

# FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

PHILOSOPHICAL LETTERS  
OF FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

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*Philosophical Letters of Friedrich Schiller:*

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# **Friedrich Schiller**

## **Philosophical Letters**

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#### **PREFATORY REMARKS**

The reason passes, like the heart, through certain epochs and transitions, but its development is not so often portrayed. Men seem to have been satisfied with unfolding the passions in their extremes, their aberration, and their results, without considering how closely they are bound up with the intellectual constitution of the individual. Degeneracy in morals roots in a one-sided and wavering philosophy, doubly dangerous, because it blinds the beclouded intellect with an appearance of correctness, truth, and conviction, which places it less under the restraining influence of man's instinctive moral sense. On the other hand, an enlightened understanding ennobles the feelings, – the heart must be formed by the head.

The present age has witnessed an extraordinary increase of a thinking public, by the facilities afforded to the diffusion of reading; the former happy resignation to ignorance begins to make way for a state of half-enlightenment, and few persons are willing to remain in the condition in which their birth has placed

then. Under these circumstances it may not be unprofitable to call attention to certain periods of the awakening and progress of the reason, to place in their proper light certain truths and errors, closely connected with morals, and calculated to be a source of happiness or misery, and, at all events, to point out the hidden shoals on which the reason of man has so often suffered shipwreck. Rarely do we arrive at the summit of truth without running into extremes; we have frequently to exhaust the part of error, and even of folly, before we work our way up to the noble goal of tranquil wisdom.

Some friends, inspired by an equal love of truth and moral beauty, who have arrived at the same conviction by different roads, and who view with serener eye the ground over which they have travelled, have thought that it might be profitable to present a few of these resolutions and epochs of thought. They propose to represent these and certain excesses of the inquiring reason in the form of two young men, of unequal character, engaged in epistolary correspondence. The following letters are the beginning of this essay.

The opinions that are offered in these letters can only be true and false relatively, and in the form in which the world is mirrored in the soul of the correspondent, and of him only. But the course of the correspondence will show that the one-sided, often exaggerated and contradictory opinions at length issue in a general, purified, and well-established truth.

Scepticism and free-thinking are the feverish paroxysms of

the human mind, and must needs at length confirm the health of well-organized souls by the unnatural convulsion which they occasion. In proportion to the dazzling and seducing nature of error will be the greatness of the triumphs of truth: the demand for conviction and firm belief will be strong and pressing in proportion to the torment occasioned by the pangs of doubt. But doubt was necessary to elicit these errors; the knowledge of the disease had to precede its cure. Truth suffers no loss if a vehement youth fails in finding it, in the same way that virtue and religion suffer no detriment if a criminal denies them.

It was necessary to offer these prefatory remarks to throw a proper light on the point of view from which the following correspondence has to be read and judged.

# LETTER I

Julius to Raphael. October.

You are gone, Raphael – and the beauty of nature departs: the sere and yellow leaves fall from the trees, while a thick autumn fog hangs suspended like a bier over the lifeless fields. Solitary, I wander through the melancholy country. I call aloud your name, and am irritated that my Raphael does not answer me.

I had received your last embrace. The mournful sound of the carriage wheels that bore you away had at length died upon my ear. In happier moments I had just succeeded in raising a tumult over the joys of the past, but now again you stand up before me, as your departed spirit, in these regions, and you accompany me to each favorite haunt and pleasant walk. These rocks I have climbed by your side: by your side have my eyes wandered over this immense landscape. In the dark sanctuary of this beech-grove we first conceived the bold ideal of our friendship. It was here that we unfolded the genealogical tree of the soul, and that we found that Julius was so closely related to Raphael. Not a spring, not a thicket, or a hill exists in this region where some memory of departed happiness does not come to destroy my repose. All things combine to prevent my recovery. Wherever I go, I repeat the painful scene of our separation.

What have you done to me, Raphael? What am I become? Man of dangerous power! would that I had never known or

never lost you! Hasten back; come on the wings of friendship, or the tender plant, your nursling, shall have perished. How could you, endowed with such tender feelings, venture to leave the work you had begun, but still so incomplete. The foundations that your proud wisdom tried to establish in my brain and heart are tottering; all the splendid palaces which you erected are crumbling, and the worm crushed to earth is writhing under the ruins.

Happy, heavenly time, when I groped through life, with bandaged eyes, like a drunken man, – when all my knowledge and my wishes were confined to the narrow horizon of my childhood's teachings! Blessed time, when a cheerful sunset raised no higher aspiration in my soul than the wish of a fine day on the morrow; when nothing reminded me of the world save the newspaper; nothing spoke of eternity save the passing bell; only ghost-stories brought to mind the thought of death and judgment; when I trembled at the thought of the devil, and was proportionately drawn to the Godhead! I felt and was happy. Raphael has taught me to think I am on the way to regret that I was ever created.

Creation? No, that is only a sound lacking all meaning, which my reason cannot receive. There was a time when I knew nothing, when no one knew me: accordingly, it is usual to say, I was not. That time is past: therefore it is usual to say that I was created. But also of the millions who existed centuries ago nothing more is now known, and yet men are wont to say, they



are. On what do we found the right to grant the beginning and to deny the end? It is assumed that the cessation of thinking beings contradicts Infinite Goodness. Did, then, Infinite Goodness come first into being at the creation of the world? If there was a period when there were no spirits, Infinite Goodness must have been imperative for a whole eternity. If the fabric of the universe is a perfection of the Creator, He, therefore, lacked a perfection before the creation of the world. But an assumption like this contradicts the idea of perfect goodness, therefore there is no creation. To what have I arrived, Raphael? Terrible fallacy of my conclusions! I give up the Creator as soon as I believe in a God. Wherefore do I require a God, if I suffice without the Creator?

You have robbed me of the thought that gave me peace. You have taught me to despise where I prayed before. A thousand things were venerable in my sight till your dismal wisdom stripped off the veil from them. I saw a crowd of people streaming to church, I heard their enthusiastic devotion poured forth in a common act of prayer and praise; twice did I stand beside a deathbed, and saw – wonderful power of religion! – the hope of heaven triumphant over the terror of annihilation, and the serene light of joy beaming from the eyes of those departing.

"Surely that doctrine must be divine," I exclaimed, "which is acknowledged by the best among men, which triumphs and comforts so wondrously!" Your cold-blooded wisdom extinguished my enthusiasm. You affirmed that an equal number of devotees streamed formerly round the Irmensaeule and

to Jupiter's temple; an equal number of votaries, with like exultation, ascended the stake kindled in honor of Brahma. "Can the very feeling," you added, "which you found so detestable in heathenism prove the truth of your doctrine?"

You proceeded to say: "Trust nothing but your own reason. There is nothing holy, save truth." I have obeyed you: I have sacrificed all my opinions, I have set fire to all my ships when I landed on this island, and I have destroyed all my hopes of return. Never can I become reconciled to a doctrine which I joyfully welcomed once. My reason is now all to me – my only warrant for God, virtue, and immortality. Woe to me if I catch this, my only witness, in a contradiction! if my esteem for its conclusions diminishes! if a broken vessel in my brain diverts its action! My happiness is henceforth intrusted to the harmonious action of my sensorium: woe to me if the strings of this instrument give a false note in the critical moments of my life – if my convictions vary with my pulsations!

## LETTER II

Julius to Raphael.

Your doctrine has flattered my pride. I was a prisoner: you have led me out into the daylight; the golden shimmer and the measureless vault have enraptured my eye. Formerly, I was satisfied with the modest reputation of being a good son of my father's house, a friend of my friends, a useful member of society. You have changed me into a citizen of the universe. At that time my wishes had not aspired to infringe on the rights of the great: I tolerated these fortunate people because beggars tolerated me. I did not blush to envy a part of the human race, because there was a still larger part of humanity that I was obliged to pity. Meeting you, I learned for the first time that my claims on enjoyment were as well founded as those of my brethren. Now, for the first time, I learned that, raised one stratum above this atmosphere, I weighed just as much and as little as the rulers of this world. Raphael severed all bonds of agreement and of opinion. I felt myself quite free; for reason, as Raphael declared, is the only monarchy in the world of spirits, and I carried my imperial throne in my brain. All things in heaven and earth have no value, no estimation, except that which my reason grants them. The whole creation is mine, for I possess an irresistible omnipotence, and am empowered to enjoy it fully. All spirits – one degree below the most perfect Spirit – are my brethren, because we all obey

one rule, and do homage to one supremacy.

How magnificent and sublime this announcement sounds! What a field for my thirst of knowledge! But – unlucky contradiction of nature – this free and soaring spirit is woven together with the rigid, immovable clockwork of a mortal body, mixed up with its little necessities, and yoked to its fate – this god is banished into a world of worms. The immense space of nature is opened to his research, but he cannot think two ideas at the same time. With his eyes he reaches up to the sunny focus of the Godhead, but he himself is obliged to creep after Him slowly and wearily through the elements of time. To absorb one enjoyment he must give up all others: two unlimited desires are too great for his little heart. Every fresh joy costs him the sum of all previous joys. The present moment is the sepulchre of all that went before it. An idyllic hour of love is an intermittent pulsation of friendship.

Wherever I look, Raphael, how limited man appears! How great the distance between his aims and their fulfilment! – yet do not begrudge him his soothing slumber. Wake him not! He was so happy before he began to inquire whither he was to go and whence he came! Reason is a torch in a prison. The prisoner knew nothing of the light, but a dream of freedom appeared over him like a flash in the night which leaves the darkness deeper than before. Our philosophy is the unhappy curiosity of Oedipus, who did not cease to inquire till the dreadful oracle was unravelled. Mayest thou never learn who thou art!

Does your wisdom replace what it has set aside? If you had no key to open heaven, why did you lead me away from earth? If you knew beforehand that the way to wisdom leads through the frightful abyss of doubt, why did you venture the innocence of your friend Julius on this desperate throw? —

If to the good, which I propose to do,  
Something very bad borders far too near,  
I prefer not to do this good.

You have pulled down a shelter that was inhabited, and founded a splendid but lifeless palace on the spot.

Raphael, I claim my soul from you! I am unhappy. My courage is gone. I despair of my own strength. Write to me soon! — your healing hand alone can pour balm on my burning wounds.

## LETTER III

Raphael to Julius.

Julius, happiness such as ours, if unbroken, would be too much for human lot. This thought often haunted me even in the full enjoyment of our friendship. This thought, then darkening our happiness, was a salutary foretaste, intended to mitigate the pain of my present position. Hardened in the stern school of resignation, I am still more susceptible of the comfort of seeing in our separation a slight sacrifice whose merit may win from fate the reward of our future reunion. You did not yet know what privation was. You suffer for the first time.

And yet it is perhaps an advantage for you that I have been torn from you exactly at this time. You have to endure a malady, from which you can only perfectly recover by your own energy, so as not to suffer a relapse. The more deserted you feel, the more you will stir up all healing power in yourself, and in proportion as you derive little or no benefit from temporary and deceptive palliatives, the more certainly will you succeed in eradicating the evil fundamentally.

I do not repent that I roused you from your dream, though your present position is painful. I have done nothing more than hasten a crisis, which every soul like yours has sooner or later to pass through, and where the essential thing is, at what time of life it is endured. There are times and seasons when it is terrible to

doubt truth and virtue. Woe to the man who has to fight through the quibbles of a self-sufficient reason while he is immersed in the storms of the passions. I have felt in its fulness all that is expressed by this, and, to preserve you from similar troubles I could devise no means but to ward off the pestilence by timely inoculation.

Nor could I, my dear Julius, choose a more propitious time? I met you in the full and glorious bloom of youthful intelligence and bodily vigor, before you had been oppressed by care or enchained by passion; fully prepared, in your freedom and strength, to stand the great fight, of which a sublime tranquillity, produced by conviction, is the prize. Truth and error had not yet been interwoven with your interests. Your enjoyments and virtues were independent of both. You required no images of terror to tear you from low dissipation. The feeling for nobler joys had made these odious to you. You were good from instinct and from unconsecrated moral grace. I had nothing to fear for your morality, if a building crumbled down on which it was not founded. Nor do your anxieties alarm me, though you may conjure up many dark anticipations in your melancholy mood. I know you better, Julius!

You are ungrateful, too! You despise the reason, and forget what joys it has procured you. Though you might have escaped the dangers of doubt all your life, still it was my duty not to deprive you of the pleasures which you were capable of enjoying. The height at which you were was not worthy of you. The way

up which you climbed gave you compensation for all of which I deprived you. I still recall the delight – with what delight you blessed the moment when the bandage dropped from your eyes! The warmth with which you grasped the truth possibly may have led your all-devouring imagination to an abyss at sight of which you draw back shuddering.

