

Treatise of Human Nature

Book II: The Passions

David Hume

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[Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Every four-point ellipsis indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. Longer omitted passages are reported on, between [brackets], in normal-size type.

First launched: June 2008

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Part i: Pride and humility

1: Division of the subject

Having divided all the perceptions of the mind into •impressions and •ideas, we can now divide impressions into **(1)** original and **(2)** secondary. The distinction between these is the one I drew in I.i.2, using the language of **(1)** ‘impressions of sensation’ and **(2)** ‘impressions of reflection’.

(1) Original impressions, i.e. impressions of sensation, arise in the soul not from any preceding perception but from the constitution of the body, from the animal spirits, or from the effect of objects on the external organs. These include all the impressions of the senses, and all bodily pains and pleasures.

(2) Secondary impressions, i.e. impressions of reflection, arise out of the original ones, either immediately or through the mediation of ideas of the original ones. These include the passions, and other emotions resembling passions. [Example of ‘the mediation of ideas’: Joe’s **(2)** present anger against Max is caused by Joe’s present memory of being hurt by Max, which is caused by his **(1)** being hurt by Max.]

The mind in its perceptions *has to* begin somewhere. It can’t begin with ideas, because every idea comes *after* a corresponding impression; so it must start with impressions—there must be some **(1)** impressions that turn up in the soul without having been heralded by any preceding perception. [Remember that for Hume ‘perception’ covers every mental state.] The causes of these impressions of sensation are natural objects and events out there in the world; I couldn’t examine those without straying from my present subject into anatomy and natural science. So I’m going to confine myself to the other **(2)** impressions, the ones I call ‘secondary’ and ‘of reflection’, which arise either from original impressions or from ideas

of them. Bodily pains and pleasures are the source of many passions, both •immediately• when they are felt by the mind and •through the mediation of ideas• when they are considered by it; but they themselves arise originally in the soul (or in the body, call it what you will) without any preceding thought or perception. An attack of gout, •which is extremely painful•, leads **to** a long series of passions—grief, hope, fear and so on—but it doesn’t come immediately **from** any mental state or idea. [Regarding that last use of ‘immediately’, perhaps Hume is thinking of things like this: my present agony is caused by gout, which is caused by my drinking too much port and getting too little exercise, which was caused by my having thoughts of how pleasant it would be to sit by the fire swilling port; so my pain is after all caused by a mental event, but not immediately.]

The reflective impressions can be divided into •calm and •violent. Of the first kind is the sense of beauty and ugliness in actions, works of art, and external objects. [In this version, ‘ugliness’—a word Hume doesn’t use—always replaces his ‘deformity’, which did but now doesn’t mean the same thing. He does regularly use the adjective ‘ugly’, and always associates it with ‘deformity’.] Of the second kind are the passions of love and hatred, grief and joy, pride and humility—these are ‘passions’ properly so-called. This division is far from exact: poetry and music frequently produce intense raptures that are far from calm; while those other impressions—the passions properly so-called—can subside into an emotion that is so soft as to be almost imperceptible. But the passions are *usually* more violent than the emotions arising from beauty and ugliness, and that’s the basis on which we draw the line. The human

mind is such a big and complicated topic that I need help in *ordering* my treatment of it, and it's in that spirit that I shall take advantage of this common and plausible classification, and set myself to explain those violent emotions or passions, their nature, origin, causes, and effects.

Looking over the passions, we find that they divide into •direct and •indirect. By 'direct passions' I mean ones that arise *immediately* from good or evil, from pain or pleasure. By 'indirect passions' I mean ones that have the same sources as the others but only when those sources are combined with other qualities. At this stage I can't justify or explain this distinction any further. I can only say that under the 'indirect passions' I include

•pride, humility, ambition, vanity, love, hatred, envy, pity, malice, generosity,

along with passions that depend on those. Under the 'direct passions' I include

•desire, aversion, grief, joy, hope, fear, despair, and security.

I shall begin with the indirect passions. ['z is an indirect result of x' ought to mean that x leads to y which leads to z. But what Hume says about z's arising from x 'by the conjunction of' other qualities points to a different picture, in which y doesn't reach back to x and forward to z but rather collaborates with x to produce z directly. The contrasting use of 'immediately' is wrong for the same reason. From now on, phrases like 'arise immediately from' will be replaced by 'arise purely from', in contexts where that is obviously the meaning.]

2: Pride and humility—their objects and causes

[Hume's words 'humility' and 'humble' will be allowed to stand in this version; but you'll see that 'humility' as he describes it sounds more like *shame*. Every occurrence of 'shame' or 'ashamed' in this version comes from the original text.] The passions of pride and humility are simple and uniform impressions, so we can't—however many words we use—properly *define* them, or any of the passions for that matter. (·This resembles the fact that we can't verbally define 'red' because the idea or impression of redness is simple and uniform·.) The most we can claim to offer is a description of them—a description in which we list the states of affairs that accompany them. But 'pride' and 'humility' are commonly used words, and the impressions they stand for are the most common of all; so no-one needs

my help to form an accurate idea of them with no risk of getting them wrong. I shan't waste time on preliminaries, therefore, and will start right away on my examination of these passions.

