front, sometimes so unnecessarily close as almost to graze his table or chair? Could the power of an emotion so beyond his own so draw, so fascinate its innocent object? Daily Aschenbach would wait for Tadzio. Then sometimes, on his approach, he would pretend to be preoccupied and let the charmer pass unregarded by. But sometimes he looked up, and their glances met; when that happened both were profoundly serious.

The elder's dignified and cultured mien let nothing appear of his inward state; but in Tadzio's eyes a question lay—he faltered in his step, gazed on the ground, then up again with that ineffably sweet look he had; and when he was past, something in his bearing seemed to say that only good breeding hindered him from turning round.

But once, one evening, it fell out differently. The Polish brother and sisters, with their governess, had missed the evening meal, and Aschenbach had noted the fact with concern. He was restive over their absence, and after dinner walked up and down in front of the hotel, in evening dress and a straw hat; when suddenly he saw the nunlike sisters with their companion appear in the light of the arc-lamps, and four paces behind them Tadzio. Evidently they came from the steamer-landing, having dined for some reason in Venice. It had been chilly on the lagoon, for Tadzio wore a dark-blue reefer-jecket with gilt buttons, and a cap to match. Sun and sea air could not burn his skin, it was the same creamy marble hue as at first—though he did look a little pale, either from the cold or in the bluish moonlight of the arc-lamps. The shapely brows were so delicately drawn, the eyes so deeply dark-lovelier he was than words could say, and as often the thought visited Aschenbach, and brought its own pang, that language could but extol, not reproduce, the beauties of the sense.

The sight of that dear form was unexpected, it had appeared unhoped-for, without giving him time to compose his features. Joy, surprise, and admiration might have painted themselves quite openly upon his face—and just at this second it happened that Tadzio smiled. Smiled at Aschenbach, unabashed and friendly, a speaking, winning, captivating smile, with slowly parting lips. With such a smile it might be that Narcissus bent over the mirroring pool a smile.
profound, infatuated, lingering, as he put out his arms to the reflection of his own beauty; the lips just slightly pursed, perhaps half-realizing his own folly in trying to kiss the cold lips of his shadow—with a mingling of coquetry and curiosity and a faint unease, enthralling and enthralled.

Aschenbach received that smile and turned away with it as though entrusted with a fatal gift. So shaken was he that he had to flee from the lighted terrace and front gardens and seek out with hurried steps the darkness of the park at the rear. Reproaches strangely mixed of tenderness and remonstrance burst from him: “How dare you smile like that! No one is allowed to smile like that!” He flung himself on a bench, his composure gone to the winds, and breathed in the nocturnal fragrance of the garden. He leaned back, with hanging arms, quivering from head to foot, and quite unmanned he whispered the hackneyed phrase of love and longing-impossible in these circumstances, absurd, abject, ridiculous enough, yet sacred too, and not unworthy of honour even here: “I love you!”

In the fourth week of his stay on the Lido, Gustave von Aschenbach made certain singular observations touching the world about him. He noticed, in the first place, that though the season was approaching its height, yet the number of guests declined and, in particular, that the German tongue had suffered a rout, being scarcely or never heard in the land. At table and on the beach he caught nothing but foreign words. One day at the barber’s—where he was now a frequent visitor—he heard something rather startling. The barber mentioned a German family who had just left the Lido after a brief stay, and rattled on in his obsequious way: “The signore is not leaving—he has no fear of the sickness, has he?” Aschenbach looked at him. “The sickness?” he repeated. Whereat the prattler fell silent, became very busy all at once, affected not to hear. When Aschenbach persisted he said he really knew nothing at all about it, and tried in a fresh burst of eloquence to drown the embarrassing subject.

That was one forenoon. After luncheon Aschenbach had himself ferried across to Venice, in a dead calm, under a burning sun; driven by his mania, he was following the Polish young folk, whom he had seen with their companion, taking the way to the landing-stage. He did not find his idol on the Piazza. But as he sat there at tea, at a little round table on the shady side, suddenly he noticed a peculiar odour, which, it seemed to him now, had been in the air for days without his being aware: a sweetish, medicinal smell, associated with wounds and disease and suspect cleanliness. He sniffed and pondered and at length recognized it; finished his tea and left the square at the end facing the cathedral. In the narrow space the stench grew stronger. At the street corners placards were stuck up, in which the city authorities warned the population against the danger of certain infections of the gastric system, prevalent during the heated season; advising them not to eat oysters or other shell-fish and not to use the canal waters. The ordinance showed every sign of minimizing an existing situation. Little groups of people stood about silently in the squares and on the bridges; the traveller moved among them, watched and listened and thought.

He spoke to a shopkeeper lounging at his door among dangling coral necklaces and trinkets of artificial amethyst, and asked him about the disagreeable odour. The man looked at him, heavy-eyed, and hastily pulled
himself together. “Just a formal precaution, signore,” he said, with a gesture. “A police regulation we have to put up with. The air is sultry—the sirocco is not wholesome, as the signore knows. Just a precautionary measure, you understand—probably unnecessary....” Aschenbach thanked him and passed on. And on the boat that bore him back to the Lido he smelt the germicide again. On reaching his hotel he sought the table in the lobby and buried himself in the newspapers. The foreign-language sheets had nothing. But in the German papers certain rumours were mentioned, statistics given, then officially denied, then the good faith of the denials called in question. The departure of the German and Austrian contingent was thus made plain. As for other nationals, they knew or suspected nothing—they were still undisturbed. Aschenbach tossed the newspapers back on the table. “It ought to be kept quiet,” he thought, aroused. “It should not be talked about.” And he felt in his heart a curious elation at these events impending in the world about him. Passion is like crime: it does not thrive on the established order and the common round, it welcomes every blow dealt the bourgeois structure, every weakening of the social fabric, because therein it feels a sure hope of its own advantage. These things that were going on in the unclean alleys of Venice, under cover of an official hushing-up policy—they gave Aschenbach a dark satisfaction. The city's evil secret mingled with the one in the depths of his heart—and he would have staked all he possessed to keep it, since in his infatuation he cared for nothing but to keep Tadzio here, and owned to himself not without horror, that he could not exist were the lad to pass from his sight.