I must follow the course of your inquiries to discover the sources of your complaints. You have written down the results of your thoughts: send me these papers and then I will answer you.



# LETTER IV

Julius to Raphael.

I have been looking over my papers this morning. Among them I have found a lost memorandum written down in those happy hours when I was inspired with a proud enthusiasm. But on looking over it how different seem all the things treated of! My former views look like the gloomy boarding of a playhouse when the lights have been removed. My heart sought a philosophy, and imagination substituted her dreams. I took the warmest for the truest coloring.

I seek for the laws of spirits – I soar up to the infinite, but I forget to prove that they really exist. A bold attack of materialism overthrows my creation.

You will read through this fragment, my dear Raphael. Would that you could succeed in kindling once again the extinct flames of my enthusiasm, to reconcile me again to my genius! but my pride has sunk so low that even Raphael's friendly hand can hardly raise me up again.

# THEOSOPHY OF JULIUS

## THE WORLD AND THE THINKING BEING.

The universe is a thought of God. After this ideal thought-fabric passed out into reality, and the new-born world fulfilled the plan of its Creator – permit me to use this human simile – the first duty of all thinking beings has been to retrace the original design in this great reality; to find the principle in the mechanism, the unity in the compound, the law in the phenomenon, and to pass back from the structure to its primitive foundation. Accordingly to me there is only one appearance in nature – the thinking being. The great compound called the world is only remarkable to me because it is present to shadow forth symbolically the manifold expressions of that being. All in me and out of me is only the hieroglyph of a power which is like to me. The laws of nature are the cyphers which the thinking mind adds on to make itself understandable to intelligence – the alphabet by means of which all spirits communicate with the most perfect Spirit and with one another. Harmony, truth, order, beauty, excellence, give me joy, because they transport me into the active state of their author, of their possessor, because they betray the presence of a rational and feeling Being, and let me perceive my relationship with that Being. A new experience in this kingdom of truth: gravitation, the circulation of the blood, the natural system of Linnaeus, correspond essentially in my

mind to the discovery of an antique dug up at Herculaneum – they are both only the reflections of one spirit, a renewed acquaintance with a being like myself. I speak with the Eternal through the instrument of nature, – through the world's history: I read the soul of the artist in his Apollo.

If you wish to be convinced, my dear Raphael, look back. Each state of the human mind has some parable in the physical creation by which it is shadowed forth; nor is it only artists and poets, but even the most abstract thinkers that have drawn from this source. Lively activity we name fire; time is a stream that rolls on, sweeping all before it; eternity is a circle; a mystery is hid in midnight gloom, and truth dwells in the sun. Nay, I begin to believe that even the future destiny of the human race is prefigured in the dark oracular utterances of bodily creation. Each coming spring, forcing the sprouts of plants out of the earth, gives me explanations of the awful riddle of death, and contradicts my anxious fears about an everlasting sleep. The swallow that we find stiffened in winter, and see waking up to life after; the dead grub coming to life again as the butterfly and rising into the air, – all these give excellent pictures of our immortality.

How strange all seems to me now, Raphael! Now all seems peopled round about me. To me there is no solitude in nature. Wherever I see a body I anticipate a spirit. Wherever I trace movement I infer thought.

Where no dead lie buried, where no resurrection will be,

Omnipotence speaks to me this through His works, and thus I understand the doctrine of the omnipresence of God.

### IDEA.

All spirits are attracted by perfection. There may be deviations, but there is no exception to this, for all strive after the condition of the highest and freest exercise of their powers; all possess the common instinct of extending their sphere of action; of drawing all, and centring all in themselves; of appropriating all that is good, all that is acknowledged as charming and excellent. When the beautiful, the true, and the excellent are once seen, they are immediately grasped at. A condition once perceived by us, we enter into it immediately. At the moment when we think of them, we become possessors of a virtue, authors of an action, discoverers of a truth, possessors of a happiness. We ourselves become the object perceived. Let no ambiguous smile from you, dear Raphael, disconcert me here, – this assumption is the basis on which I found all that follows, and we must be agreed before I take courage to complete the structure.

His inner feeling or innate consciousness tells every man almost the same thing. For example, when we admire an act of magnanimity, of bravery and wisdom, does not a secret feeling spring up in our heart that we are capable of doing the same? Does not the rush of blood coloring our cheeks on hearing narratives of this kind proclaim that our modesty trembles at the admiration called forth by such acts? that we are confused at the praise which this ennobling of our nature must call down upon

us? Even our body at such moments agrees with the attitude of the man, and shows clearly that our soul has passed into the state we admire. If you were ever present, Raphael, when a great event was related to a large assembly, did you not see how the relater waited for the incense of praise, how he devoured it, though it was given to the hero of his story, – and if you were ever a relater did you not trace how your heart was subject to this pleasing deception? You have had examples, my dear Raphael, of how easily I can wrangle with my best friend respecting the reading aloud of a pleasing anecdote or of a beautiful poem, and my heart told me truly on these occasions that I was only displeased at your carrying off the laurels because these passed from the head of author to that of the reader. A quick and deep artistic appreciation of virtue is justly held to be a great aptitude for virtue, in the same way as it is usual to have no scruple in distrusting the heart of a man whose intelligence is slow to take in moral beauty.

You need not advance as an objection that, frequently, coupled with a lively perception of a perfection, the opposite failing is found to coexist, that evil-doers are often possessed with strong enthusiasm for what is excellent, and that even the weak flame up into enthusiasm of herculean growth. I know, for example, that our admired Haller, who unmasked in so manly a spirit the sickly nothingness of vain honors; a man whose philosophical greatness I so highly appreciated, that he was not great enough to despise the still greater vanity of an order of knighthood,

which conferred an injury on his greatness. I am convinced that in the happy moment of their ideal conceptions, the artist, the philosopher, and the poet are really the great and good man whose image they throw out; but with many this ennobling of the mind is only an unnatural condition occasioned by a more active stirring of the blood, or a more rapid vibration of the fancy: it is accordingly very transient, like every other enchantment, disappearing rapidly and leaving the heart more exhausted than before, and delivered over to the despotic caprice of low passions. I expressly said more exhausted than before, for universal experience teaches that a relapsing criminal is always the most furious, and that the renegades of virtue seek additional sweets in the arms of crime to compensate for the heavy pressure of repentance.

I wished to establish, my Raphael, that it is our own condition, when we feel that of another, that perfection becomes ours for the moment during which we raise in ourselves the representation of it; that the delight we take in truth, beauty, and virtue shows itself when closely analyzed to be the consciousness of our individual ennobling and enriching; and I think I have proved this.

We have ideas of the wisdom of the highest Being, of His goodness, of His justice, but none of His omnipotence. To describe His omnipotence, we help ourselves by the graduated representation of three successions: Nothing, His Will, and Something. It is waste and empty; God calls on light; and there is light. If we had a real idea of His operative omnipotence we

should be creators, as He.

Accordingly, every perfection which I perceive becomes my own; it gives me joy, because it is my own; I desire it, because I love myself. Perfection in nature is no property of matter, but of spirits. All spirits are happy through their perfection. I desire the happiness of all souls, because I love myself. The happiness which I represent to myself becomes my happiness; accordingly I am interested in awakening these representations, to realize them, to exalt them; I am interested in diffusing happiness around me. Whenever I produce beauty, excellence, or enjoyment beyond myself, I produce myself; when I neglect or destroy anything, I neglect, I destroy myself. I desire the happiness of others, because I desire my own; and the desire of the happiness of others we call benevolence and love.

### LOVE.

Now, my most worthy Raphael, let me look round. The height has been ascended, the mist is dissipated; I stand in the midst of immensity, as in the middle of a glowing landscape. A purer ray of sunlight has clarified all my thoughts. Love is the noblest phenomenon in the world of souls, the all-powerful magnet in the spiritual sphere, the source of devotion and of the sublimest virtue. Yet love is only the reflection of this single original power, an attraction of the excellent, based upon an instantaneous permutation of individuality, an interchange of being.

When I hate, I take something from myself; when I love, I

become richer by what I love. To pardon is to recover a property that has been lost. Misanthropy is a protracted suicide: egotism is the supremest poverty of a created being.

When Raphael tore himself from my embrace my soul was rent in twain, and I weep over the loss of my nobler half. On that holy evening – you must remember it – when our souls first communed together in ardent sympathy, all your great emotions became my own, and I only entered into my unvarying right of property over your excellence; I was prouder to love you than to be loved by you, for my own affection had changed me into Raphael.

Was it not this almighty instinct  
That forced our hearts to meet  
In the eternal bond of love?  
Raphael! enraptured, resting on your arm,  
I venture, joyful, the march towards perfection,  
That leadeth to the spiritual sun.

Happy! happy! I have found thee,  
Have secured thee 'midst millions,  
And of all this multitude thou art mine!  
Let the wild chaos return;  
Let it cast adrift the atoms!  
Forever our hearts fly to meet each other.

Must I not draw reflections of my ecstasy  
From thy radiant, ardent eyes?



In thee alone do I wonder at myself.  
The earth in brighter tints appears,  
Heaven itself shines in more glowing light,  
Seen through the soul and action of my friend.

Sorrow drops the load of tears;  
Soothed, it rests from passion's storms,  
Nursed upon the breast of love.  
Nay, delight grows torment, and seeks  
My Raphael, basking in thy soul,  
Sweetest sepulchre! impatiently.

If I alone stood in the great All of things,  
Dreamed I of souls in the very rocks,  
And, embracing, I would have kissed them.  
I would have sighed my complaints into the air;  
The chasms would have answered me.  
O fool! sweet sympathy was every joy to me.

Love does not exist between monotonous souls, giving out the same tone; it is found between harmonious souls. With pleasure I find again my feelings in the mirror of yours, but with more ardent longing I devour the higher emotions that are wanting in me. Friendship and love are led by one common rule. The gentle Desdemona loves Othello for the dangers through which he has passed; the manly Othello loves her for the tears that she shed hearing of his troubles.

There are moments in life when we are impelled to press to

our heart every flower, every remote star, each worm, and the sublimest spirit we can think of. We are impelled to embrace them, and all nature, in the arms of our affection, as things most loved. You understand me, Raphael. A man who has advanced so far as to read off all the beauty, greatness, and excellence in the great and small of nature, and to find the great unity for this manifold variety, has advanced much nearer to the Divinity. The great creation flows into his personality. If each man loved all men, each individual would possess the whole world.

I fear that the philosophy of our time contradicts this doctrine. Many of our thinking brains have undertaken to drive out by mockery this heavenly instinct from the human soul, to efface the effigy of Deity in the soul, and to dissolve this energy, this noble enthusiasm, in the cold, killing breath of a pusillanimous indifference. Under the slavish influence of their own unworthiness they have entered into terms with self-interest, the dangerous foe of benevolence; they have done this to explain a phenomenon which was too godlike for their narrow hearts. They have spun their comfortless doctrine out of a miserable egotism, and they have made their own limits the measure of the Creator; degenerate slaves decrying freedom amidst the rattle of their own chains. Swift, who exaggerated the follies of men till he covered the whole race with infamy, and wrote at length his own name on the gallows which he had erected for it – even Swift could not inflict such deadly wounds on human nature as these dangerous thinkers, who, laying great claim to penetration,

adorn their system with all the specious appearance of art, and strengthen it with all the arguments of self-interest.

Why should the whole species suffer for the shortcomings of a few members?

I admit freely that I believe in the existence of a disinterested love. I am lost if I do not exist; I give up the Deity, immortality, and virtue. I have no remaining proof of these hopes if I cease to believe in love. A spirit that loves itself alone is an atom giving out a spark in the immeasurable waste of space.

### SACRIFICE.

But love has produced effects that seem to contradict its nature.

It can be conceived that I increase my own happiness by a sacrifice which I offer for the happiness of others; but suppose this sacrifice is my life? History has examples of this kind of sacrifice, and I feel most vividly that it would cost me nothing to die in order to save Raphael. How is it possible that we can hold death to be a means of increasing the sum of our enjoyments? How can the cessation of my being be reconciled with the enriching of my being?

The assumption of immortality removes this contradiction; but it also displaces the supreme gracefulness of this act of sacrifice. The consideration of a future reward excludes love. There must be a virtue which even without the belief in immortality, even at the peril of annihilation, suffices to carry out this sacrifice.