[In this paragraph we'll meet Hume's technical notion of 'the object of someone's pride or humility'. He also uses 'object' (not 'object of') hundreds of times to mean merely 'thing' or 'item'—as in the phrase 'the effect of objects on the external organs'. When 'object' is used in this thin sense, *in a context where the 'object of' notion is also at work*, the thin-sense 'object' will be replaced by 'thing' or by 'item', a word that Hume himself never uses.] It is obvious that pride and humility, though directly contrary to one another, have the same object. This object is *oneself*, i.e. the sequence of related

ideas and impressions of which one has an intimate memory and consciousness. Whenever we are driven by pride or humility, our view is always focussed on *ourselves*. We feel one or other of those opposite affections—are elated by pride, or dejected with humility—depending on how favourable an idea of *ourselves* we have. [The word ‘affection’ occurs very often in this work. It is Hume’s most general term for emotional states, covering everything from furious rage to mild distaste, from ecstatic pleasure to a barely detectable feeling of satisfaction.] ·When we are in a state of pride or humility·, whatever other items we are thinking about we’re considering them in relation to ourselves; otherwise they couldn’t arouse these passions or increase or lessen them in the slightest. When *oneself* doesn’t enter the picture, there is no room for either pride or humility.

But although the connected sequence of perceptions that we call ‘self’ is always the •object of these two passions, it can’t possibly be their •cause—it can’t *unaided* arouse them. [Hume goes on to explain that if one’s self alone caused either pride or humility, it would always arouse both together, and because they are contrary passions with the same object, namely oneself, they would cancel out, so that in the upshot neither would be caused. He continues:] It is impossible for a man to be both proud and humble at the same time. It often happens that a man has reasons for pride and other reasons for humility; in that case they take turns in him; or, if they do come together and collide, the stronger one annihilates the weaker and loses as much of its strength as has been used up in that process. But in the present case—i.e. the supposed case in which the *whole* cause of someone’s pride and/or humility is himself—neither of the two passions could ever be stronger than the other, because their common cause, himself, isn’t biased in favour of one rather than the other, so it must produce both in the same strength—which means that it can’t produce either of them. . . .

So we have to distinguish the •cause of these passions, i.e. the idea that arouses them, from their •object, i.e. whatever it is that they focus on when aroused. Once pride or humility has kicked in, it immediately turns our attention onto *ourselves*, regarding that as its ultimate and final object; but for either pride or humility to be aroused in the first place, another factor is needed—a factor that figures differently in one of these passions from how it figures in the other. Here’s how the course of events goes:

- (1) A certain idea I_1 comes before the mind,
- (2) I_1 causes or produces an associated passion P,
- (3) P turns the person’s attention to I_2 , the idea of himself.

So here we have a passion P that comes between two ideas I_1 and I_2 ; it is caused by I_1 and it causes I_2 . Thus, the first idea I_1 represents the cause of the passion, the second idea I_2 represents the object of the passion.

Let us start with the causes of pride and humility. The most obvious and remarkable thing about them is the vast variety of things that people can be proud of or humble about. Every valuable quality of the mind—

of the imagination, judgment, memory, or disposition; wit, good sense, learning, courage, justice, integrity—all these are causes of pride, and their opposites are causes of humility. And people can be proud of or humble about physical characteristics as well as mental ones. A man may be proud of his

beauty, strength, agility, handsomeness; elegance in dancing, riding, fencing; skill in any manual business or manufacture,

·and humble about his lack of any of these·. And there’s more yet! Pride and humility look further, and take in whatever items are in *any* way connected with or related to us. Our country, family, children, relations, riches, houses, gardens,

horses, dogs, clothes; any of these can cause either pride or humility.

Thinking about these causes, we see that in any cause of pride or humility we have to distinguish •the operative quality from •the thing that has the quality. Take the case of a man who is proud of a beautiful house that he owns or that he planned and built. The object of his pride is himself, and its cause is the beautiful house; and the cause is subdivided into •the beauty that operates on [Hume's phrase] the pride and •the house that has the beauty. Both these parts are essential, and they really are different—both •in themselves

and •in how they relate to pride and humility. No-one is ever proud of *beauty*, considered in the abstract and not considered as possessed by something that is related to him; and no-one would be proud of *a house*—even one that he had planned and built, and now owned—unless it had beauty or some other pride-inducing quality. So we need to be aware of this distinction between the two parts of any cause of pride or humility, and to handle it with careful exactness: •the two can easily be separated from one another, and •it takes the two of them in conjunction to produce the passion.