He was no longer satisfied to owe his communion with his charmer to chance and the routine of hotel life; he had begun to follow and waylay him. On Sundays, for example, the Polish family never appeared on the beach. Aschenbach guessed they went to mass at San Marco and pursued them thither. He passed from the glare of the Piazza into the golden twilight of the holy place and found him he sought bowed in worship over a prie-dieu. He kept in the background, standing on the fissured mosaic pavement among the devout populace, that knelt and muttered and made the sign of the cross; and the crowded splendour of the oriental temple weighed voluptuously on his sense. A heavily ornate priest intoned and gesticulated before the altar, where little candle-flames flickered helplessly in the reek of incense-breathing smoke; and with that cloying sacrificial smell another seemed to mingle—the odour of the sickened city. But through all the glamour and glitter Aschenbach saw the exquisite creature there in front turn his head, seek out and meet his lover's eye.

The crowd streamed out through the portals into the brilliant square thick with fluttering doves, and the fond fool stood aside in the vestibule on the watch. He saw the Polish family leave the church. The children took ceremonial leave of their mother, and she turned towards the Piazzetta on her way home, while his charmer and the cloistered sisters, with their governess, passed beneath the clock tower into the Merceria. When they were a few paces on, he followed—he stole behind them on their walk through the city. When they paused, he did so too; when they turned round, he fled into inns and courtyards to let them pass. Once he lost them from view, hunted feverishly over bridges and in filthy culs-de-sac, only to confront them suddenly in a narrow passage whence there was no escape, and experience a moment of panic fear. Yet it would be untrue
to say he suffered. Mind and heart were drunk with passion, his footsteps
guided by the dmonic power whose pastime it is to trample on human reason
and dignity.

Tadzio and his sisters at length took a gondola. Aschenbach hid behind a
portico or fountain while they embarked, and directly they pushed off did the
same. In a furtive whisper he told the boatman he would tip him well to follow
at a little distance the other gondola, just rounding a corner, and fairly
sickened at the man's quick, sly grasp and ready acceptance of the gobetween's
role.

Leaning back among soft, black cushions he swayed gently in the wake of the
other black-snouted bark, to which the strength of his passion chained him.
Sometimes it passed from his view, and then he was assailed by an anguish of
unrest. But his guide appeared to have long practice in affairs like these;
always, by dint of short cuts or deft mancuvres, he contrived to overtake the
coveted sight. The air was heavy and foul, the sun burnt down through a slate-
coloured haze. Water slapped gurgling against wood and stone. The
gondolier's cry, half warning, half salute, was answered with singular accord
from far within the silence of the labyrinth. They passed little gardens, high up
the crumbling wall, hung with clustering white and purple flowers that sent
down an odour of almonds. Moorish lattices showed shadowy in the gloom.
The marble steps of a church descended into the canal, and on them a beggar
squatted, displaying his misery to view, showing the whites of his eyes,
holding out his hat for alms. Farther on a dealer in antiquities cringed before
his lair, inviting the passer-by to enter and be duped. Yes, this was Venice, this
the fair frailty that fawned and that betrayed, half fairy-tale, half snare; the city
in whose stagnating air the art of painting once put forth so lusty a growth, and
where musicians were moved to accords so weirdly lulling and lascivious. Our
adventurer felt his senses wooed by this voluptuousness of sight and sound,
tasted his secret knowledge that the city sickened and hid its sickness for love
of gain, and bent an ever more unbridled leer on the gondola that glided on
before him.

It came at last to this—that his frenzy left him capacity for nothing else but to
pursue his flame; to dream of him absent, to lavish, loverlike, endearing terms
on his mere shadow. He was alone, he was a foreigner, he was sunk deep in
this belated bliss of his-all which enabled him to pass unblushing through
experiences well-nigh unbelievable. One night, returning late from Venice, he
paused by his beloved's chamber door in the second storey, leaned his head
against the panel, and remained there long, in utter drunkenness, powerless to
tear himself away, blind to the danger of being caught in so mad an attitude.

And yet there were not wholly lacking moments when he paused and
reflected, when in consternation he asked himself what path was this on which
he had set his foot. Like most other men of parts and attainments, he had an
aristocratic interest in his forbears, and when he achieved a success he liked to
think he had gratified them, compelled their admiration and regard. He
thought of them now, involved as he was in this illicit adventure, seized of
these exotic excesses of feeling: thought of their stern self-command and
decent manliness, and gave a melancholy smile. What would they have said?
What, indeed, would they have said to his entire life, that varied to the point of
degeneracy from theirs? This life in the bonds of art, had not he himself, in the
days of youth and in the very spirit of those bourgeois forefathers, pronounced
mocking judgment upon it? And yet, at bottom, it had been so like their own!
It had been a service, and he a soldier, like some of them; and art was wara
grilling, exhausting struggle that nowadays wore one out before one could
grow old. It had been a life of self-conquest, a life against odds, dour,
steadfast, abstinent; he had made it symbolical of the kind of over-streained
heroism the time admired, and he was entitled to call it manly, even
courageous. He wondered if such a life might not be somehow specially
pleasing in the eyes of the god who had him in his power. For Eros had
received most countenance among the most valiant nations- yes, were we not
told that in their cities prowess made him flourish exceedingly? And many
heroes of olden time had willingly borne his yoke, not counting any
humiliation such if it happened by the god's decree; vows, prostrations, self-
abasements, these were no source of shame to the lover; rather they reaped
him praise and honour.