I grant it is ennobling to the human soul to sacrifice present enjoyment for a future eternal good; it is the noblest degree of egotism; but egotism and love separate humanity into two very unlike races, whose limits are never confounded.

Egotism erects its centre in itself; love places it out of itself in the axis of the universal whole. Love aims at unity, egotism at solitude. Love is the citizen ruler of a flourishing republic, egotism is a despot in a devastated creation. Egotism sows for gratitude, love for the ungrateful. Love gives, egotism lends; and love does this before the throne of judicial truth, indifferent if for the enjoyment of the following moment, or with the view to a martyr's crown – indifferent whether the reward is in this life or in the next.

Think, O Raphael, of a truth that benefits the whole human race to remote ages; add that this truth condemns its confessor to death; that this truth can only be proved and believed if he dies. Conceive this man gifted with the clear all-embracing and illumining eye of genius, with the flaming torch of enthusiasm, with all the sublime adaptations for love; let the grand ideal of this great effect be presented to his soul; let him have only an obscure anticipation of all the happy beings he will make; let the present and future crowd at the same time into his soul; and then answer me, – does this man require to be referred to a future life?

The sum of all these emotions will become confounded with his personality; will flow together in his personal identity, his I or Ego. The human race he is thinking of is himself. It is a body,

in which his life swims forgotten like a blood-drop, forgotten, but essential to the welfare of the economy; and how quickly and readily he will shed it to secure his health.

GOD.

All perfections in the universe are united in God. God and nature are two magnitudes which are quite alike. The whole sum of harmonic activity which exists together in the divine substance, is in nature the antitype of this substance, united to incalculable degrees, and measures, and steps. If I may be allowed this expressive imagery, nature is an infinitely divided God.

Just as in the prism a white ray of light is split up into seven darker shades of color, so the divine personality or Ego has been broken into countless susceptible substances. As seven darker shades melt together in one clear pencil of light, out of the union of all these substances a divine being would issue. The existing form of nature's fabric is the optical glass, and all the activities of spirits are only an endless play of colors of that simple divine ray. If it pleased Omnipotence some day to break up this prism, the barrier between it and the world would fall down, all spirits would be absorbed in one infinite spirit, all accords would flow together in one common harmony, all streams would find their end in the ocean.

The bodily form of nature came to pass through the attractive force of the elements. The attraction of spirits, varied and developed infinitely, would at length lead to the cessation of that

separation (or may I venture the expression) would produce God. An attraction of this kind is love.

Accordingly, my dear Raphael, love is the ladder by which we climb up to likeness to God. Unconsciously to ourselves, without laying claim to it, we aim at this.

Lifeless masses are we, when we hate;  
Gods, when we cling; in love to one another,  
Rejoicing in the gentle bond of love.  
Upwards this divinest impulse holdeth sway  
Through the thousandfold degrees of creation  
Of countless spirits who did not create.

Arm-in-arm, higher and still higher,  
From the savage to the Grecian seer,  
Who is linked to the last seraph of the ring,  
We turn, of one mind, in the same magic dance,  
Till measure, and e'en time itself,  
Sink at death in the boundless, glowing sea.

Friendless was the great world's blaster;  
And feeling this, he made the spirit world  
Blessed mirrors of his own blessedness!  
And though the Highest found no equal,  
Yet infinitude foams upward unto Him  
From the vast basin of creation's realm.

Love is, Raphael, the great secret that can restore the

dishonored king of gold from the flat, unprofitable chalk; that can save the eternal from the temporal and transient, and the great oracle of duration from the consuming conflagration of time.

What does all that has been said amount to?

If we perceive excellence, it is ours. Let us become intimate with the high ideal unit, and we shall be drawn to one another in brotherly love. If we plant beauty and joy we shall reap beauty and joy. If we think clearly we shall love ardently. "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect," says the Founder of our Faith. Weak human nature turned pale at this command, therefore He explained himself in clearer terms: "Love one another!"

Wisdom, with thy sunlike look,  
Awful goddess! turn thee back,  
And give way to Love;  
Who before thee went, with hero heart,  
Up the steep and stormy path  
To the Godhead's very throne;  
Who, unveiling the Holiest,  
Showed to thee Elysium  
Through the vaulted sepulchre.  
Did it not invite us in?  
Could we reach immortality —  
Or could we seek the spirit  
Without Love, the spirit's master?  
Love, Love leadeth only to Nature's Father,

Only love the spirits.

I have now given you, Raphael, my spirit's confession of faith – a flying outline of the creation I have undertaken. As you may perceive, the seed which you scattered in my soul took root. Mock, or rejoice, or blush at your scholar, as you please. Certain it is this philosophy has ennobled my heart, and extended and beautified the perspective of my life. It is possible, my excellent friend, that the entire structure of my conclusions may have been a baseless and visionary edifice. Perhaps the world, as I depicted it, nowhere exists, save in the brain of your Julius. Perhaps, after the lapse of thousands on thousands of years, when the wiser Judge promised in the future, sits on the judgment-seat, at the sight of the true original, filled with confusion, I should tear in pieces my schoolboy's design. All this may happen – I expect it; and even if not a vestige of reality is found in my dream, the reality will fill me with proportionately greater delight and wonder. Ought my ideas to be more beautiful than those of the Creator? How so? Could we tolerate that His exalted artistic structure should fall beneath the expectations of a mortal connoisseur? This is exactly the fiery probation of His great perfection, and the sweetest triumph for the Exalted Spirit, that false conclusions and deception do not injure His acknowledgment; that all tortuous deviations of the wandering reason at length strike into the straight road of everlasting truth; that all diverging arms and currents ultimately meet in the main



stream. What an idea, Raphael, I form of the Great Artist, who, differently travestied in a thousand copies, still retains identical features in all this diversity, from which even the depreciating hand of a blunderer cannot remove admiration.

Moreover, my representation may certainly be fallacious, wholly an invention, – nay, I am persuaded that it must necessarily be so; and yet it is possible that all results of this may come to pass. All great sages are agreed that our whole knowledge moves on ultimately to a conventional deception, with which, however, the strictest truth can co-exist. Our purest ideas are by no means images of things, but only their signs or symbols determined by necessity, and co-existing with them.

Neither God, nor the human soul, nor the world are really what we consider them. Our thoughts of these are only the endemic forms in which the planet we inhabit hands them to us. Our brain belongs to this planet; accordingly, also, the idioms of our ideas, which are treasured up in it. But the power of the soul is peculiar, necessary, and always consistent: the capricious nature of the materials through which it finds expression changes nothing in the eternal laws, as long as this capriciousness does not stand in contradiction with itself, and so long as the sign remains true to the thing it designates. As the thinking power develops the relations of the idioms, these relations of things must also really be present in them. Therefore, truth is no property of the idioms, but of the conclusion; it is not the likeness of the sign with the thing signified, of the conception with the object; but

the agreement of this conception with the laws of thought. In a similar manner, the doctrine of quantity makes use of cyphers which are nowhere present, except upon paper, and yet it finds with them what is present in the world of reality. For example, what resemblance is there between the letters A and B, the signs  $\cdot$  and  $=$ ,  $+$ , and  $-$ , and the fact that has to be ascertained? Yet the comet, foretold centuries before, advances from a remote corner of the heavens and the expected planet eclipses the disk at the proper time. Trusting to the infallibility of his calculation, the discoverer Columbus plunges into unknown regions of the sea to seek the missing other half of the known hemisphere – the great island of Atlantis – to fill up a blank in his geographical map. He found this island of his paper calculation, and his calculation was right. Would it have been less great if a hostile storm had shattered his fleet or driven it back? The human mind makes a similar calculation when it measures the super-sensual by means of the sensible, and when mathematics applies its conclusions to the hidden physics of the superhuman. But the last test of its calculations is still wanting, for no traveller has come back from that land to relate his discovery. Human nature has its proper bounds, and so also has the individual. We will give each other mutual comfort respecting the former: Raphael will concede this to the boyish age of his Julius. I am poor in conceptions, a stranger in many branches of knowledge which are thought to be essential in inquiries of this nature. I have not belonged to any philosophical school, nor have I read many printed books.

It may quite well be that I occasionally substitute my fancies in the place of stricter logical proofs, that I mistake the rush of my blood or the hopes of my heart for sound wisdom; yet, my dear friend, you must not grudge me the moments I have thus lost. It is a real gain for universal perfection: it was the provision of the Wisest Spirit that the erring reason should also people the chaotic world of dreams, and make fruitful even the barren ground of contradiction. It is not only the mechanical artist who polishes the rough diamond into a brilliant whom we ought to value, but also that one who ennobles mere ordinary stones by giving them the apparent dignity of the diamond. The industry displayed in the forms may sometimes make us forget the massive truth of the substance. Is not every exercise of the thinking power, every sharpening of the edge of the spirit, a little step towards its perfection; and every perfection has to obtain a being and substantial existence in a complete and perfect world. Reality is not confined to the absolutely necessary; it also embraces the conditionally necessary: every offspring of the brain, every work elaborated by the wit, has an irresistible right of citizenship in this wider acceptance of creation. In the measureless plan of nature no activity was to be left out, no degree of enjoyment was to be wanting in universal happiness. The great Inventive Spirit would not even permit error to be wasted, nor allow this wide world of thought to remain empty and chaotic in the mind of man. For the Great Ruler of His world does not even allow a straw to fall without use, leaves no space uninhabited where life may be

enjoyed; for He converts the very poison of man into the food of vipers; He even raises plants from the realm of corruption, and hospitably grants the little glimmer of pleasure that can co-exist with madness. He turns crime and folly into excellence, and weaves out of the very vices of a Tarquin the great idea of the universal monarchy of Rome. Every facility of the reason, even in error, increases its readiness to accept truth.

Dear friend of my soul, suffer me to add my contribution to the great woof of human wisdom. The image of the sun is reflected differently in the dewdrop and in the majestic mirror of the wide-stretching ocean. Shame to the turbid, murky swamp, which never receives and never reflects this image! Millions of plants drink from the four elements of nature; a magazine of supplies is open for all: but they mix their sap in a thousand different ways, and return it in a thousand new forms. The most beautiful variety proclaims a rich Lord of this house. There are four elements from which all spirits draw their supplies: their Ego or individuality, Nature, God, and the Future All intermingle in millions of ways and offer themselves in a million differences of result: but one truth remains which, like a firm axis, goes through all religions and systems – draw nigh to the Godhead of whom you think!

# LETTER V

Raphael to Julius.

It would be very unfortunate, my dear Julius, if there were no other way of quieting you than by restoring the first-fruits of your belief in you. I found with delight these ideas, which I saw gaining in you, written down in your papers. They are worthy of a soul like yours, but you could not remain stationary in them. There are joys for every age and enjoyments for each degree of spirits. It must have been a difficult thing for you to sever yourself from a system that was entirely made to meet the wants of your heart. I would wager that no other system will strike such deep roots in you, and, possibly, if left quite to your own direction, you would sooner or later become reconciled to your favorite ideas. You would soon remark the weakness of the opposite system, and then, if both systems appeared equally deficient in proof, you would prefer the most desirable one, or, perhaps, you would find new arguments to preserve at least the essential features of your former theory, even if a few more doubtful points had to be given up.

But all this is remote from my plan. You must arrive at a higher freedom of mind, where you no longer require support. I grant that this is not the affair of a moment. The first aim of the earliest teaching is commonly the subjugation of the mind, and among all the artifices of the art of education this generally succeeds

the first. Even you, though endowed with great elasticity of character, yet appear destined to submit readily to the sway of opinions, and even more inclined to this than thousands; and this state of infancy might last very long with you, as you do not readily feel the oppression of it. Your head and heart are in very close connection. A doctrine is sweet to you on account of the teacher. You soon succeeded in finding an interesting side in this doctrine, you ennobled it according to the wants of your heart, and you suffered your mind to be resigned to other points that must needs appear strange to you. You regarded attacks on this doctrine as boyish revenge taken by a slavish soul against the rod of its tutor. You played with your chains, which you thought you carried by your own free will.

I found you in this situation, and the sight gave me pain – how, in the midst of the enjoyment, of your glowing life, and while giving expression to your noblest powers, you were hemmed in by narrow considerations. The very logical consistency with which you acted according to your convictions, and the strength of soul that made every sacrifice light to you, were twofold hinderances to your activity and to your joys. I then resolved to set aside these clumsy efforts by which it had been endeavored to cramp a soul like yours in the measure of ordinary natures. The result of your first exertions favored my intentions. I admit that your imagination was more actively employed upon the work than was your penetration. The loss of your fondest convictions was more than atoned for by your presentiments, which gathered

results much more rapidly than the tortoise pace of cold scientific inquiry, passing from the known to the unknown. Your kind of inspired system gave you your first enjoyment in this new field of activity, and I was very careful not to destroy a welcome enthusiasm which was very favorable to the development of your excellent disposition. The scene is now changed. A return into the restrictions of infancy is closed forever. Your way leads onwards, and you require no further precautions.