3: Where these objects and causes come from

Having distinguished the object of a passion from its cause, and within the cause having distinguished the operative quality from the thing that has it, the next task is to examine what makes each of our two—pride and humility—to be what it is, and associates a given case of passion to this •object and that •quality and this other subject [= 'quality- possessor']. For example, to understand fully what is going on when I am *proud of my son's energy*, we must face these questions:

- What makes this state of mine a case of *pride*?
- How does *energy* come into it?
- How does *that man* come into it?
- How do *I* come into it?

and must have answers to them all. When we have done all that we'll fully understand the origin of pride and humility.

Why do pride and humility always have *self* for their object? Well, it happens because of a certain property of the

human mind—a property that is both •natural and also •basic. No-one can doubt that this property is natural, given how constantly and steadily it operates: it is *always* self that is the object of pride and humility, and whenever either of these passions looks further, it is still with a view to oneself—without an appropriate relation to ourself no person or thing can have any influence on us. If the connection between one's pride or humility and oneself were not natural but rather something we learn, there would surely be some people who hadn't learned this properly and were (for example) proud of the number of stars in the sky or ashamed of the existence of volcanoes.

That the mental property in question is basic or primary will likewise appear evident if we consider that it is the distinguishing characteristic of these passions. Unless nature had given the mind some basic qualities, it could

never have any derived ones, because with no basic qualities it would have no basis for action and could never begin to exert itself. The basic qualities of the mind are the ones that are most inseparable from it, and can't be analysed out as upshots or special cases of other more basic qualities. And that's the case with the mental quality that determines the object of pride and humility. [In this context, 'basic' replaces Hume's 'original'. The sense of 'original' in 'original quality' is nothing like its sense in 'original impressions' (see page 147), and it should be helpful to use a different word. A second point: if the paragraph gives any *reason* for thinking not merely that the mind must have some basic qualities but that the quality Hume is writing about is one of them, it is in the first sentence; but it's not clear what reason it is.]

Even if you are satisfied that the •object towards which pride and humility are directed is natural, you may not be satisfied that the •causes of these passions are equally natural. Rather than coming from the constitution of our mind (you may think), perhaps all that vast variety of causes comes from individual preferences. This doubt is soon removed when we look at human nature, and bear in mind that the same •sorts of items have given rise to pride and humility in all nations and at all times, so that even if someone is a stranger to us we can make a pretty good guess at what will either increase or diminish his passions of these two kinds. There are no big differences among people in this respect, and what ones there are come merely from differences in temperament and bodily constitution. Can we imagine it as possible that without any change in human nature men will ever become entirely indifferent to their power, riches, beauty, or personal merit, and that their pride and vanity won't be affected by these advantages? [Despite the phrase 'pride and vanity', Hume ordinarily seems to treat 'vanity' as synonymous with 'pride'. This version will always leave 'vanity' and 'vain' untouched.]

But though the causes of pride and humility are clearly natural, it turns out that •they can't be basic—i.e. that •it's impossible that each of them is connected to pride or humility by a particular basic natural hook-up. They are far too numerous for that; and many of them are man-made things that are products partly of work, partly of personal choices and partly of good luck. Work produces houses, furniture, clothes. Personal choice determines what kinds of houses etc. men make. And good luck often contributes to all this, by revealing the effects of different mixtures and combinations of bodies—e.g. the lucky discovery of a better recipe for cement. It's absurd to think that *each* of these was foreseen and provided for by nature, and that every new man-made cause of pride or humility is connected with that passion by a basic mechanism that lay concealed in the soul until something happened that kicked it into action. The cabinet-maker who invented the plan for a writing desk and then made the first one, sold it to someone who was proud of this possession of his; are we to suppose that this pride arose from a *basic* pride-in-writing-desks mechanism in his mind? one that is different from his pride-in-handsome-chairs mechanism? We must reject that ridiculous suggestion; so we have to conclude that the causes of pride owe their efficacy to some one or more features that they all share, and similarly with all the causes of humility.

[Those two occurrences of 'mechanism' replace Hume's word 'principle', which he uses here in a now-obsolete sense—or narrow range of closely related senses. In the passage represented by the **(1)–(2)–(3)** on page 149 above, Hume speaks of the first idea I_1 as a 'cause or productive principle' of the passion P ; but 'principle' is often used to stand not for an individual cause but rather for some permanent causal structure. In our present paragraph, 'mechanism' catches the meaning pretty well, as it does also in most of the dozens of other cases. Don't think of these mechanisms in terms of physical machines with wheels and gears etc. In fact, Hume has no opinion about the intrinsic nature of these items, but he's sure that they exist. If it is pretty reliably the case that when an F occurs

in someone's mind it will be followed by a G, Hume will be sure that it's because that mind has a property or quality or 'principle' connecting F with G—what this version will call a 'mechanism' connecting F with G. That expresses a conviction that the if-F-then-G link will continue to hold, but Hume's use of this mechanism concept does more work than that. Where two things like these seem to be reliably true:

- When an F occurs in someone's mind, it is followed by a G,
- When an H occurs in someone's mind, it is followed by a J,

Hume will want to know 'Does one mechanism underlie both these generalizations, or do they involve two independent mechanisms?' He does real work with this type of question, even while knowing nothing about what any such mechanism consists in.—When he uses 'principle', as we do, to stand for a kind of proposition, the word will of course be left untouched.]