Thus did the fond man's folly condition his thoughts; thus did he seek to hold
his dignity upright in his own eyes. And all the while he kept doggedly on the
traces of the disreputable secret the city kept hidden at its heart, just as he kept
his own-and all that he learned fed his passion with vague, lawless hopes. He
turned over newspapers at cafés, bent on finding a report on the progress of
the disease; and in the German sheets, which had ceased to appear on the hotel
table, he found a series of contradictory statements. The deaths, it was
variously asserted, ran to twenty, to forty, to a hundred or more; yet in the next
day's issue the existence of the pestilence was, if not roundly denied, reported
as a matter of a few sporadic cases such as might be brought into a seaport
town. After that the warnings would break out again, and the protests against
the unscrupulous game the authorities were playing. No definite information
was to be had.

And yet our solitary felt he had a sort of first claim on a share in the
unwholesome secret; he took a fantastic satisfaction in putting leading
questions to such persons as were interested to conceal it, and forcing them to
explicit untruths by way of denial. One day he attacked the manager, that
small, soft-stepping man in the French frock-coat, who was moving about
among the guests at luncheon, supervising the service and making himself
socially agreeable. He paused at Aschenbach's table to exchange a greeting,
and the guest put a question, with a negligent, casual air:

"Why in the world
are they forever disinfecting the city of Venice?"

"A police regulation," the adroit one replied; "a precautionary measure,
intended to protect the health of the public during this unseasonably warm and
sultry weather."

"Very praiseworthy of the police," Aschenbach gravely responded. Af-
ter a
further exchange of meteorological commonplaces the manager passed on.

It happened that a band of street musicians came to perform in the hotel
gardens that evening after dinner. They grouped themselves beneath an iron
stanchion supporting an arc-light, two women and two men, and turned their
faces, that shone white in the glare, up towards the guests who sat on the hotel
terrace enjoying this popular entertainment along with their coffee and iced
drinks. The hotel lift-boys, waiters, and office staff stood in the doorway and listened; the Russian family displayed the usual Russian absorption in their enjoyment—they had their chairs put down into the garden to be nearer the singers and sat there in a half-circle with gratitude painted on their features, the old serf in her turban erect behind their chairs.

These strolling players were adepts at mandolin, guitar, harmonica, even compassing a reedy violin. Vocal numbers alternated with instrumental, the younger woman, who had a high shrill voice, joining in a love-duet with the sweetly falsettoing tenor. The actual head of the company, however, and incontestably its most gifted member, was the other man, who played the guitar. He was a sort of baritone buffo; with no voice to speak of, but possessed of a pantomimic gift and remarkable burlesque tan. Often he stepped out of the group and advanced towards the terrace, guitar in hand, and his audience rewarded his sallies with bursts of laughter. The Russians in their parterre seats were beside themselves with delight over this display of southern vivacity; their shouts and screams of applause encouraged him to bolder and bolder flights.

Aschenbach sat near the balustrade, a glass of pomegranate juice and soda-water sparkling ruby-red before him, with which he now and then moistened his lips. His nerves drank in thirstily the unlovely sounds, the vulgar and sentimental tunes, for passion paralyses good taste and makes its victim accept with rapture what a man in his senses would either laugh at or turn from with disgust. Idly he sat and watched the antics of the buffoon with his face set in a fixed and painful smile, while inwardly his whole being was rigid with the intensity of the regard he bent on Tadzio, leaning over the railing six paces off.

He lounged there, in the white belted suit he sometimes wore at dinner, in all his innate, inevitable grace, with his left arm on the balustrade, his legs crossed, the right hand on the supporting hip; and looked down on the strolling singers with an expression that was hardly a smile, but rather a distant curiosity and polite toleration. Now and then he straightened himself and with a charming movement of both arms drew down his white blouse through his leather belt, throwing out his chest. And sometimes—Aschenbach saw it with triumph, with horror, and a sense that his reason was tottering—the lad would cast a glance, that might be slow and cautious, or might be sudden and swift, as though to take him by surprise, to the place where his lover sat. Aschenbach did not meet the glance. An ignoble caution made him keep his eyes in leash. For in the rear of the terrace sat Tadzio's mother and governess; and matters had gone so far that he feared to make himself conspicuous. Several times, on the beach, in the hotel lobby, on the Piazza, he had seen, with a stealing numbness, that they called Tadzio away from his neighborhood. And his pride revolted at the affront, even while conscience told him it was deserved.