You must not be surprised to find that a system such as yours cannot resist the searching of a severe criticism. All essays of this kind, equal in breadth and boldness to yours, have had no other fate. It was also most natural that your philosophical progress began with you individually, as with the human race in general. The first object on which man's spirit of inquiry first attempted its strength was, at all times, the universe. Hypotheses relating to the origin of the world, and the combination of its parts, had occupied the greatest thinkers for ages, when Socrates called down the philosophy of his day from heaven to earth. But the limits of human wisdom were too narrow for the proud intellect of his followers. New systems arose on the ruins of the former ones. The penetrating mind of subsequent ages explored the immeasurable field of possible answers to those ever-recurring questions, bearing on the mysterious interior of nature, which could not be disclosed by any human intellect. Some, indeed, succeeded in giving a certain coloring of distinctness, completeness, and evidence

to their views. There are many conjuring tricks by which the pride of reason seeks to avoid the disgrace of not being able to exceed the bounds of human nature in extending the circle of its knowledge. It is a frequent conceit with men to believe that they have discovered new truths, when they have dissected a conception into the separate elements out of which it was first compounded by an act of caprice. Not unfrequently an imperceptible assumption lies at the basis of a chain of consequences, whose breaks and deficiencies are cunningly concealed, while the false conclusions are admired as sublime wisdom. In other cases, partial experiences are accumulated to found a hypothesis, and all contradictory phenomena are either ignored, or the meaning of words is changed according to the requirements of the reasoning. Nor is it only the philosophical quack who employs these conjuring tricks to deceive the public; without being conscious of it, the most upright and the least prejudiced thinker uses analogous means to satisfy his thirst for knowledge directly that he issues from the only sphere where reason can legitimately enjoy the fruit of its activity.

After what you have heard me say on former occasions, Julius, these expressions must cause you no little astonishment; yet they are not the product of a sceptical caprice. I could lay before you the foundations on which they rest, but this would require, as prelude, a somewhat dry examination into the nature of human knowledge, – and I prefer to reserve this for a time when you will feel the want of it. You have not yet arrived at that state of



mind when humiliating truths on the limits of human knowledge can have any interest for you. Make a first essay with the system which has supplanted your own in your mind. Examine it with the same impartiality as severity. Proceed in the same manner with other theories with which you have recently become acquainted, and if none of them can fully satisfy your requirements, you will ask yourself if, after all, these requirements are reasonable.

Perhaps you will tell me this is a poor consolation. You will infer that resignation is your only refuge after so many brilliant hopes had been raised. "Was it worth while," you will say, "to challenge me to a full exercise of my reason in order to set bounds to it at the very moment when it was beginning to bear the noblest fruit? Was I only to become acquainted with a higher enjoyment in order to feel with a double keenness how painful it is to be thus bounded?"

Nevertheless, it is this very feeling of discouragement that I expressly wish to banish from your soul. My aim is this: to remove all that places an obstacle to the free enjoyment of your being, to bring to life in you the germ of all lofty inspiration – the consciousness of the nobility of your soul. You have been awakened from the slumber in which you were rocked by the slavery of others' opinions; but you would never reach the degree of grandeur to which you are called if you dissipated your strength in the pursuit of an unattainable end. This course was all proper up to the present time; it was the natural consequence of your recently acquired freedom. It was

necessary that the ideas which had most engaged you previously should give the first impulse to the activity of your mind.. Among all possible directions that your mind could take, is its present course the most fertile in results? The answer would be given, sooner or later, by your own experience. My part was confined to hastening, if possible, this crisis.

It is a common prejudice to take as a measure of the greatness of man that matter on which he works, and not the manner of his work. But it is certain that a superior Being honors the stamp of perfection even in the most limited sphere, whilst He casts an eye of pity on the vain attempts of the insect which seeks to overlook the universe. It follows from this that I am especially unwilling to agree to the proposition in your papers, which assumes that the high destiny of man is to detect the spirit of the Divine Artist in the work of creation. To express the activity of infinite perfection, I admit that I do not know any sublimer image than art; but you appear to have overlooked an important distinction. The universe is not the pure expression of an ideal, like the accomplished work of a human artist. The latter governs despotically the inanimate matter which he uses to give a body to his ideas. But in the divine work the proper value of each one of its parts is respected, and this conservative respect with which the Great Architect honors every germ of activity, even in the lowliest creature, glorifies it as much as the harmony of the immeasurable whole. Life and liberty to all possible extent are the seal of divine creation; nowhere is it more sublime than

where it seems to have departed most widely from its ideal. But it is precisely this highest perfection that prevents us from grasping the limits in which we are at present confined. We embrace only too small a part of the universe, and the explanation of most of its discords is inaccessible to our faculties. Each step we climb in the scale of being will make us more susceptible of these enjoyments of art; but even then their only value will be that of means, and to excite us to an analogous exercise of our activity. The idle admiration of a greatness foreign to ourselves can never be a great merit. A superior man is never wanting in matter for his activity, nor in the forces necessary to become himself a creator in his sphere. This vocation is yours also, Julius; when you have recognized this you will never have a thought of complaining of the limits that your desire of knowledge cannot overstep.

When you have arrived at this conviction I expect to find you wholly reconciled to me. You must first know fully the extent of your strength before you can appreciate the value of its freest manifestation. Till then, continue to be dissatisfied with me, but do not despair of yourself.

# ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ANIMAL AND THE SPIRITUAL NATURE IN MAN

"It behooves us to clearly realize, as the broad facts which have most wide-reaching consequences in mental physiology and pathology, that all parts of the body, the highest and the lowest, have a sympathy with one another more intelligent than conscious intelligence can yet, or perhaps ever will, conceive; that there is not an organic motion, visible or invisible, sensible or insensible, ministrant to the noblest or to the most humble purposes, which does not work its appointed effect in the complex recesses of the mind, and that the mind, as the crowning achievement of organization, and the consummation and outcome of all its energies, really comprehends the bodily life." – MAWDESLEY, *Body and Mind*.

"It is an indisputable truth that what we call the material world is only known to us under the forms of the ideal world, and, as Descartes tells us, our knowledge of the soul is more intimate and certain than our knowledge of the body." – HUXLEY.

# INTRODUCTION

S 1.

Many philosophers have asserted that the body is, as it were, the prison-house of the spirit, holding it only too firmly to what is earthly, and checking its so-called flight towards perfection. On the other hand, it has been held by another philosophic school that knowledge and virtue are not so much an end as a means towards happiness, and that the whole perfection of man culminates in the amelioration of his body.

Both opinions <sup>1</sup>, methinks, are one-sided. The latter system

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<sup>1</sup> Huxley, speaking of psychology and physiology (idealism and materialism), says: "Our stem divides into two main branches, which grow in opposite ways, and bear flowers which look as different as they can well be. But each branch is sound and healthy, and has as much life and vigor as the other. If a botanist found this state of things in a new plant, I imagine he might be inclined to think that his tree was monoecious, that the flowers were of different sexes, and that, so far from setting up a barrier between the branches of the tree, the only hope of fertility lay in bringing them together. This is my notion of what is to be done with physics and metaphysics. Their differences are complementary, not antagonistic, and thought will never be completely fruitful until the one unites with the other." – HUXLEY, *Macmillan's Mag.*, May 1870. Descartes' method (according to Huxley) leads straight up to the critical idealism of his great successor, Kant, in declaring that the ultimate fact of all knowledge is a consciousness and therefore affirming that the highest of all certainties, and indeed the only absolute certainty, is the existence of mind. But it stops short of Berkeley in declaring that matter does not exist: his arguments against its existence would equally tend to prove the non-existence of soul. In Descartes' stem, the body is simply a machine, in the midst of which the rational soul (peculiar to man) is lodged, and which it directs at its will, as a skilful engineer familiar with its working might do – through

has almost entirely disappeared from our schemes of ethics and philosophy, and is, I am inclined to think, not seldom cast out with over-fanatical zeal – (nothing assuredly is so dangerous to truth as when one-sided opinions meet with one-sided opponents). The former system has on the whole been more patiently endured, since it has the greatest capacity for warming the heart towards virtue, and has already justified its value in the case of truly great souls. Who is there that does not admire the strength of mind of a Cato, the lofty virtue of a Brutus and Aurelius, the equanimity of an Epictetus and a Seneca? But, in spite of all this, the system in question is nothing more than a beautiful aberration of the understanding, a real extreme, which in its wild enthusiasm underrates one part of our human nature, and desires to raise us into the order of ideal beings without at the same time relieving us of our humanity, – a system which runs directly contrary to all that we historically know or philosophically can explain either of the evolution of the single man or of that of the entire race, and can in no way be reconciled with the limitations of our human soul. It is therefore here, as ever, the wisest plan to hold the balance between the two opinions, and thus reach with greater certainty the middle line of

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will and through affection he can "increase, slacken, and alter their movements at his pleasure." At the same time, he admits, in all that regards its mere animal life – in active functions, such as those connected with hunger, respiration, sleep, digestion; in many passive ones, such as we are accustomed to call mental, as in memory, the perception of color, sound – a purely automatic action of the body, which it pursues simply by following out its own laws, independent of the soul's direction or interference.

truth. But, inasmuch as a mistake has very often been committed by treating the mental powers in an exclusive way, that is, in so far as they can be considered in independence of the body, and through an intentional subordination of this same body, the aim of this present essay will be to bring into a clearer light the remarkable contributions made by the body to the workings of the soul, and the great and real influence of the animal system of sensations upon the spiritual. But this is as like the philosophy of Epicurus as the holding of virtue to be the summum bonum is stoicism.

Before we seek to discover those higher moral ends which the animal nature assists us in attaining to, we must establish their physical necessity, and come to an agreement as to some fundamental conceptions.

# PHYSICAL CONNECTION

## THE ANIMAL NATURE STRENGTHENS THE ACTION OF THE SPIRIT

S 2. – Organism of the Operations of the Soul – of its Maintenance and Support – of Generation.

All those conditions which we accept as requisite to the perfection of man in the moral and material world may be included in one fundamental sentence: The perfection of man consists in his ability to exercise his powers in the observation of the plan of the world; and since between the measure of the power and the end towards which it works there must exist the completest harmony, perfection will consist in the highest possible activity of his powers, and, at the same time, in their mutual subordination. But the action of the human soul is – from a necessity which I do not understand – bound fast to the action of matter. The changes in the world of matter must be modified and, so to speak, refined by a peculiar class of secondary powers – I mean the senses – before they can produce in me any corresponding ideas; while, on the other hand, a fresh set of organic powers, the agents of voluntary movements must come into play between the inner spirit and the outward world in



order to make the changes of the former tell upon the latter; thus must the operations of thinking and sensation alike correspond to certain movements of the internal sensorium. All this goes to make up the organism of the soul's activities.

But matter is spoil stolen from the eternal change, and wears itself away, even as it works; in its movement its very element is driven from its grooves, chased away and lost. Because now, on the contrary, that simple essence, the soul, possesses in itself permanence and stability, and in its essence neither gains nor loses aught, – matter cannot keep step with the activity of the spirit, and there would thus soon be an end of the organism of spiritual life, and therewith of all action of the soul. To prevent which there must be added to the first system or organic powers a second one, which shall make good the losses sustained, and sustain the decay by a chain of new creations ready to take the place of those that have gone. This is the organism of maintenance.

Still further. After a short period of activity, when the equal balance of loss and reparation is once removed, man quits the stage of life, and the law of mortality depopulates the earth. There is not room enough for the multitude of sentient beings, whom eternal love and wisdom seemed to have called to a happy existence, to live side by side within the narrow boundaries of our world, and the life of one generation shuts out the life of another. Therefore was it necessary that new men should appear, to take the place of those who had departed, and that life should be kept

up in unbroken succession. But of creation there is no longer any trace; what now becomes new becomes so only by development. The development of man must come to pass through man, if it is to bear a proportion to the original number, if man is to be cultivated into man. On this account a new system of organic powers was added to the two that had preceded it, which had for its object to quicken and to develop the seed of humanity. This is the organism of generation.