•And there's a more general point that goes the same way. We find •that in the course of nature there are many effects but their causal sources are usually few and simple, and •that when a natural scientist appeals to a different quality in order to explain every different operation, that's a sign that he isn't very competent. This must apply with special force to •explanations of the operations of• the human mind,

because it is such a confined subject. It's reasonable for us to think that it *couldn't* contain such a monstrous heap of mechanisms as would be needed to arouse the passions of pride and humility if each of their causes were connected to its passion by its own separate mental mechanism.

The situation of the scientific study of man is now what the situation of the physical sciences were with regard to astronomy before the time of Copernicus. Although the ancient astronomers were aware of the maxim that nature does nothing in vain, they concocted systems of astronomy that •were so intricate that they seemed inconsistent with true science, and eventually •gave place to something simpler and natural. When someone confronted by a new phenomenon isn't ashamed to invent a new mechanism for it rather than tracing it back to mechanisms already known, when he overloads his scientific system with this sort of variety, we know for sure that none of his mechanisms is the right one and that he's merely trying to hide his ignorance behind a screen of falsehoods.

4: The relations of impressions and ideas

So now we have easily established two truths—that the mechanisms through which this variety of causes arouse pride and humility are natural, and that there isn't a different mechanism for every different cause. Now let us investigate *how* we can reduce these mechanisms to a lesser number, finding among the causes something common on which their influence depends.

To do this, we'll have to think about certain properties

of human nature that have an enormous influence on every operation both of the understanding and of the passions, yet are seldom emphasized by students of human nature.

(1) One is the •association of ideas, which I have so often mentioned and explained •in Book I of this *Treatise*•. It's impossible for the mind to concentrate steadily on one idea for any considerable time, and no amount of strenuous effort will enable it to train itself to that kind of constancy

of attention. But changeable though our thoughts are, they aren't entirely without rule and method in their changes. The rule by which they proceed is to pass from one object to what is •resembling, •contiguous to, or •produced by it. When one idea is present to the imagination, any other idea that is related to it in one of these three ways will naturally follow it, entering the mind more easily through that introduction.

(2) The other property of the human mind that I want to call attention to is a similar •association of **impressions**. Impressions that resemble one another are connected together, so that when one arises the rest immediately follow. Grief and disappointment give rise to anger, anger to envy, envy to malice, and malice to grief again, until the whole circle is completed. Similarly, when our mind is elevated with joy it naturally throws itself into love, generosity, pity, courage, pride, and the other emotional states that resemble joy. When the mind is gripped by a passion, it can't easily confine itself to that passion alone without any change or variation. Human nature is too inconstant to permit such regularity—it is *essentially* changeable. And what it's most natural for it to change *to* at any given time are affections or emotions that are . . . in line with the dominant passions that it actually has at that moment. So clearly there's an attraction or association among impressions as well as among ideas, but with one notable difference: •ideas are associated by resemblance, contiguity, and causation, whereas •impressions are associated only by resemblance.

(3) These two kinds of association very much assist and forward each other, and the transition •from one idea to another or from one impression to another• is more easily made when both items have the same object. For example, a man who is upset and angry because of some harm that someone has done to him will be apt to find a hundred

subjects of discontent, impatience, fear, and other unpleasant passions, especially if he can find these subjects in or near the person who did him the initial harm. In a case like this, the mechanisms that drive the transition from one idea to another go along with the mechanisms that drive the transition from one passion to another; and with both of them operating jointly in a single mental event, they bestow on the mind a double impulse. So the new passion must arise with that much greater violence, and the transition to it must be made that much more easy and natural.

I'd like to cite the authority of an elegant writer, •Joseph Addison•, who writes this:

As the imagination delights in everything that is great, strange, or beautiful, and is still more pleased the more it finds of these perfections in the same thing, so it is capable of receiving a new satisfaction by the assistance of another sense. Thus, any continued sound, as the music of birds or a fall of waters, awakens every moment the mind of the beholder, and makes him more attentive to the several beauties of the place that lie before him. Thus, if there arises a fragrance of smells or perfumes, they heighten the pleasure of the imagination and make even the colours and lushness of the landscape appear more agreeable; for the ideas of both senses recommend each other, and are pleasanter together than when they enter the mind separately: as the different colours of a picture, when they are well disposed, set off one another, and receive an additional beauty from the advantage of the situation.

In this phenomenon we see the association both of impressions and of ideas, as well as the mutual assistance they give each other.