The performer below presently began a solo, with guitar accompaniment, a street song in several stanzas, just then the rage all over Italy. He delivered it in a striking and dramatic recitative, and his company joined in the refrain. He was a man of slight build, with a thin, undernourished face; his shabby felt hat rested on the back of his neck, a great mop of red hair sticking out in front; and he stood there on the gravel in advance of his troupe, in an impudent, swaggering posture, twanging the strings of his instrument and flinging a witty
and rollicking recitative up to the terrace, while the veins of his forehead swelled with the violence of his effort. He was scarcely a Venetian type, belonging rather to the race of Neapolitan jesters, half bully, half comedian, brutal, blustering, an unpleasant customer, and entertaining to the last degree. The words of his song were trivial and silly, but on his lips, accompanied with gestures of head, hands, arms, and body, with leers and winks and the loose play of the tongue in the corner of his mouth, they took on meaning, an equivocal meaning, yet vaguely offensive. He wore a white sports shirt with a suit of ordinary clothes, and a strikingly large and naked-looking Adam's apple rose out of the open collar. From that pale, snub-nosed face it was hard to judge of his age; vice sat on it, it was furrowed with grimacing, and two deep wrinkles of defiance and self-will, almost of desperation, stood oddly between the red brows, above the grinning, mobile mouth. But what more than all drew upon him the profound scrutiny of our solitary watcher was that this suspicious figure seemed to carry with it its own suspicious odour. For whenever the refrain occurred and the singer, with waving arms and antic gestures, passed in his grotesque march immediately beneath Aschenbach's seat, a strong smell of carbolic was wafted up to the terrace. After the song he began to take up money, beginning with the Russian family, who gave liberally, and then mounting the steps to the terrace. But here he became as cringing as he had before been forward. He glided between the tables, bowing and scraping, showing his strong white teeth in a servile smile, though the two deep furrows on the brow were still very marked. His audience looked at the strange creature as he went about collecting his livelihood, and their curiosity was not unmixed with disfavor. They tossed coins with their finger-tips into his hat and took care not to touch it. Let the enjoyment be never so great, a sort of embarrassment always comes when the comedian oversteps the physical distance between himself and respectable people. This man felt it and sought to make his peace by fawning. He came along the railing to Aschenbach, and with him came that smell no one else seemed to notice. “Listen!” said the solitary, in a low voice, almost mechanically; “they are disinfecting Venice—why?” The mountebank answered hoarsely: “Because of the police. Orders, signore. On account of the heat and the sirocco. The sirocco is oppressive. Not good for the health.” He spoke as though surprised that anyone could ask, and with the flat of his hand he demonstrated how oppressive the sirocco was. “So there is no plague in Venice?” Aschenbach asked the question between his teeth, very low. The man's expressive face fell, he put on a look of comical innocence. “A plague? What sort of plague? Is the sirocco a plague? Or perhaps our police are a plague! You are making fun of us, signore! A plague! Why should there be? The police make regulations on account of the heat and the weather....” He gestured. “Quite,” said Aschenbach, once more, soft and low; and dropping an unduly large coin into the man's hat dismissed him with a sign. He bowed very low and left. But he had not reached the steps when two of the hotel servants flung themselves on him and began to whisper, their faces close to his. He shrugged, seemed to be giving assurances, to be swearing he had said nothing. It was not hard to guess the import of his words. They let him go at last and he went back into the garden, where he conferred briefly with his troupe and then stepped forward for a farewell song.
It was one Aschenbach had never to his knowledge heard before, a rowdy air, with words in impossible dialect. It had a laughing-refrain in which the other three artists joined at the top of their lungs. The refrain had neither words nor accompaniment, it was nothing but rhythmical, modulated, natural laughter, which the soloist in particular knew how to render with most deceptive realism. Now that he was farther off his audience, his self-assurance had come back, and this laughter of his rang with a mocking note. He would be overtaken, before he reached the end of the last line of each stanza; he would catch his breath, lay his hand over his mouth, his voice would quaver and his shoulders shake, he would lose power to contain himself longer. Just at the right moment each time, it came whooping, bawling, crashing out of him, with a verisimilitude that never failed to set his audience off in profuse and unpremeditated mirth that seemed to add gusto to his own. He bent his knees, he clapped his thigh, he held his sides, he looked ripe for bursting. He no longer laughed, but yelled, pointing his finger at the company there above as though there could be in all the world nothing so comic as they; until at last they laughed in hotel, terrace, and garden, down to the waiters, lift-boys, and servants laughed as though possessed.

Aschenbach could no longer rest in his chair, he sat poised for flight. But the combined effect of the laughing, the hospital odour in his nostrils, and the nearness of the beloved was to hold him in a spell; he felt unable to stir. Under cover of the general commotion he looked across at Tadzio and saw that the lovely boy returned his gaze with a seriousness that seemed the copy of his own; the general hilarity, it seemed to say, had no power over him, he kept aloof. The grey-haired man was overpowered, disarmed by this docile, childlike deference; with difficulty he refrained from hiding his face in his hands. Tadzio's habit, too, of drawing himself up and taking a deep sighing breath struck him as being due to an oppression of the chest. “He is sickly, he will never live to grow up,” he thought once again, with that dispassionate vision to which his madness of desire sometimes so strangely gave way. And compassion struggled with the reckless exultation of his heart.

The players, meanwhile, had finished and gone; their leader bowing and scraping, kissing his hands and adorning his leavetaking with antics that grew madder with the applause they evoked. After all the others were outside, he pretended to run backwards full tilt against a lamp-post and slunk to the gate apparently doubled over with pain. But there he threw off his buffoon's mask, stood erect, with an elastic straightening of his whole figure, ran out his tongue impudently at the guests on the terrace, and vanished in the night. The company dispersed. Tadzio had long since left the balustrade. But he, the lonely man, sat for long, to the waiters' great annoyance, before the dregs of pomegranate-juice in his glass. Time passed, the night went on. Long ago, in his parental home, he had watched the sand filter through an hourglass—he could still see, as though it stood before him, the fragile, pregnant little toy. Soundless and fine the rust-red streamlet ran through the narrow neck, and made, as it declined in the upper cavity, an exquisite little vortex.