These three organisms, brought into the most thorough connection, local and real, go to form the human body.

### S 3. – The Body.

The organic powers of the human body naturally divide themselves into two principal classes. The first class embraces those which no known laws and phenomena of the physical world enable us to comprehend; and to these belong the sensibility of the nerves and the irritability of the muscles. Inasmuch as it has hitherto been impossible to penetrate the economy of the invisible, men have sought to interpret this unknown mechanism through that with which they were already familiar, and have considered the nerves as a canal conducting an excessively fine, volatile, and active fluid, which in rapidity of motion and fineness was held to excel ether and the electric spark. This fluid was held to be the principle and author of our sensibility and power of motion, and hence received the name of the spirit of life. Further, the irritability of the muscles was held to consist, in a certain effort to contract themselves on the touch of

some external provocation. These two principles go to form the specific character of animal organism.

The second class of powers embraces those which we can account for by the universally-known laws of physics. Among these I reckon the mechanism of motion, and the chemistry of the human body, the source of vegetable life. Vegetation, then, and animal mechanism, thoroughly mingled, form the proper physical life of the human body.

#### S 4. – Animal Life.

This is not yet all. Since loss or misfortune, when it occurs, falls more or less within the will-power of the spirit, the spirit must be able to make some compensation for it. Further, since the body is subjected to all the consequences of this connection, and in the circle of circumstances is exposed to countless hostile forces, it must be within the power of the soul to protect the body against these harmful influences, and to bring it into such relations with the physical world as shall tend most to its preservation. The soul must therefore be conscious of the present evil or good state of its organs; from a bad state it must draw dissatisfaction, from a good state satisfaction, so that it may either retain or remove the condition, seek it or fly from it. Here then we have the organism at once and closely linked to the sensational capacity, and the soul drawn into the service of the body. We have now something more than vegetation, something more than a dead model and the mechanism of nerves and muscles. Now

we have animal life.<sup>2</sup>

A healthy condition of our animal life is, as we know, most important for the healthy condition of our spiritual life; and we dare never ignore the animal life so long as we are not quit of it. It must therefore possess a firm foundation, not easily moved, that is, the soul must be fitted and prepared for the actions of our bodily life by an irresistible power. Were then the sensations of our animal loss or well-being to become spiritual perceptions, and had they to be created by thought, how often would the soul be obscured by the overwhelming blaze of passion; how often stifled by laziness and stupidity; how often overlooked in the absorptions and distractions of business! Further, would not, in this case, the most perfect knowledge of his economy be demanded of the animal man – would not the child need to be a master in a branch of knowledge in which, after fifty years of investigation, Harvey, Boerhaave, and Haller were only beginners? The soul could thus have positively no idea of the

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<sup>2</sup> But we have something more than the animal life of the animal (beast). A beast lives an animal life in order that it may experience pleasant sensations. It experiences pleasant sensations that it may preserve the animal life. It lives now, therefore, in order that it may live again tomorrow. It is happy now that it may be happy to-morrow. But it is a simple, an uncertain happiness, which depends upon the action of the organism, it is a slave to luck and blind chance; because it consists in sensation only. Man, too, lives an animal life, – is sensible of its pleasures and suffers its pains. But why? He feels and suffers that he may preserve his animal life. He preserves his animal life that he may longer have the power to live a spiritual one. Here, then, the means differ from the end; there, end and means seem to coincide. This is one of the lines of separation between man and the animal.

condition she was called upon to alter. How shall she become acquainted with it? how shall she begin to act at all?

#### S 5. – Animal Sensations.

So far we have met with such sensations only as they take their rise in an antecedent operation of the understanding; but we have now to deal with sensations in which the understanding bears no part. These sensations, if they are not exactly the expression of the present state of our organs, mark it out specifically, or, better, accompany it. These sensations have quickly and forcibly to determine the will to aversion or desire; but, on the other hand, they are ever to float on the surface of the soul, and never to extend to the province of the reason. The part, accordingly, played by thought, in the case of a mental perception, is here taken up by that modification in the animal parts of us which either threatens the destruction of the sensation or insures its duration: that is, an eternal law of wisdom has combined with that condition of the machine which confirms its welfare, a pleasant emotion of the soul; and, on the other hand, with that condition which undermines it and threatens ruin, an unpleasant emotion is connected; and this in such a manner that the sensation itself has not the faintest resemblance to the state of the organs of which it is the mark. Animal sensations have, on this showing, a double origin: (1) in the present state of the machine; (2) in the capacity or faculty (of sensation).

We are now able to understand how it is that the animal sensations have the power to drive the soul with an irresistible

tyranny in the direction of passionate action, and not seldom gain the upper hand in a struggle with those sensations which are most purely intellectual. For these last the soul has produced by means of thought, and therefore they can by thought be solved or even destroyed. Abstraction and philosophy have this power over the passions, over opinions – in short, over all the situations of life; but the animal sensations are forced upon the soul by a blind necessity, by a stern mechanical law. The understanding, which did not create them, likewise cannot dissolve them and make them as if they were not, though by giving an opposite direction to our attention it can do much to weaken their power and obscure their pretensions. The most stubborn stoic, lying in the agony of the stone, will never be able to boast that he did not feel its pain; but, lost in the consideration of the end of his existence, he will be able to divide his whole power of sensation and perception, and the preponderating pleasure of a great achievement, which can subordinate even pain to the general welfare, will be victorious over the present discomfort. It was neither absence of nor annihilation of sensation that enabled Mucius, while he was roasting his hand in the fire, to gaze upon the foe with the Roman look of proud repose, but the thought of great Rome in admiration of his deed. This it was that ruled in his soul, and kept it grandly self-possessed, so that the terrible provocation of the animal pain was too slight to disturb the equal balance of his nature. But not on this account was the pain the Roman suffered less than it would have been in the

case of the most effeminate voluptuary. True enough, the man who is accustomed to pass his days in a state of confused ideas will be less capable of manly action, in the critical moment of sensuous pain, than he who lives persistently among ideas distinct and clear; but, for all that, neither the loftiest virtue, nor the profoundest philosophy, nor even divine religion, can save a man from the result of a necessary law, though religion can bless her servants even at the stake, and make them happy as the pile gives way.

The wisest purpose is served by the power which the animal sensations possess over the perceptive faculty of the soul. The spirit once initiated in the mysteries of a higher pleasure would look with disdain upon the motions of its companion, and would pay no heed to the poor necessities of physical life, were it not that the animal feeling compelled it to do so. The mathematician, soaring in the region of the infinite, and dreaming away reality in a world of abstractions, is roused by the pang of hunger from his intellectual slumber; the natural philosopher, dismembering the solar system, accompanying through immeasurable space the wanderings of the planets, is restored by the prick of a needle to his mother earth; the philosopher who unfolds the nature of the Deity, and fancies himself to have broken through the fetters of mortality, returns to himself and everyday life when the bleak north wind whistles through his crazy hut, and teaches him that he stands midway between the beast and the angel.

Against an excess of the animal sensations the severest mental

exertion in the end possesses no influence; as they continue to grow stronger, reason closes her ears, and the fettered soul moves but to subserve the purposes of the bodily organization. To satisfy hunger or to quench thirst man will do deeds at which humanity will shudder: against his will he turns traitor or murderer – even cannibal: —

Tiger! in the bosom of thy mother wilt thou set thy teeth?

– so violent is the influence of the animal sensation over the mind. Such watchful care has the Creator shown for the preservation of the machine that the pillars on which it rests are the firmest, and experience has taught us that it is rather the overabundance than the want of animal sensations that has carried destruction with it.

The animal sensations therefore may be said to further the welfare of the animal nature, just as the moral and intellectual perceptions promote spiritual progress or perfection. The system of animal sensations and motions, then, comprises the conception of the animal nature. This is the ground on which all the activities of the soul depend, and the conformation of this fabric determines the duration of the spiritual activity itself, and the degree of ease with which it works. Here, then, we find ourselves in possession of the first member of the connection between the two natures.

S 6. – Objections against the Connection of the Two Natures, drawn from Ideas of Morality.

There is no doubt that thus much will be conceded; but the



next remark will be: "Here ends, too, any determining influence the body may possess; beyond this point the body is but the soul's inert companion, with whom she must sustain a constant battle, attendance on whose necessities robs her of all leisure, whose attacks and interruptions break the thread of the most intricate speculation, and drive the spirit from the clearest and plainest conceptions into a chaotic complexity of the senses, whose pleasures remove the greatest part of our fellow-creatures far from their high original, and reduce them to the level of the beasts, which, in a word, entangles them in a slavery from which death only can deliver them. Is it not senseless and unjust," our complainer might go on to say, "to mix up a being, simple, necessary, that has its subsistence in itself, with another being that moves in an eternal whirl, exposed to every chance and change, and becomes the victim of every external necessity?" On cooler afterthought we shall perhaps see a great beauty take its rise out of this apparent confusion and want of plan.

# PHILOSOPHICAL CONNECTION

## ANIMAL IMPULSES AWAKEN AND DEVELOP THE IMPULSES OF THE SOUL

S 7. – The Metho.

The surest way, perhaps, to throw some light upon this matter is the following: Let us detach from man all idea of what can be called organization, – that is, let the body be separated from the spirit, without, however, depriving the latter of the power to attain to representations of, and to produce actions in, the corporeal world; and let us then inquire how the spirit would set to work, would develop its powers, what steps it would take towards its perfection: the result of this investigation must be founded upon facts. The actual culture of the individual man is thus surveyed, while we at the same time obtain a view of the development of the whole race. In the first place, then, we have this abstract case: the power of representation and will are present, a sphere of action is present, and a free way opened from the soul to the world, from the world to the soul. The question then is, How will the spirit act?

S 8. – The Soul viewed as out of connection with the Body.

We can form no conception without the antecedent will to

form it; no will, unless by experience of a better condition thereby induced, without [some] sensation; no sensation without an antecedent idea (for along with the body we excluded bodily sensations), therefore no idea without an idea.

Let us consider now the case of a child; that is, according to our hypothesis, a spirit conscious in itself of the power to form ideas, but which for the first time is about to exercise this power. What will determine him to think, unless it be the pleasant sensation thereby arising, and what can have procured for him the experience of this pleasurable sensation? We have just seen that this, again, could be nothing but thinking, and he is now for the first time to think. Further, what shall invite him to a consideration of the [external] world? Nothing but the experience of its perfection in so far as it satisfies his instinct of activity, and as this satisfaction affords him pleasure. What, then, can determine him to an exercise of his powers? Nothing but the experience of their existence; and all these experiences are now to be made for the first time. He must therefore have been active from all eternity – which is contrary to the case as stated – or he will to all eternity be inactive, just as the machine without a touch from without remains idle and motionless.

S 9. – The Soul viewed in connection with the Body.

Now let the animal be added to the spirit. Weave these two natures so closely together as they really are closely woven, and cause an unknown something, born of the economy of the animal body, to be assailed by the power of sensation, – let the soul

be placed in the condition of physical pain. That was the first touch, the first ray to light up the night of slumbering powers, a touch as from a golden finger upon nature's lute. Now is sensation there, and sensation only was it that before we missed. This kind of sensation seems to have been made on purpose to remove all these difficulties. In the first case none could be produced because we were not allowed to presuppose an idea; here a modification of the bodily organs becomes a substitute for the ideas that were lacking, and thus does animal sensation come to the help of the spirits inward mechanism, if I may so call it, and puts the same in motion. The will is active, and the action of a single power is sufficient to set all the rest to work. The following operations are self-developed and do not belong to this chapter.

#### S 10. – Out of the History of the Individual.

Let us follow now the growth of the soul in the individual man in relation to what I am trying to demonstrate, and let us observe how all his spiritual capacities grow out of motive powers of sense.

a. The child. Still quite animal; or, rather more and at the same time less than animal – human animal (for that being which at some time shall be called man can at no time have been only animal). More wretched than an animal, because he has not even instinct – the animal-mother may with less danger leave her young than the mother abandon her child. Pain may force from him a cry, but will never direct him to the source from which it comes. The milk may give him pleasure, but he does not seek it.

He is altogether passive.

His thinking rises only to sensation.

His knowledge is but pain, hunger – and what binds these together.

b. The boy. Here we have already reflection, but only in so far as it bears upon the satisfaction of the animal impulse. "He learns to value," says Garve [Observations on Ferguson's "Moral Philosophy," p. 319], "the things of others, and his actions in respect of others, first of all through the fact of their affording him [sensuous] pleasure."