5: The influence of these relations on pride and humility

Now we have some principles that are based on unquestionable experience. The next move is to consider how to apply them to our present topic, starting with this: we'll look over all the causes of pride and humility and ask whether the causal work is done by the •qualities of things or by the •things that have the qualities. When I examine these qualities, I immediately find that many of them agree in producing the sensation of pleasure independently of pride, and that many of them agree in producing the sensation of unpleasure independently of humility. [The phrase 'sensation of pain', which is what Hume wrote, is *now* much too narrow for what he means. And 'displeasure' won't do either, because to our ear it carries suggestions of moral disapproval and of the attitude of someone in authority. So, as the opposite of 'pleasure', this version will use 'unpleasure', an excellent English word that is exactly right for the purpose. Hume often expresses this same notion with the term 'uneasiness', probably borrowed from Locke; it will be allowed to stand.] Thus, personal beauty considered just in itself gives pleasure as well as pride; and personal ugliness causes unpleasure as well as humility. A magnificent feast delights us, and a sordid one displeases. When I find something to be true in some instances, I suppose it to be true in all, so I'll now take it for granted at present, without any further proof, that every cause of pride produces, through its special qualities, a separate pleasure, and every cause of humility in the same way produces a separate uneasiness.

Regarding •the things that *have* these qualities, it's often obvious that •they are either parts of ourselves or something nearly related to us; and it seems likely enough that this is always the case—as I shall suppose it to be. The good and bad qualities of *our* actions and manners constitute

virtue and vice, and determine *our* personal character, which has as much effect on pride and humility as anything does. Similarly, it is the beauty or ugliness of *our* person, houses, silverware, or furniture by which we are made either vain or humble. When those same qualities are possessed by things that aren't related to *us* in any way, they haven't the slightest tendency to make us proud or humble.

[In this paragraph the first six words are Hume's.] Having thus in a manner supposed two properties of the causes of pride and humility, namely that

- the qualities produce a separate unpleasure or pleasure,

—separate, that is, from their production of humility or pride—and that

- the things that *have* the qualities are related to self,

I now turn to the examination of the passions themselves, looking for something in them that corresponds to the supposed properties of their causes. From this examination we get two results.

(1) The special object of pride and humility—i.e. their always being related to *oneself*—is fixed by a basic and natural instinct; the fundamental constitution of the mind makes it absolutely impossible to have pride or humility that isn't connected with oneself, i.e. with the individual person of whose actions and sentiments each of us is intimately conscious. When we are actuated by either of these passions, our ultimate focus is on *ourselves*—the object we can't lose sight of while we are experiencing pride or humility. I don't offer to explain why this is so; I regard it as a *basic* feature of the mind.

(2) The second quality that I find in pride and humility and regard as another *basic* quality is how they feel, the special emotions that they arouse in the soul and that constitute their very being and essence. Pride is a pleasant sensation, and humility an unpleasant one; strip off the pleasure or displeasure and there's no pride or humility left. We *feel* that this is so; and there's no point in reasoning or disputing about something that is settled by feeling.

Now let us take these two established properties of the passions, namely

(1) their object (self) and (2) how they feel (pleasant or unpleasant)

and compare them to the two supposed properties of their causes, namely

(3) their relation to self, and (4) their tendency to produce pleasure or pleasure independently of the passion.

If I am right about those four items, everything falls into place—the true theory breaks in on me with irresistible convincingness. The property (3) of the cause of the passion is related to the (1) object that nature has assigned to the passion; the property (4) of the cause is related to the (2) feeling of the passion: from this double relation of ideas and impressions the passion is derived. [The rest of this paragraph expands what Hume wrote, in ways that can't easily be indicated by the 'small dots' convention.] The (3)/(1) relation involves a relation between **ideas**—for example between •the idea of a book that I wrote and the idea of •myself. The (4)/(2) relation is a relation between **impressions**—for example between •the pleasure I get from the book just as a good book and •the pleasure that is a part of my pride in the book. It is easy for idea (3) to lead to idea (1), and for impression (4) to lead to impression (2); so you can see how easy it is for the whole transition to occur from

(4) impersonal pleasure in (3) something that happens to be related to me in a certain way

to

(2) pride in something (1) because I made it.

The movement from idea to idea helps and is helped by the move from impression to impression; there's a double impact on the mind, pushing it into pride.

To understand this better, let's suppose that nature has equipped the human mind with a certain structure that is disposed produce a special impression or emotion, the one we call 'pride'. She has assigned to this emotion a certain idea, namely that of *self*, which it never fails to produce. It's not hard to entertain this; it's a kind of set-up of which we know many examples. The nerves of the nose and palate are so structured that in certain circumstances they convey certain particular sensations to the mind; the sensations of lust and hunger always produce in us the idea of the special items that are suitable to each appetite. These two features occur together in pride. The 'mental' 'organs' are structured so as to produce the passion; and when the passion has been produced it naturally produces a certain idea. None of this needs to be *proved*. It's obvious that we would never have that passion if there weren't a mental structure appropriate for it; and it's equally obvious that the passion always turns our view to ourselves, making us think of our own qualities and circumstances.