The very next afternoon the solitary took another step in pursuit of his fixed policy of baiting the outer world. This time he had all possible success. He went, that is, into the English travel bureau in the Piazza, changed some money at the desk, and posing as the suspicious foreigner, put his fateful
question. The clerk was a tweed-clad young Britisher, with his eyes set close
together, his hair parted in the middle, and radiating that steady reliability
which makes his like so strange a phenomenon in the gamin, agile-witted
south. He began: “No ground for alarm, sir. A mere formality. Quite regular in
view of the unhealthy climatic conditions.” But then, looking up, he chanced
to meet with his own blue eyes the stranger's weary, melancholy gaze, fixed
on his face. The Englishman coloured. He continued in a lower voice, rather
confused: “At least, that is the official explanation, which they see fit to stick
to. I may tell you there's a bit more to it than that.” And then, in his good,
straightforward way, he told the truth.

For the past several years Asiatic cholera had shown a strong tendency to
spread. Its source was the hot, moist swamps of the delta of the Ganges, where
it bred in the mephitic air of that primeval island-jungle, among whose
bamboo thickets the tiger crouches, where life of every sort flourishes in
rankest abundance, and only man avoids the spot. Thence the pestilence had
spread throughout Hindustan, raging with great violence; moved eastward to
China, westward to Afghanistan and Persia; following the great caravan
routes, it brought terror to Astrakhan, terror to Moscow. Even while Europe
trembled lest the spectre be seen striding westward across country, it was
 carried by sea from Syrian ports and appeared simultaneously at several points
on the Mediterranean littoral; raised its head in Toulon and Malaga, Palermo
and Naples, and soon got a firm hold in Calabria and Apulia. Northern Italy
had been spared so far. But in May the horrible vibrations were found on the
same day in two bodies: the emaciated, blackened corpses of a bargee and a
woman who kept a green-grocer's shop. Both cases were hushed up. But in a
week there were ten more-twenty, thirty in different quarters of the town. An
Austrian provincial, having come to Venice on a few days' pleasure trip, went
home and died with all the symptoms of the plague. Thus was explained the
fact that the German-language papers were the first to print the news of the
Venetian outbreak. The Venetian authorities published in reply a statement to
the effect that the state of the city's health had never been better; at the same
time instituting the most necessary precautions. But by that time the food
supplies-milk, meat, or vegetables-had probably been contaminated, for death
unseen and unacknowledged was devouring and laying waste in the narrow
streets, while a brooding, unseasonable heat warmed the waters of the canals
and encouraged the spread of the pestilence. Yes, the disease seemed to
flourish and wax strong, to redouble its generative powers. Recoveries were
rare. Eighty out of every hundred died, and horribly, for the onslaught was of
the extremest violence, and not infrequently of the “dry” type, the most
malignant form of the contagion. In this form the victim's body loses power to
expel the water secreted by the bloodvessels, it shrivels up, he passes with
hoarse cries from convulsion to convulsion, his blood grows thick like pitch,
and he suffocates in a few hours. He is fortunate indeed, if, as sometimes
happens, the disease, after a slight malaise, takes the form of a profound
unconsciousness, from which the sufferer seldom or never rouses. By the
beginning of June the quarantine buildings of the ospedale civico had quietly
filled up, the two orphan asylums were entirely occupied, and there was a
hideously brisk traffic between the Nuovo Fundamento and the island of San
Michele, where the cemetery was. But the city was not swayed by high-
minded motives or regard for international agreements. The authorities were
more actuated by fear of being out of pocket, by regard for the new exhibition
of paintings just opened in the Public Gardens, or by apprehension of the large
losses the hotels and the shops that catered to foreigners would suffer in case
of panic and blockade. And the fears of the people supported the persistent
official policy of silence and denial. The city's first medical officer, an honest
and competent man, had indignantly resigned his office and been privily
replaced by a more compliant person. The fact was known; and this corruption
in high places played its part, together with the suspense as to where the
walking terror might strike next, to demoralize the baser elements in the city
and encourage those antisocial forces which shun the light of day. There was
intemperance, indecency, increase of crime. Evenings one saw many drunken
people which was unusual. Gangs of men in surly mood made the streets
unsafe, theft and assault were said to be frequent, even murder; for in two
cases persons supposedly victims of the plague were proved to have been
poisoned by their own families. And professional vice was rampant,
displaying excesses heretofore unknown and only at home much farther south
and in the east.

Such was the substance of the Englishman's tale. “You would do well,” he
concluded, “to leave today instead of tomorrow. The blockade cannot be more
than a few days off.”

“Thank you,” said Aschenbach, and left the office.