A love of work, the love to his parents, to friends, yea even love to God, must go along the pathway of physical sense [Sinnlichkeit] to reach his soul. "That only is the sun," as Garve elsewhere observes, "which in itself enlightens and warms: all other objects are dark and cold; but they too can be warmed and illumined when they enter into such a connection with the same as to become partakers of its rays." [Observations on Ferguson's "Moral Philosophy," p. 393.] The good things of the spirit possess a value with the boy only by transference – they are the spiritual means to an animal end.

c. Youth and man. The frequent repetition of this process of induction at last brings about a readiness, and the transference begins to discover a beauty in what at first was regarded simply as a means. The youth begins to linger in the process without knowing why. Without observing it, he is often attracted to think about this means. Now is the time when the beams of spiritual

beauty in itself begin to fall upon his open soul; the feeling of exercising his powers delights him, and infuses an inclination to the object which, up to this time, was a means only: the first end is forgotten. His enlightened mind and the richer store of his ideas at last reveal to him the whole worth of spiritual pleasures – the means has become the highest end.

Such is the teaching more or less of the history of each individual man – whose means of education have been fairly good; and wisdom could hardly choose a better road along which to lead mankind. Is not the mass of the people even to this day in leading-strings? – much like our boy. And has not the prophet from Medina left us an example of striking plainness how to bridle the rude nature of the Saracens?

On this subject nothing more excellent can be said than what Garve remarked in his translation of Ferguson's "Moral Philosophy," in the chapter upon the Natural Impulses, and has developed as follows: "The impulse of self-preservation and the attraction of sensual pleasure first bring both man and beast to the point of action: he first comes to value the things of others and his own actions in reference to them according as they procure him pleasure. In proportion as the number of things under whose influence he comes increases do his desires cover a wider circle; as the road by which he reaches the objects of his wishes lengthens, so do his desires become more artificial. Here we come to the first line of separation between man and the mere animal, and herein we may even discover a difference

between one species of animal and another. With few animals does the act of feeding follow immediately upon the sensation of hunger; the heat of the chase, or the industry of collection must come first. But in the case of no animal does the satisfaction of this want follow so late upon the preparations made in reference thereto as in the case of man; with no animal does the endeavor wind through so long a chain of means and intentions before it arrives at the last link. How far removed from this end, though in reality they have no other, are the labors of the artisan or the ploughman. But even this is not all. When the means of human subsistence have become richer and more various through the institutions of society; when man begins to discover that without a full expenditure of time and labor a surplus remains to him; when at the same time by the communication of ideas he becomes more enlightened; then he begins to find a last end for all his actions in himself; he then remarks that, even when his hunger is thoroughly satisfied, a good supply of raiment, a roof above him, and a sufficiency of furniture within doors, there still remains something over and above for him to do. He goes a step further, he becomes conscious that in those very actions by which he has procured for himself food and comfort – in so far as they have their origin in certain powers of a spirit, and in so far as they exercise these powers – there lies a higher good than in the external ends which thereby are attained. From this moment on he works, indeed – in company with the rest of the human race, and along with the whole animal kingdom – to

keep himself alive, and to provide for himself and his friends the necessaries of physical existence; – for what else could he do? What other sphere of action could he create for himself, if he were to leave this? But he knows now that nature has not so much awakened in him these various impulses and desires for the purpose of affording so many particular pleasures, – but, and far more, places before him the attraction of those pleasures and advantages, in order that these impulses may be put in motion – and with this end, that to a thinking being there may be given matter for thought, to a sensitive spirit matter for sensations, to the benevolent means of beneficence, and to the active opportunity for work. Thus does everything, living or lifeless, assume to him a new form. All the facts and changes of life were formerly estimated by him only in so far as they caused him pleasure or pain: now, in so far as they offer occasion for expression of his desire of perfection. In the first case, events are now good, now bad; in the latter, all are equally good. For there is no chance or accident which does not give scope for the exercise of some virtue, or for the employment of a special faculty. At first he loved his fellows because he believed that they could be of use to him; he loves them now far more – because he looks upon benevolence as the condition of the perfect mind."

S 11. – From the History of Humanity.

Yet once more, a glance at the universal history of the whole human race – from its cradle to the maturity of full-grown man – and the truth of what has been said up to this point will stand



forth in clearest relief.

Hunger and nakedness first made of man a hunter, a fisher, a cowherd, a husbandman, and a builder. Sensual pleasure founded families, and the defencelessness of single men was the origin of the tribe. Here already may the first roots of the social duties be discovered. The soil would soon become too poor for the increasing multitude of men; hunger would drive them to other climates and countries that would discover their wealth to the necessity that forced men to seek it; in the process they would learn many improvements in the cultivation of the soil, and perhaps some means to escape the hurtful influence of many things they would necessarily encounter. These separate experiences passed from grandfather to grandson, and their number was always on the increase. Man learned to use the powers of nature against herself; these powers were brought into new relations and the first invention was made. Here we have the first roots of the simple and healing arts – always, we admit, art and invention for the behoof of the animal, but still an exercise of power, an addition to knowledge; and at the very fire in whose embers the savage roasted his fish, Boerhaave afterwards made his inquiries into the composition of bodies; through the very knife which this wild man used to cut up his game, Lionet invented what led to his discovery of the nerves of insects; with the very circle wherewith at first hoofs were measured, Newton measures heaven and earth. Thus did the body force the mind to pay attention to the phenomena around

it; thus was the world made interesting and important, through being made indispensable. The inward activity of their nature, and the barrenness of their native soil, combined in teaching our forefathers to form bolder plans, and invented for them a house wherein, under conduct of the stars, they could safely move upon rivers and seas, and sail toward regions new: —

*Fluctibus ignotis insultavere carinae.*

(Their keels danced upon waves unknown.)

Here again they met with new productions of nature, new dangers, new needs that called for new exertions. The collision of animal instincts drives hordes against hordes, forges a sword out of the raw metal, begets adventurers, heroes, and despots. Towns are fortified, states are founded: with the states arise civic duties and rights, arts, figures, codes of law, subtle priests – and gods.

And now, when necessities have degenerated into luxury, what a boundless field is opened to our eyes! Now are the veins of the earth burrowed through, the foot of man is planted on the bottom of the sea, commerce and travel flourish: —

*Latet sub classibus aequor.*

(The sea is hid beneath the fleets.)

The West wonders at the East, the East at the West; the productions of foreign countries accustom themselves to grow under other skies, and the art of gardening shows the products of three-quarters of the world in one garden. Artists learn her works from nature, music soothes the savage breast, beauty and

harmony ennoble taste and manners, and art leads the way to science and virtue. "Man," says Schloezer [see Schloezer's Plan of his Universal History, S 6], "this mighty demigod, clears rocks from his path, digs out lakes, and drives his plough where once the sail was seen. By canals he separates quarters of the globe and provinces from one another; leads one stream to another and discharges them upon a sandy desert, changed thereby into smiling meadow; three quarters of the globe he plunders and transplants them into a fourth. Even climate, air, and weather acknowledge his sway. While he roots out forests and drains the swamp, the heaven grows clear above his head, moisture and mist are lost, winter becomes milder and shorter, because rivers are no longer frozen over." And the mind of man is refined with the refining of his clime.

The state occupies the citizen in the necessities and comforts of life. Industry gives the state security and rest from without; from within, granting to thinker and artist that fruitful leisure through which the age of Augustus came to be called the Golden Age. The arts now take a more daring and untrammelled flight, science wins a light pure and dry, natural history and physical science shatter superstition, history extends a mirror of the times that were, and philosophy laughs at the follies of mankind. But when luxury grows into effeminacy and excess, when the bones begin to ache, and the pestilence to spread and the air becomes infected, man hastens in his distress from one realm of nature to another, that he may at least find means for lessening his pains.

Then he finds the divine plant of China; from the bowels of the earth he digs out the mightily-working mercury, and from the poppy of the East learns to distil its precious juice. The most hidden corners of nature are investigated; chemistry separates material objects into their ultimate elements, and creates worlds of her own; alchemists enrich the province of physical science; the microscopic glance of a Schwammerdam surprises nature in her most secret operations. Man goes still further; necessity or curiosity transcends the boundaries set by superstition: he seizes the knife, takes courage, and the masterpiece of nature is discovered, even man. Thus did it behoove the least, the poorest, to help us to reach the highest; disease and death must lend their aid to man in teaching him *Gnothi seauton* ("Know thyself!"). The plague produced and formed our Hippocrates, our Sydenhams, as war is the mother of generals; and we owe to the most devastating disease that ever visited humanity an entire reformation of our medical system.

Our intention was to show the influence upon the perfecting of the soul through the temperate enjoyment of the pleasures held out by the senses; and how marvellously has the matter changed, even while under our hands! We found that even excess and abuse in this direction have furthered the real demands of humanity; the deflections from the primitive end of nature – merchants, conquerors, and luxury – have, undoubtedly, tended to hasten a progress which had otherwise been more regular, but very slow. Let us compare the old world with the new! In the first, desire

was simple, its satisfaction easy; but how mistaken, how painful was the judgment passed on nature and her laws! Now, the road is made more difficult by a thousand windings, but how full the light that has been shed upon all our conceptions!

We may, then, repeat: Man needed to be an animal before he knew that he was a spirit; he needed to crawl in the dust before he ventured on a Newtonian flight through the universe. The body, therefore, is the first spur to action; sense the first step on the ladder to perfection.

## **ANIMAL SENSATIONS ACCOMPANY MENTAL SENSATIONS**

S 12. – Law.

The understanding of man is extremely limited, and, therefore, all sensations resulting from its action must of necessity be also limited. In order, therefore, to give these sensations greater impulse, and with redoubled force to attract the will to good and restrain it from evil, both natures, the spiritual and the animal, are so intimately connected with each other that their modifications, being mutually interchanged, impart strength to one another. Hence arises a fundamental law of mixed natures, which, being reduced to its primary divisions, runs thus: the activities of the body correspond to the activities of the mind; that is, any overstraining of a mental activity is necessarily followed by an overstraining of certain

bodily actions, – just as the equilibrium, or harmonious action, of the mental powers is associated with that of the bodily powers in perfect accord. Further: mental indolence induces indolence in the bodily actions; mental inaction causes them to cease altogether. Thus, as perfection is ever accompanied by pleasure, imperfection by the absence of pleasure, this law may be thus expressed: Mental pleasure is invariably attended by animal pleasure, mental pain by animal pain. [Complacency and Displacency perhaps more aptly express the meaning of Lust and Unlust, which we translate by pleasure and pain.]

S 13. – Mental Pleasure furthers the Welfare of the Human Frame.

Thus, a sensation which embraces within its range the whole spiritual being agitates in the same measure the whole framework of the organic body, – heart, veins and blood, muscles and nerves, all, from those mighty nerves that give to the heart its living impulse of motion down to the tiny and unimportant nerves by which hairs are attached to the skin, share equally its influence. Everything tends to a more violent motion. If the sensation be an agreeable one, all these parts will acquire a higher degree of harmonious activity; the heart's beat will be free, lively, uniform, the blood will flow unchecked, gently or with fiery speed, according as the affection is of a gentle or violent description; digestion, secretion, and excretion will follow their natural course; the excitable membranes will pliantly play in a gentle vapor-bath, and excitability as well as sensitiveness

will increase. Therefore the condition of the greatest momentary mental pleasure is at the same time the condition of the greatest bodily well-being.

As many as there may be of these partial activities (and is not every beat of the pulse the result perhaps of thousands?) so many will be the obscure sensations crowding upon the soul, each one of which indicates perfection. Out of this confused complexity arises entire sensation of the animal harmonies, that is, the highest possible combined sensation of animal pleasure, which ranges itself, as it were, alongside of the original intellectual or moral sensation, which this addition infinitely increases. Thus is every agreeable affection the source of countless bodily pleasures.

This is most evidently confirmed by the examples of sick persons who have been cured by joy. Let one whom a terrible home-sickness has wasted to a skeleton be brought back to his native land, and the bloom of health will soon be his again; or let us enter a prison in which miserable men have for ten or twenty years inhabited filthy dungeons and possess at last barely strength to move, – and let us tell them suddenly they are free; the single word of freedom will endow their limbs with the strength of youth, and cause dead eyes to sparkle with life. Sailors, whom thirst and famine have made their prey during a long voyage, are half cured by the steersman's cry of "Land!" and he would certainly greatly err who ascribed the whole result to a prospect of fresh food. The sight of a dear one, whom the sufferer has long

desired to see, sustains the life that was about to go, and imparts strength and health. It is a fact, that joy can quicken the nervous system more effectually than all the cordials of the apothecary, and can do wonders in the case of inveterate internal disorders denied to the action of rhubarb and even mercury. Who then does not perceive that the constitution of the soul which knows how to derive pleasure from every event and can dissipate every ache in the perfection of the universe, must be the most beneficial to the whole organism? and this constitution of the soul is – virtue.