The next question is this: Does the passion arise purely from nature, or do other causes come into it as well? Unaided nature may produce •some of our passions and sensations, e.g. hunger; but it's certain that •pride needs the help of some external object, and that the organs that produce pride aren't kicked into action, as the heart and arteries are, by a basic internal movement. 'Here are three reasons for saying this.'
(a) Daily experience convinces us that pride requires certain

causes to arouse it, and fades away unless it is supported by some excellence in the character, physical accomplishments, clothes, possessions or fortune of the person whose pride is in question. (b) It's obvious that if pride arose purely from nature it would be perpetual, because its object is always the same, and there's no disposition of body that is special to pride, as there is to thirst and hunger. (c) If pride arose purely from nature, the same would be true of humility; and in that case anyone who is ever humble must be perpetually humble, except that being perpetually proud and perpetually humble he would never be either! Safe conclusion: pride must have a cause as well as an object, and neither can have any influence without the other.

Our only remaining question, then, is this: What is the cause of pride? What makes pride kick in by starting up the organs that are naturally fitted to produce it? [This next bit uses the 1–2–3–4 numbering system that was used a page back.] When I look to my own experience for an answer, I immediately find a hundred different causes of pride; and on examining them I get confirmation for my initial suspicion that each cause of pride *x* has these two features. (4) *x* is a sort of item that is generally apt to produce an impression that is allied to pride—specifically, that is *like* pride. (3) *x* has to do with something that is allied to the object of this particular instance of pride. Consider for example my pride in my brother's physical skills. (4) Physical skill generally gives pleasure, which resembles pride in being enjoyable; and (3) this instance of physical skill is possessed by someone 'allied' to me, namely my brother. Stated generally:

P: Anything that (4) gives a pleasant sensation and (3) is related to oneself arouses the passion of pride, which (2) is also agreeable and (1) has oneself for its object.

[Hume remarks that this account of the causes of pride relies on his extremely general thesis—one that he applies far beyond the territory of pride—that impressions and ideas are apt to be caused by other impressions and ideas that are suitably *related* to them, especially by the relation of resemblance. He says also that it doesn't take much to start up a causal chain that ends in pride, because the relevant 'organs' are] naturally disposed to produce that affection, and so require only a first impulse or beginning for their action.

This account of the causes of pride holds equally for the causes of humility. The sensation of humility is uneasy, as that of pride is agreeable; so the causal story reverses the (4)/(2) quality-of-sensation part of the pride story while keeping the (3)/(1) relation-to-onself part the same. In short:

H: Anything that (4) gives an unpleasant sensation and (3) is related to oneself arouses the passion of humility, which (2) is also unpleasant and (1) has oneself for its object.

[Hume says that in going from P to H what we are doing is to 'change the relation of impressions without making any change in the relation of ideas'. This is right about the ideas, wrong about the impressions, i.e. the sensations. In shifting from P to H we don't 'change the relation of impressions; it's the relation of *similarity* in both; what we change are the impressions that are thus related.] Accordingly, we find that a beautiful house owned by me makes me proud; and if through some accident it becomes ugly while still being mine, that same house makes me humble. When beautiful, the house gave pleasure, which corresponds to pride; and when it became ugly it caused unpleasure, which is related to humility. It is easy to move from pride to humility or from humility to pride, because the double relation between the ideas and impressions is there in both cases.

[In this next paragraph Hume remarks that ‘nature has bestowed a kind of attraction on certain impressions and ideas’, thus likening the phenomenon of the association of ideas and impressions with something like *magnetism*. Apart from that, the paragraph repeats the material of the preceding one, emphasizing how natural and inevitable pride and humility are. Take the case of my pride in my beautiful house. The cause of this involves

(4) a pleasure-giving quality (beauty) possessed by (3) something related to me;

and the resultant pride is

(2) a pleasant-feeling sensation associated with (1) my idea of myself.

Hume concludes:] no wonder the whole cause, consisting of a quality and of a subject, so unavoidably gives rise to the passion.

[The last paragraph of this compares Hume’s theory of pride with his theory of causal judgments. He says that there’s ‘a great analogy’ between the two.]

6: Qualifications to this system

Before I move on to examine the causes of pride and humility in detail, I should state some qualifications—five of them—to the general thesis that all agreeable (disagreeable) items that are related to ourselves by an association of ideas and of impressions produce pride (humility). These qualifications come from the very nature of the subject.

(1) When an agreeable item acquires a relation to oneself, the first passion that appears is joy; and it takes less to produce joy than to produce pride. I feel joy on being present at a feast, where my senses are regaled with delicacies of every kind; but it’s only the master of the feast who has not just •joy but also the additional passion of •self- applause and vanity. It’s true that men sometimes boast of a great entertainment at which they have only been present, using *that* relation as a basis for converting their pleasure into pride: but there’s no denying that *in general* joy arises from a more inconsiderable relation than vanity [Hume’s word], and

that many things that are not related to us closely enough to produce pride can still give us pleasure. . . .