The Piazza lay in sweltering sunshine. Innocent foreigners sat before the cafés
or stood in front of the cathedral, the centre of clouds of doves that, with
fluttering wings, tried to shoulder each other away and pick the kernels of
maize from the extended hand. Aschenbach strode up and down the spacious
flags, feverishly excited, triumphant in possession of the truth at last, but with
a sickening taste in his mouth and a fantastic horror at his heart. One decent,
expiatory course lay open to him; he considered it. Tonight, after dinner, he
might approach the lady of the pearls and address her in words which he
precisely formulated in his mind: “Madame, will you permit an entire stranger
to serve you with a word of advice and warning which self-interest prevents
others from uttering? Go away. Leave here at once, without delay, with Tadzio
and your daughters. Venice is in the grip of pestilence.” Then might he lay his
hand in farewell upon the head of that instrument of a mocking deity; and
thereafter himself flee the accursed morass. But he knew that he was far
indeed from any serious desire to take such a step. It would restore him, would
give him back himself once more; but he who is beside himself revolts at the
idea of self-possession. There crossed his mind the vision of a white building
with inscriptions on it, glittering in the sinking sun—he recalled how his mind
had dreamed away into their transparent mysticism; recalled the strange
pilgrim apparition that had wakened in the aging man a lust for strange
countries and fresh sights. And these memories, again, brought in their train
the thought of returning home, returning to reason, self-mastery, an ordered
existence, to the old life of effort. Alas! the bare thought made him wince with
a revulsion that was like physical nausea. “It must be kept quiet,” he
whispered fiercely. “I will not speak!” The knowledge that he shared the city's
secret, the city's guilt—it put him beside himself, intoxicated him as a small
quantity of wine will a man suffering from brain-fag. His thoughts dwelt upon
the image of the desolate and calamitous city, and he was giddy with fugitive,
mad, unreasoning hopes and visions of a monstrous sweetness. That tender sentiment he had a moment ago evoked, what was it compared with such images as these? His art, his moral sense, what were they in the balance beside the boons that chaos might confer? He kept silence, he stopped on.

That night he had a fearful dream—if dream be the right word for a mental and physical experience which did indeed befall him in deep sleep, as a thing quite apart and real to his senses, yet without his seeing himself as present in it. Rather its theatre seemed to be his own soul, and the events burst in from outside, violently overcoming the profound resistance of his spirit; passed him through and left him, left the whole cultural structure of a lifetime trampled on, ravaged, and destroyed.

The beginning was fear; fear and desire, with a shuddering curiosity. Night reigned, and his senses were on the alert; he heard loud, confused noises from far away, clamour and hubbub. There was a rattling, a crashing, a low dull thunder; shrill halloos and a kind of howl with a long-drawn u-sound at the end. And with all these, dominating them all, flute-notes of the cruellest sweetness, deep and cooing, keeping shamelessly on until the listener felt his very entrails betwitched. He heard a voice, naming, though darkly, that which was to come: “The stranger god!” A glow lighted up the surrounding mist and by it he recognized a mountain scene like that about his country home. From the wooded heights, from among the tree-trunks and crumbling moss-covered rocks, a troop came tumbling and raging down, a whirling rout of men and animals, and overflowed the hillside with flames and human forms, with clamour and the reeling dance. The females stumbled over the long, hairy pelts that dangled from their girdles; with heads flung back they uttered loud hoarse cries and shook their tambourines high in air; brandished naked daggers or torches vomiting trails of sparks. They shrieked, holding their breasts in both hands; coiling snakes with quivering tongues they clutched about their waists. Horned and hairy males, girt about the loins with hides, drooped heads and lifted arms and thighs in unison, as they beat on brazen vessels that gave out droning thunder, or thumped madly on drums. There were troops of beardless youths armed with garlanded staves; these ran after goats and thrust their staves against the creatures' flanks, then clung to the plunging horns and let themselves be borne off with triumphant shouts. And one and all the mad rout yelled that cry, composed of soft consonants with a long-drawn u-sound at the end, so sweet and wild it was together, and like nothing ever heard before! It would ring through the air like the bellow of a challenging stag, and be given back many-tongued; or they would use it to goad each other on to dance with wild excess of tossing limbs—they never let it die. But the deep, beguiling notes of the flute wove in and out and over all. Beguiling too it was to him who struggled in the grip of these sights and sounds, shamelessly awaiting the coming feast and the uttermost surrender. He trembled, he shrank, his will was steadfast to preserve and uphold his own god against this stranger who was sworn enemy to dignity and self-control. But the mountain wall took up the noise and howling and gave it back manifold; it rose high, swelled to a madness that carried him away. His senses reeled in the steam of panting bodies, the acrid stench from the goats, the odour as of stagnant watersand another, too familiar smell-of wounds, uncleanness, and disease. His heart throbbed to the drums, his brain reeled, a blind rage seized him, a whirling
lust, he craved with all his soul to join the ring that formed about the obscene symbol of the godhead, which they were unveiling and elevating, monstrous and wooden, while from full throats they yelled their rallying cry. Foam dripped from their lips, they drove each other on with lewd gesturings and beckoning hands. They laughed, they howled, they thrust their pointed staves into each other's flesh and licked the blood as it ran down. But now the dreamer was in them and of them, the stranger god was his own. Yes, it was he who was flinging himself upon the animals, who bit and tore and swallowed smoking goblets of flesh--while on the trampled moss there now began the rites in honour of the god, an orgy of promiscuous embraces--and in his very soul he tasted the bestial degradation of his fall.

The unhappy man woke from this dream shattered, unhinged, powerless in the demon's grip. He no longer avoided men's eyes nor cared whether he exposed himself to suspicion. And anyhow, people were leaving; many of the bathing-cabins stood empty, there were many vacant places in the dining-room, scarcely any foreigners were seen in the streets. The truth seemed to have leaked out; despite all efforts to the contrary, panic was in the air. But the lady of the pearls stopped on with her family; whether because the rumours had not reached her or because she was too proud and fearless to heed them. Tadzio remained; and it seemed at times to Aschenbach, in his obsessed state, that death and fear together might clear the island of all other souls and leave him there alone with him he coveted. In the long mornings on the beach his heavy gaze would rest, a fixed and reckless stare, upon the lad; towards nightfall, lost to shame, he would follow him through the city's narrow streets where horrid death stalked too, and at such time it seemed to him as though the moral law were fallen in ruins and only the monstrous and perverse held out a hope.