S 14. – Mental pain undermines the Welfare of the Whole Organisms.

In the very same way, the opposite result is brought about by a disagreeable affection of the mind. The ideas which rule so intensely the angry or terrified man may, as rightly as Plato called the passions a fever of the soul, be regarded as convulsions of the organ of thought. These convulsions quickly extend through the nervous system, and so disturb the vital powers that they lose their perfection, and all organic actions lose their equilibrium. The heart beats violently and irregularly; the blood is so confined to the lungs that the failing pulse has barely enough to sustain it. The internal chemical processes are at cross-purposes; beneficent juices lose their way and work harm in other provinces, while what is malignant may attack the very core of our organism. In a word, the condition of the greatest mental distress becomes the condition of the greatest bodily sickness.

The soul is informed of the threatened ruin of the organs that



should have been her good and willing servants by a thousand obscure sensations, and is filled with an entire sensation of pain, associating itself to the primary mental suffering, and giving to this a sharper sting.

S 15. – Examples.

Deep, chronic pains of the soul, especially if accompanied by a strong exertion of thought – among which I would give a prominent place to that lingering anger which men call indignation – gnaw the very foundations of physical life, and dry up the sap that nourish it. Sufferers of this kind have a worn and pale appearance, and the inward grief betrays itself by the hollow, sunken eyes. "Let me," says Caesar, "have men about me that are fat": —

Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights;  
Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look;  
He thinks too much – such men are dangerous.

Fear, trouble, distress of conscience, despair, are little less powerful in their effects than the most violent fevers. Richard, when in deepest anxiety, finds his former cheerfulness is gone, and thinks to bring it back with a glass of wine. But it is not mental sorrow only that has banished comfort, it is a sensation of discomfort proceeding from the very root of his physical organism, the very same sensation that announces a malignant fever. The Moor, heavily burdened with crimes, and once crafty enough in absolving all the sensations of humanity – by his

skeleton-process – into nothing, now rises from a dreadful dream, pale and breathless, with a cold sweat upon his brow. All the images of a future judgment which he had perhaps believed in as a boy, and blotted out from his remembrance as a man, assail his dream-bewildered brain. The sensations are far too confused for the slower march of reason to overtake and unravel them. Reason is still struggling with fancy, the spirit with the horrors of the corporeal frame. ["Life of Moor," tragedy of Krake. Act. v. sc. 1.]

MOOR. – No! I am not shaking. It was but a dream. The dead are not beginning to rise. Who says I tremble and turn pale? I am quite well, quite well.

BED. – You are pale as death; your voice is frightened and hesitating.

MOOR. – I am feverish. I will be bled to-morrow. Say only, when the priest comes, that I have fever.

BED. – But you are very ill.

MOOR. – Yes truly; that is all. And sickness disturbs the brain and breeds strange mad dreams. Dreams mean nothing. Fie on womanish cowardice! Dreams mean nothing. I have just had a pleasant dream.

*[He falls down in a faint.]*

Here we have the whole image of the dream suddenly forcing itself upon a man, and setting in motion the entire system of obscure ideas, stirring up from the foundation the organ of thought. From all these causes arises an intense sensation of

pain in its utmost concentration, which shatters the soul from its depth, and lames per consensum the whole structure of the nerves.

The cold horror that seizes on the man who is about to commit some crime, or who has just committed one, is nothing else than the horror which agitates the feverish man, and which is felt on taking nauseous medicines. The nightly tossings of those who are troubled by remorse, always accompanied by a high pulse, are veritable fevers, induced by the connection between the physical organism with the soul; and Lady Macbeth, walking in her sleep, is an instance of brain delirium. Even the imitation of a passion makes the actor for the moment ill; and after Garrick had played Lear or Othello he spent some hours in convulsions on his bed. Even the illusion of the spectator, through sympathy with acted passion, has brought on shivering, gout, and fits of fainting.

Is not he, then, who is plagued with an evil temper, and draws gall and bitterness from every situation in life: is not the vicious man, who lives in a chronic state of hatred and malevolence; is not the envious man, who finds torture in every excellence of his neighbor, – are not these, all of them, the greatest foes to their own health? Has vice not enough of the horrible in it, when it destroys not only happiness but health.

S 16. – Exceptions.

But a pleasant affection has sometimes been a fatal one, and an unpleasant one has sometimes worked a marvellous cure. Both facts rest upon experience: should they remove the limits of the

law we have expounded?

Joy is fatal when it rises into ecstasy: nature cannot support the strain which in one moment is thrown upon the whole nervous system. The motion of the brain is no longer harmony, but convulsion, an extremely sudden and momentary force which soon changes into the ruin of the organism, since it has transgressed the boundary line of health (for into the very idea of health there enters and is essentially interwoven the idea of a certain moderation of all natural motions). The joy as well as the grief of finite beings is limited, and dare not pass beyond a certain point without ruin.

As far as the second part is concerned, we have many examples of cure, through a moderate fit of anger, of inveterate dyspepsia; and through fright, – as in the case of a fire – of rheumatic pains and lameness apparently incurable. But even dysentery has sometimes resolved an internal stoppage, and the itch has been a cure for melancholy madness and insanity: is the itch, for this, less a disease? – is dysentery therefore health.

S 17. – Indolence of Mind brings about greater Indolence in the Organic Movements.

As, according to the testimony of Herr von Haller, activity of mind during the day tends to quicken the pulse towards evening, will not indolence of mind make it more sluggish, and absolute inactivity completely stop it? For, although the circulation of the blood does not seem to be so very dependent on the mind, is it altogether unreasonable to suppose that the

heart, which, in any case, borrows from the brain the larger portion of its strength, must necessarily, when the soul ceases to maintain the action of the brain, suffer thereby a great loss of power? A condition of phlegm is accompanied by a sluggish pulse, the blood is thin and watery, and the circulation defective in the abdomen. The idiots, whom Muzell has described for us [Muzell's "Medical and Surgical Considerations."], breathed slowly and with difficulty, had no inclination to eat and drink, nor to the natural functions; the pulse was slow, all bodily movements slumberous and indicative of weariness. The mental numbness which is the result of terror or wonder is sometimes accompanied by a general suspension of all natural physical activity. Was the mind the origin of this condition, or was it the body which brought about this torpid state of mind? But these considerations lead to subtleties and intricate questions, and, besides, must not be discussed in this place.

#### S 18. – Second Law.

All that has been said of the transference of the mental sensations to the animal holds true of the transference of animal affections to the mental. Bodily sickness – for the most part the natural result of intemperance – brings its punishment in the form of bodily pain; but the mind also cannot escape a radical attack, in order that a twofold pain may more powerfully impress upon it the necessity of restraint in the desires. In like manner the feeling of bodily health is accompanied by a more lively consciousness of mental improvement, and man is thus the more

spurred on to maintain his body in good condition. We arrive thus at a second law of mixed natures – that, with the free action of the bodily organism, the sensations and ideas gain a freer flow; and learn that, with a corrupted organism, corruption of the thinking faculty and of the sensations inevitably follows. Or, more shortly, that the general sensation of a harmonious animal life is the fountain of mental pleasure, and that animal pain and sickness is the fountain of mental pain.

In these different respects, or from their consideration, soul and body may not unaptly be compared with two stringed instruments tuned by the same hand, and placed alongside of one another. When a string of one of them is touched and a certain tone goes forth, the corresponding string of the other will sound of itself and give the same tone, only somewhat weaker. And, using this comparison, we may say that the string of gladness in the body wakes the glad string in the soul, and the sad string the string of sadness. This is that wonderful and noteworthy sympathy which unites the heterogeneous principles in man so as to form one being. Man is not soul and body – but the most inward and essential blending of the two.

S 19. – Moods of Mind result from Moods of Body.

Hence the heaviness, the incapacity of thought, the discontented temper; which are the consequence of excess in physical indulgence; hence the wonderful effects of wine upon those who always drink in moderation. "When you have drunk wine," says Brother Martin, "you see everything double, you

think doubly easily, you are doubly ready for any undertaking, and twice as quickly bring it to a conclusion." Hence the comfort and good-humor experienced in fine weather, proceeding partly from association of ideas, but mostly from the increased feeling of bodily health that goes along with it, extending over all the functions of our organism. Then it is that people use such expressions as, "I feel that I am well," and at such a season they are more disposed towards all manner of mental labor, and have a heart more open to the humaner feelings, and more prompt to the practice of moral duties. The same may be seen in the national character of different peoples. Those who dwell in gloomy regions mourn along with the dismal scenery: in wild and stormy zones man grows wild: where his lot is cast in friendly climates he laughs with the sky that is bright above him. Only under the clear heaven of Greece lived a Homer, a Plato, a Phidias; there were born the Muses and the Graces, while the Lapland mists can hardly bring forth men, and never a genius. While our Germany was yet a wild forest or morass, the German was a hunter as wild as the beast whose skin he slung about his shoulders. As soon as industry had changed the aspect of his country began the epoch of moral progress. I will not maintain that character takes its rise in climate only, but it is certain that towards the civilization of a people one main means is the improvement of their skies.

The disorders of the body may disorder the whole range of our moral perceptions, and prepare the way for an outburst of

the most evil passions. A man whose constitution is ruined by a course of dissipation is more easily led to extremes than one who has kept his body as it should be kept. This is, indeed, the horrible plan of those who destroy our youths, and that father of robbers must have known man well, who said, "We must destroy both body and soul." Catiline was a profligate before he became a conspirator, and Doria greatly erred when he thought he had no cause to fear a voluptuary like Fiesco. On the whole, it is very often remarked that an evil spirit dwells in a sick body.

In diseases this sympathy is still more striking. All severe illnesses, especially those of malignant nature and arising from the economy of the abdominal regions, announce themselves, more or less, by a strange revolution in the character. Even while the disease is still silently stealing through the hidden corners of our mechanism, and undermining the strength of nerve, the mind begins to anticipate by dark forebodings the fall of her companion. This is a main element in that condition which a great physician described in a masterly manner under the name of "Horrores." Hence their moroseness of disposition, which none can account for, their wavering fancies and inclinations, their disgust at what used to give them pleasure. The amiable man grows quarrelsome, the merry man cross, and he who used to lose himself, and gladly, in the bustle of the world, flies the face of man and retires into a gloomy melancholy. But underneath this treacherous repose the enemy is making ready for a deadly onslaught. The universal disturbance of the entire mechanism,



when the disease once breaks forth, is the most speaking proof of the wonderful dependence of the soul on the body. The feeling, springing from a thousand painful sensations, of the utter ruin of the organism, brings about a frightful mental confusion. The most horrible ideas and fancies rise from their graves. The villain whom nothing could move yields under the dominant power of mere animal terror. Winchester, in dying, yells in the anguish of despair. The soul is under a terrible necessity, it would seem, of snatching at whatever will drag it deeper into darkness, and rejects with obstinate madness every ray of comfort. The string, the tone of pain is in the ascendant, and just as the spiritual misery rose in the bodily disorder, so now it turns and renders the disorder more universal and more intense.

S 20. – Limitations of the foregoing.

But there are daily examples of sufferers who courageously lift themselves above bodily ills: of dying men who, amidst the distressful struggles of the frame, ask, "Where is thy sting, O death?" Should not wisdom, one might urge, avail to combat the blind terrors of the organic nature? Nay, much more than wisdom, should religion have so little power to protect her friends against the assaults springing from the dust? Or, what is the same thing, does it not depend upon the preceding condition of the soul, as to how she accepts the alterations of the processes of life?

Now, this is an irrefragable truth. Philosophy, and still more a mind courageous and elevated by religion, are capable of completely weakening the influence of the animal sensations

which assault the soul of one in pain, and able, as it were, to withdraw it from all coherence with the material. The thought of God, which is interwoven with death, as with all the universe, the harmony of past life, the anticipation of an ever-happy future, spread a bright light over all its ideas; while night is drawn round the soul of him who departs in folly and in unbelief. If even involuntary pangs force themselves upon the Christian and wise man (for is he less a human being?), yet will he resolve the sensations of his dissolving frame into happiness: —

The soul, secured in her existence, smiles  
At the drawn dagger and defies its point.  
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself  
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;  
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,  
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.