So my general thesis that *everything that is related to us and produces pleasure or unpleasure also produces pride or humility* has to be qualified: for pride or humility to occur, the relation has to be a close one, closer than is required for joy.

(2) The second qualification says that for an item to make a person proud or humble it must be •closely related to that person and •*not closely related to many other people*. It’s a quality observable in human nature that anything that comes before us often, so that we get used to it, loses its value in our eyes and before long is treated as negligible. Also, we judge things more by comparison than by their real intrinsic merit; and we’re apt to overlook what is essentially good in a thing if we can’t use some contrast to enhance its value. These •qualities of the mind—which I’ll try to explain

later—have an effect on joy as well as pride. It is noteworthy that goods that are common to all mankind, and have become familiar to us by custom, give us little satisfaction—sometimes much less than we get from inferior things that we value highly because they are rare and unusual. But •the qualities in question have a greater effect on vanity than on joy. We rejoice in many goods that don't give us pride because they are so widespread. When health returns after a long illness, we are very conscious of our •satisfaction, but we don't regard our health as a subject of •vanity because it is shared with so many others.

Why is pride in this way so much harder to trigger than joy? I think it's for the following reason. For me to be proud, my mind has to fix on *two* items,

- (i) the cause, i.e. the item that produces pleasure; and
- (ii) myself, the real object of the passion.

But for me to have joy ·or pleasure·, all my mind needs to take in is (i). Admittedly, this cause of my joy must have *some* relation to myself, but that's needed only to make it agreeable to me; it doesn't make *myself* the object of this joy. So pride involves focussing on two items, and if neither of them is sufficiently special this must weaken pride more than joy is weakened by the insufficiency of the one item that it involves. ·He was proud of his house's wonderful copper roof; then he learned that (i) it wasn't copper but treated zinc, and that in any case (ii) all the neighbouring houses also had such roofs. This was a fatal *double* blow to his pride·.

(3) The third qualification is this: the pleasant or unpleasant item will cause pride or humility only if it is very noticeable and obvious, not only to ourselves but also to others. This detail, like those in (1) and (2), has an effect on joy as well as on pride: our ·joyful· sense of our own happiness is intensified when we appear to others to be happy. The same thing applies even more strongly to our

·proud· sense of being virtuous or beautiful. I'll try to explain later why this is so.

(4) [The fourth qualification has to do with short-lived potential causes of pride. Something x that crops up in my life in a 'casual and inconstant' manner won't give me much joy, and will give me even less pride. Why *less*? Because in pride I'm thinking well of *myself* because of my relation to x; and if x is enormously less durable than I am, this seems ridiculous. With joy the situation is different, because in joy the whole focus is on x and not on myself.]

(5) The fifth point, which is really an enlargement of my account rather than a limiting qualification of it, is this: General rules have a great influence on pride and humility, as well as on all the other passions. For example, our notion of a certain social rank is made to fit the power or riches that go with it, and we don't change this notion because of any peculiarities of health or temperament that may deprive someone in that rank of any enjoyment of his possessions. [Hume uses the word 'notion' twice in that sentence, but his real topic is the emotions or passions that go with the notion; the next two sentences make that clear.] This can be explained in the same way as the influence of general rules on the understanding. Custom easily leads us to go too far in our passions as well as in our reasonings.

I might as well point out here that *all* the mechanisms that I'll be explaining in the course of this Treatise are greatly aided by the influence of general rules and maxims on the passions. Suppose that a full-grown person with a nature the same as yours were suddenly launched into our world: isn't it obvious that he would be at a loss over everything, and would have to *work* at learning what degree of love or hatred, pride or humility, or any other passion he ought to attribute to different things? The passions are often varied by very minor mechanisms that aren't always

perfectly regular in their operation; but when custom and practice have •brought all these mechanisms to light and •settled the correct value of everything, this is bound to contribute to the easy production of the passions, and to guide us—through general established maxims—regarding how strongly we ought to prefer one object to another. . . .

A final thought relating to these five qualifications: The people who are proudest and are generally regarded as having most reason for their pride aren't always the happiest

. . . . though my account might lead you to think otherwise. An evil may be real although **(1)** its cause has no relation to me; it may be real without **(2)** being special to me; it may be real without **(3)** showing itself to others; it may be real without **(4)** being constant; and it may be real without **(5)** falling under general rules. Such evils as these won't fail to make us miserable, but they have little tendency to diminish pride. The most real and solid evils in life may all be found to be of this nature.