Like any lover, he desired to please; suffered agonies at the thought of failure, and brightened his dress with smart ties and handkerchiefs and other youthful touches. He added jewellery and perfumes and spent hours each day over his toilette, appearing at dinner elaborately arrayed and tensely excited. The presence of the youthful beauty that had bewitched him filled him with disgust of his own aging body; the sight of his own sharp features and grey hair plunged him in hopeless mortification; he made desperate efforts to recover the appearance and freshness of his youth and began paying frequent visits to the hotel barber. Enveloped in the white sheet, beneath the hands of that garrulous personage, he would lean back in the chair and look at himself in the glass with misgiving.

“Grey,” he said, with a grimace.

“Slightly,” answered the man. “Entirely due to neglect, to a lack of regard for appearances. Very natural, of course, in men of affairs, but, after all, not very sensible, for it is just such people who ought to be above vulgar prejudice in matters like these. Some folk have very strict ideas about the use of cosmetics; but they never extend them to the teeth, as they logically should. And very disgusted other people would be if they did. No, we are all as old as we feel, but no older, and grey hair can misrepresent a man worse than dyed. You, for instance, signore, have a right to your natural colour. Surely you will permit me to restore what belongs to you?”

“How?” asked Aschenbach.
For answer the oily one washed his client's hair in two waters, one clear and one dark, and lo, it was as black as in the days of his youth. He waved it with the tongs in wide, flat undulations, and stepped back to admire the effect.

“Now if we were just to freshen up the skin a little,” he said.

And with that he went on from one thing to another, his enthusiasm waxing with each new idea. Aschenbach sat there comfortably; he was incapable of objecting to the process—rather as it went forward it roused his hopes. He watched it in the mirror and saw his eyebrows grow more even and arching, the eyes gain in size and brilliance, by dint of a little application below the lids. A delicate carmine glowed on his cheeks where the skin had been so brown and leathery. The dry, anemic lips grew full, they turned the colour of ripe strawberries, the lines round eyes and mouth were treated with a facial cream and gave place to youthful bloom. It was a young man who looked back at him from the glass—Aschenbach's heart leaped at the sight. The artist in cosmetic at last professed himself satisfied; after the manner of such people, he thanked his client profusely for what he had done himself. “The merest trifle, the merest, signore,” he said as he added the final touches. “Now the signore can fall in love as soon as he likes.” Aschenbach went off as in a dream, dazed between joy and fear, in his red neck-tie and broad straw hat with its gay striped band.

A lukewarm storm-wind had come up. It rained a little now and then, the air was heavy and turbid and smelt of decay. Aschenbach, with fevered cheeks beneath the rouge, seemed to hear rushing and flapping sounds in his ears, as though storm-spirits were abroad—unhallowed ocean harpies who follow those devoted to destruction, snatch away and defile their viands. For the heat took away his appetite and thus he was haunted with the idea that his food was infected.

One afternoon he pursued his charmer deep into the stricken city's huddled heart. The labyrinthine little streets, squares, canals, and bridges, each one so like the next, at length quite made him lose his bearings. He did not even know the points of the compass; all his care was not to lose sight of the figure after which his eyes thirsted. He slunk under walls, he lurked behind buildings or people's backs; and the sustained tension of his senses and emotions exhausted him more and more, though for a long time he was unconscious of fatigue. Tadzio walked behind the others, he let them pass ahead in the narrow alleys, and as he sauntered slowly after, he would turn his head and assure himself with a glance of his strange, twilit grey eyes that his lover was still following. He saw him—and he did not betray him. The knowledge enraptured Aschenbach. Lured by those eyes, led on the leading-string of his own passion and folly, utterly lovesick, he stole upon the footsteps of his unseemly hope—and at the end found himself cheated. The Polish family crossed a small vaulted bridge, the height of whose archway hid them from his sight, and when he climbed it himself they were nowhere to be seen. He hunted in three directions—straight ahead and on both sides the narrow, dirty quay-in vain. Worn quite out and unnerved, he had to give over the search.

His head burned, his body was wet with clammy sweat, he was plagued by intolerable thirst. He looked about for refreshment, of whatever sort, and found a little fruit-shop where he bought some strawberries. They were
overripe and soft; he ate them as he went. The street he was on opened out into a little square, one of those charmed, forsaken spots he liked; he recognized it as the very one where he had sat weeks ago and conceived his abortive plan of flight. He sank down on the steps of the well and leaned his head against its stone rim. It was quiet here. Grass grew between the stones, and rubbish lay about. Tall, weather-beaten houses bordered the square, one of them rather palatial, with vaulted windows, gaping now, and little lion balconies. In the ground floor of another was an apothecary's shop. A waft of carbolic acid was borne on a warm gust of wind.

There he sat, the master; this was he who had found a way to reconcile art and honours; who had written The Abject, in a style of classic purity renounced bohemianism and all its works, all sympathy with the abyss and the troubled depths of the outcast human soul. This was he who had put knowledge underfoot to climb so high; who had outgrown the ironic pose and adjusted himself to the burdens and obligations of fame; whose renown had been officially recognized and his name ennobled, whose style was set for a model in the schools. There he sat. His eyelids were closed, there was only a swift, sidelong glint of the eyeballs now and again, something between a question and a leer; while the rouged and flabby mouth uttered single words of the sentences shaped in his disordered brain by the fantastic logic that governs our dreams.