It is precisely this unwonted cheerfulness on the part of those who are mortally sick which has often a physical reason at the basis, and which has the most express significance for the practical physician. It is often found in conjunction with the most fatal symptoms of Hippocrates, and without being attributable to any bygone crisis. Such a cheerfulness is of bad import. The nerves, which during the height of the fever have been most sharply assailed, have now lost sensation; the inflamed members, it is well known, cease to smart as soon as they are destroyed; but

it would be a hapless thought to rejoice that the time of burning pain were passed and gone. Stimulus fails before the dead nerves, and a deathly indolence belies future healing. The soul finds herself under the illusion of a pleasant sensation, because she is free from a long-enduring painful one. She is free from pain, not because the tone of her instrument is restored, but because she no more experiences the discord. Sympathy ceases as soon as the connection is lost.

#### S 21. – Further Aspects of the Connection.

If I might now begin to go deeper – if I might speak of delirium, of slumber, of stupor, of epilepsy and catalepsy, and such like, wherein the free and rational spirit is subjected to the despotism of the body – if I might enlarge especially on the wide field of hysteria and hypochondria – if it were allowed me to speak of temperaments, idiosyncrasies, and constitutions, which for physicians and philosophers are an abyss – in one word, should I attempt to demonstrate truth of the foregoing from the bed of sickness, which is ever a chief school of psychology – my matter would be extended to an endless length. We have, it seems to me, enough to prove that the animal nature is throughout mingled with the spiritual, and that this combination is perfection.

## **PHYSICAL PHENOMENA EXPRESS THE EMOTIONS OF THE MIND**

S 22. – Physiognomy of Sensations.

It is just this close correspondence between the two natures which is the basis of the whole science of physiognomy. By means of this nervous connection (which, as we have seen, lies at the bottom of the communication of feelings) the most secret movements of the soul are revealed on the exterior of the body, and passion penetrates even through the veil of the hypocrite. Each passion has its specific expressions, its peculiar dialect, so to speak, by which one knows it. And, indeed, it is an admirable law of Supreme Wisdom, that every passion which is noble and generous beautifies the body, while those that are mean and hateful distort it into animal forms. The more the mind departs from the likeness of the Deity, the nearer does the outward form seem to approach the animal, and always that animal which has a kindred proclivity. Thus, the mild expression of the philanthropist attracts the needy, whom the insolent look of the angry man repels. This is an indispensable guide in social life. It is astonishing what an accordance bodily appearance has with the passions; heroism and fearlessness pour life and strength through the veins and muscles, the eyes sparkle, the breast heaves, all the limbs arm themselves alike for combat – the man has the appearance of a war-horse. Fright and fear extinguish the fire in

the eyes, the limbs sink powerless and heavy, the marrow in the bones seems frozen, the blood falls back on the heart like a stone, a general weakness cripples the powers of life.

A great, bold, lofty thought compels us to stand on tiptoe, to hold up the head, to expand the mouth and nose. The feeling of eternity, the outlook on a wide open horizon, the sea, etc., make us stretch out our arms – we would merge ourselves into the eternal: with the mountains, we would grow towards the heavens, rush thither on storms and waves: yawning abysses throw us down in giddiness. In like manner, hate is expressed in the body by a repelling force; while, on the contrary, in every pressure of the hand, in every embrace, our body will merge into that of our friend, in the same manner as the souls are in harmonious combination. Pride makes the body erect as the soul rises; pettiness bends the head, the limbs hang down; servile fear is expressed in the cringing walk; the thought of pain distorts our face, if pleasurable aspects spread a grace over the whole body; anger, on the other hand, will break through every strong opposing cord, and need will almost overcome the impossible. I would now ask through what mechanism it happens that exactly these movements result from these feelings, that just these organs are affected by these passions? Might I not just as well want to know why a certain wounding of the ligament should stiffen the lower jaw?

If the passion which sympathetically awakened these movements of the frame be often renewed, if this sensation of

soul become habitual, then these movements of the body will become so also. If this matured passion be of a lasting character, then these constitutional features of the frame become deeply engraved: they become, if I may borrow the pathologist's word, "deuteropathic," and are at last organic. Thus, at last, the firm perennial physiognomy of man is formed, so that it is almost easier afterwards to change the soul than the form. In this sense, one may also say, without being a "Stahlian," that the soul forms the body; and perhaps the earliest years of youth decide the features of a man for life, as they certainly are the foundation of his moral character. An inert and weak soul, which never overflows in passions, has no physiognomy at all; and want of expression is the leading characteristic of the countenance of the imbecile. The original features which nature gave him continue unaltered; the face is smooth, for no soul has played upon it; the eyebrows retain a perfect arch, for no wild passion has distorted them; the whole form retains its roundness, for the fat reposes in its cells; the face is regular, perhaps even beautiful, but I pity the soul of it!

A physiognomy of (perfect) organic parts, e.g., as to the form and size of the nose, eyes, mouth, ears, etc., the color of the hair, the height of the neck, and such like, may perhaps possibly be found, but certainly not very easily, however much Lavater should continue to rave about it through ten quarto volumes. He who would reduce to order the capricious play of nature, and classify the forms which she has punished like a stepmother,

or endowed as a mother, would venture more than Linnaeus, and should be very careful lest he become one with the original presented to him, through its monstrous sportive variety.

Yet one more kind of sympathy deserves to be noticed, since it is of great importance in physiology. I mean the sympathy of certain sensations for the organs from which they sprang. A certain cramp in the stomach causes a feeling of disgust; the reproduction of this sensation brings back the cramp. How is this?

S 23. – The Remains of the Animal Nature is also a Source of Perfection.

Although the animal part of man preserves for him the many great advantages of which we have already spoken, still, one may say that, in another aspect, it remains always despicable; viz., the soul thus depends, slave-like, on the activity of its tools; the periodical relaxation of these prescribes to the soul an inactive pause and annihilation at periods. I mean sleep, which, one cannot deny, robs us at least of the third part of our life. Further, our mind is completely dependent on the laws of the body, so that the cessation of the latter puts a sudden stop to the continuance of thoughts, even though we be on the straight, open path towards truth. If the reason have ever so little fixed upon an idea, when the lazy matter refuses to carry it out, the strings of the thinking organs grow weary, if they have been but slightly strained; the body fails us where we need it most. What astonishing steps, one may infer, would man make in the use of his powers if he could

continue to think in a state of unbroken intensity! How he would unravel every idea to its final elements; how he would trace every appearance to its most hidden sources, if he could keep them uninterruptedly before his mind! But, alas! it is not thus. Why is it not so?

S 24. – Necessity for Relaxation.

The following will lead us on the track of truth: —

1. Pleasant sensation was necessary to lead man to perfection, and he can only be perfect when he feels comfortable.
2. The nature of a mortal being makes unpleasant feeling unavoidable. Evil does not shut man out from the best world, and the worldly-wise find their perfection therein.
3. Thus pain and pleasure are necessary. It seems harder, but it is no less true.
4. Every pain, as every pleasure, grows according to its nature, and would continue to do so.
5. Every pain and every pleasure of a mixed being tend to their own dissolution.

S 25. – Explanation.

It is a well-known law of the connection between ideas that every sensation, of whatever kind, immediately seizes another of its kind, and enlarges itself through this addition. The larger and more manifold it becomes, so much the more does it awaken similar sensations in all directions through the organs of thought, until, by degrees, it becomes universally predominant, and occupies the whole soul. Consequently, every sensation



grows through itself; every present condition of the feeling power contains the root of a feeling to follow, similar, but more intense. This is evident. Now, every mental sensation is, as we know, allied to a similar animal one; in other words, each one is connected with more or less movement of the nerves, which take a direction according to the measure of their strength and extension. Thus, as mental sensations grow, must the movements in the nervous system increase also. This is no less clear. Now, pathology teaches us that a nerve never suffers alone: and to say, "Here is a superfluity of strength," is as much as to say, "There is want of strength." Thus, every nervous movement grows through itself. Now, we have remarked that the movements of the nervous system react upon the mind, and strengthen the mental sensations;

[Why, how one weeps when one's too weary!  
Tears, tears! why we weep,  
'Tis worth inquiry: – that we've shamed a life,  
Or lost a love, or missed a world, perhaps?  
By no means. Simply, that we've walked too far,  
Or talked too much, or felt the wind in the east, etc.]

– *Aurora Leigh.*]

vice versa, the strengthened sensation of the mind increase and strengthen the motions of the nerves. Thus we have a circle, in which sensation must always increase, and nervous movements every moment become more powerful and universal.

Now, we know that the movements of the bodily frame which cause the feeling of pain run counter to the harmony by which it would exist in well-being; that is, that they are diseased. But disease cannot grow unceasingly, therefore they end in the total destruction of the frame. In relation to pain, it is thus proved that it aims at the death of the subject.

But, the motions of the nerves under pleasant sensations being so harmonious to the continuance of the machinery that the condition of mind which constitutes pleasure is that of the greatest bodily well-being, should not rather, then, pleasant sensation prolong the bloom of the body eternally? This inference is too hasty. In a certain stage of moderation, these nervous motions are wholesome, and really a sign of health. But if they outgrow this stage, they may be the highest activity, the highest momentary perfection; but, thus, they are excess of health, no longer health itself.

We only call that condition of the natural motions health in which the root of similar ones for the future lies, viz., those which confirm the perfection of succeeding motions; thus, the destiny of continuance is essentially contained in the idea of health. Thus, for example, the body of the most debilitated profligate attains to its greatest harmony at the moment of excess; but it is only momentarily, and a so much deeper abatement shows sufficiently that overstraining was not health. Therefore one may justly accept that an overstrained vigor of physical action hastens death as much as the greatest disorder or the worst illness. Both

pain and pleasure draw us towards an unavoidable death, unless something be present which limits their advance.

S 26. – Excellence of this Abatement.

It is just this (the limit to their growth) which the abatement of the animal nature causes. It must be no other than this limitation of our fragile frame (that appeared to have lent to our opponents so strong a proof against its perfection) which ameliorates all the evil consequences that the mechanism otherwise makes unavoidable. It is exactly this sinking, this lassitude of the organs, over which tinkers complain so much, that prevents our own strength destroying us in a short time; that does not permit our positions to be always increasing towards our destruction. This limitation shows each passion the period of its growth, its height and decline (if indeed the passion does not die out in a total relaxation of the body), which leaves the excited spirits time to resume their harmony, and the organs to recover. Hence, the highest pitch of rapture, of fear, and of anger, are the same as weariness, weakness, or fainting. But sleep vouchsafes more, for as Shakspeare says: —

Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's sweet restorer.

– *Macbeth*.

During sleep, the vital forces restore themselves to that healthy balance which the continuance of our being so much requires;

all the cramped ideas and feelings, the overstrained actions which have troubled us through the day, are solved in the entire relaxation of the sensorium; the harmony of the motions of the mind are resumed, and the newly-awakened man greets the coming day more calmly.

In relation to the arrangement of the whole, also, we cannot sufficiently admire the worth and importance of this limitation. The arrangement necessarily causes many, who should be no less happy, to be sacrificed to the general order and to bear the lot of oppression. Likewise, many, whom we perhaps unjustly envy, must expend their mental and bodily strength in restless exertion, so that the repose of the whole be preserved. The same with sick persons, the same with unreasoning animals. Sleep seals the eye of care, takes from the prince and statesman the heavy weight of governing; pours new force into the veins of the sick man, and rest into his harassed soul; the daylaborer no longer hears the voice of the oppressor, and the ill-used beast escapes from the tyranny of man. Sleep buries all cares and troubles, balances everything, equips every one with new-born powers to bear the joys and sorrows of the next day.

#### S 27. – Severing of the Connection.

At length arrived at the point in the circle where the mind has fulfilled the aim of its being, an internal, unaccountable mechanism has, at the same time, made the body incapable of being any longer its instrument. All care for the well-being of the bodily state seems to reach but to this epoch. It appears to me

that, in the formation of our physical nature, wisdom has shown such parsimony, that notwithstanding constant compensations, decline must always keep in the ascendancy, so that freedom misuses the mechanism, and death is germinated in life as out of its seed. Matter dissolves again into its last elements, which travel through the kingdom of nature in other forms and relations, to serve other purposes. The mind continues to practise its thinking powers in other circles, and to observe the universe from other sides.

We may truly say that it has not by any means exhausted this actual sphere, that it might have left this sphere itself more perfect; but do we know that this sphere is lost to it? We lay many a book aside which we do not understand, but perhaps in a few years we shall understand it better.