“For mark you, Phdrus, beauty alone is both divine and visible; and so it is the sense way, the artist's way, little Phdrus, to the spirit. But, now tell me, my dear boy, do you believe that such a man can ever attain wisdom and true manly worth, for whom the path to the spirit must lead through the senses? Or do you rather think-for I leave the point to you-that it is a path of perilous sweetness, a way of transgression, and must surely lead him who walks in it astray? For you know that we poets cannot walk the way of beauty without Eros as our companion and guide. We may be heroic after our fashion, disciplined warriors of our craft, yet are we all the women, for we exult in passion, and love is still our desire-our craving and our shame. And from this you will perceive that we poets can be neither wise nor worthy citizens. We must needs be wanton, must needs rove at large in the realm of feeling. Our magisterial style is all folly and pretence, our honourable repute a farce, the crowd's belief in us is merely laughable. And to teach youth, or the populace, by means of art is a dangerous practice and ought to be forbidden. For what good can an artist be as a teacher, when from his birth up he is headed direct for the pit? We may want to shun it and attain to honour in the world; but however we turn, it draws us still. So, then, since knowledge might destroy us, we will have none of it. For knowledge, Phdrus, does not make him who possesses it dignified or austere. Knowledge is all-knowing, understanding, forgiving; it takes up no position, sets no store by form. It has compassion with the abyss—it is the abyss. So we reject it, firmly, and henceforward our concern shall be with beauty only. And by beauty we mean simplicity, largeness, and renewed severity of discipline; we mean a return to detachment and to form. But detachment, Phdrus, and preoccupation with form lead to intoxication and desire, they may lead the noblest among us to frightful emotional excesses, which his own stern cult of the beautiful would make him the first to condemn. So they too, they too, lead to the bottomless pit. Yes,
they lead us thither, I say, us who are poets—who by our natures are prone not
to excellence but to excess. And now, Phdrus, I will go. Remain here; and only
when you can no longer see me, then do you depart also.”

A few days later Gustave Aschenbach left his hotel rather later than usual in
the morning. He was not feeling well and had to struggle against spells of
giddiness only half physical in their nature, accompanied by a swiftly
mounting dread, a sense of futility and hopelessness—but whether this referred
to himself or to the outer world he could not tell. In the lobby he saw a
quantity of luggage lying strapped and ready; asked the porter whose it was,
and received in answer the name he already knew he should hear—that of the
Polish family. The expression of his ravaged features did not change; he only
gave that quick lift of the head with which we sometimes receive the
uninteresting answer to a casual query. But he put another: “When?”

“After luncheon,” the man replied. He nodded, and went down to the beach.

It was an unfriendly scene. Little crisping shivers ran all across the wide
stretch of shallow water between the shore and the first sand-bank. The whole
beach, once so full of colour and life, looked now autumnal, out of season; it
was nearly deserted and not even very clean. A camera on a tripod stood at the
edge of the water, apparently abandoned; its black cloth snapped in the
freshening wind.

Tadzio was there, in front of his cabin, with the three or four playfellows still
left him. Aschenbach set up his chair some halfway between the cabins and
the water, spread a rug over his knees, and sat looking on. The game this time
was unsupervised, the elders being probably busy with their packing, and it
looked rather lawless and out-of-hand. Jaschiu, the sturdy lad in the belted
suit, with the black, brilliantined hair, became angry at a handful of sand
thrown in his eyes; he challenged Tadzio to a fight, which quickly ended in the
downfall of the weaker. And perhaps the coarser nature saw here a chance to
avenge himself at last, by one cruel act, for his long weeks of subserviency:
the victor would not let the vanquished get up, but remained kneeling on
Tadzio’s back, pressing Tadzio’s face into the sand—for so long a time that it
seemed the exhausted lad might even suffocate. He made spasmodic efforts to
shake the other off, lay still, and then began a feeble twitching. Just as
Aschenbach was about to spring indignantly to the rescue, Jaschiu let his
victim go. Tadzio, very pale, half sat up, and remained so, leaning on one arm,
for several minutes, with darkening eyes and rumpled hair. Then he rose and
walked slowly away. The others called him, at first gaily, then imploringly; he
would not hear. Jaschiu was evidently overtaken by swift remorse; he
followed his friend and tried to make his peace, but Tadzio motioned him back
with a jerk of one shoulder and went down to the water’s edge. He was
barefoot and wore his striped linen suit with the red breastknot. There he
stayed a little, with bent head, tracing figures in the wet sand with one toe;
then stepped into the shallow water, which at its deepest did not wet his knees;
waded idly through it and reached the sand-bar. Now he paused again, with his
face turned seaward; and next began to move slowly leftwards along the
narrow strip of sand the sea left bare. He paced there, divided by an expanse of
water from the shore, from his mates by his moody pride; a remote and
isolated figure, with floating locks, out there in sea and wind, against the misty
inane. Once more he paused to look: with a sudden recollection, or by an
impulse, he turned from the waist up, in an exquisite movement, one hand
resting on his hip, and looked over his shoulder at the shore. The watcher sat
just as he had sat that time in the lobby of the hotel when first the twilit grey
eyes had met his own. He rested his head against the chair-back and followed
the movements of the figure out there, then lifted it, as it were in answer to
Tadzio's gaze. It sank on his breast, the eyes looked out beneath their lids,
while his whole face took on the relaxed and brooding expression of deep
slumber. It seemed to him the pale and lovely Summoner out there smiled at
him and beckoned; as though, with the hand he lifted from his hip, he pointed
outward as he hovered on before into an immensity of richest expectation.
And, as so often before, he rose to follow.

Some minutes passed before anyone hastened to the aid of the elderly man
sitting there collapsed in his chair. They bore him to his room. And before
nightfall a shocked and respectful world received the news of his decease.

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