7: Vice and virtue

Taking these qualifications along with us, let us examine the causes of pride and humility to see whether in every case we can discover the double relations by which they operate on the passions. If we find that

every cause of pride or humility in a given person **(1)** is related to that person and **(2)** produces pleasure or uneasiness independently of the pride or humility,

there'll be no room left for doubt about the present system [= 'the account I have given of the causes of pride and humility']. I shall mainly work at proving **(2)**, because **(1)** is in a way self-evident.

I'll begin with vice and virtue, which are the most obvious causes of pride and humility. In recent years there has been a great deal of interest in whether our notions of vice and virtue are •based on natural and basic mechanisms •of the mind• or •arise from self-interest and upbringing; but this issue is irrelevant to my present topic. I'll deal with it in Book III of this Treatise. In the meantime I'll try to show that

my system holds good on either of these hypotheses—which will be a strong proof of its solidity!

Suppose that morality has no foundation in nature, and that •our judgments about• vice and virtue are based on our own self-interest or are products of indoctrination in our youth; it's still beyond question that vice and virtue produce in us a real unpleasure and pleasure; and we see this being strenuously asserted by those who defend that hypothesis about the basis of morality. They say this:

Every passion, habit, or turn of character that tends to work for our advantage or against it gives us delight or uneasiness; and *that* is where approval and disapproval come from. We easily profit from the generosity of others, but always risk losing because of their avarice; courage defends us, but cowardice leaves us open to every attack; justice is the support of society, but unchecked injustice would quickly lead

to its ruin; humility exalts us, but pride mortifies us. For these reasons the former qualities are regarded as virtues, and the latter regarded as vices.

This line of thought takes it for granted that delight or uneasiness—pleasure or displeasure—accompanies every kind of merit or demerit; and that is all I need for my purposes.

But I go further, and remark that **(1)** this moral hypothesis and **(2)** my present system are not merely compatible but one implies the other—if **(1)** is true, that provides an absolute and undefeatable proof of **(2)**. It goes as follows. If all **morality** is based on the displeasure or pleasure arising from the prospect of any loss or gain that may result from the characters of those whose moral status is in question, all the **effects of morality** must come from that same displeasure or pleasure—including among those effects the passions of pride and humility. The very essence of virtue, according to this hypothesis, is to produce pleasure, and that of vice to give displeasure. For virtue or vice to make someone proud or humble it must be part of that person's character, i.e. must be virtue or vice that he has. What further proof can we want for the double relation of impressions and ideas? [Slowing that down a bit: When I am proud of my own virtue, I move from the impression that is the pleasure associated with virtue to the impression that is the agreeable feeling of pride; and from the idea of the virtue as *mine* to the idea of *me*. So: a double relation.]

An equally conclusive argument for my account of pride and humility can be derived from the thesis that morality is something real, essential, and grounded in nature, i.e. the opposite of the thesis I have just been exploring. The most probable theory anyone has offered to explain how vice differs from virtue, and what the origin is of moral rights and obligations, is this:

Some characters and passions produce displeasure in us just from our observing or thinking about them; others produce pleasure in the same way; and all this happens because of a basic fact about how we are naturally constructed. The displeasure and pleasure are not only inseparable from vice and virtue but constitute their very nature and essence. To approve of a character is to feel a basic pleasure when it appears. To disapprove of it is to be aware of an displeasure.

According to this view, displeasure and pleasure are the primary causes of vice and virtue, which implies that they must also be the causes of all the effects of vice and virtue, including the pride and humility that inevitably accompany vice and virtue.

Even if that hypothesis in moral philosophy is false, it's still obvious that displeasure and pleasure are inseparable from vice and virtue even they aren't causes of them. Just seeing a generous and noble character gives us satisfaction; such a character never fails to charm and delight us when we encounter it, even if it's only in a poem or fable. And on the other side, cruelty and treachery displease us by their very nature; and we can't ever be reconciled to these qualities, either in ourselves or others. Thus one theory of morality is an undeniable proof of my system, and the other is at least compatible with it.

But the qualities of the mind that are commonly taken to be parts of moral duty aren't the only causes of pride and humility, which also arise from any other quality that has a connection with pleasure and displeasure. Nothing flatters our vanity more than a talent for pleasing others by our wit, good-humour, or any other accomplishment; and nothing gives us a more painful sense of humiliation than a failure of any attempt to please in such a way. No-one has ever been

able to tell what *wit* is, i.e. to show what is going on when we affirm 'It shows wit' of one system of thought and deny it of another. Our only basis for making this distinction is our *taste*—there's no other standard for us to go by. Well, then, what *is* this 'taste', which in a way brings true wit and false wit into existence, and without which no thought can be entitled to either label? It's clearly nothing but a sensation of pleasure from true wit, and of uneasiness or unpleasure from false wit, without our being able to tell the reasons for that pleasure or uneasiness. So the very essence of true and false wit is the power to give •these opposite sensations, and that's why it is that true and false wit are causes of the pride or humility that arises from •them.

[In the next sentence, and a few other places, 'schools' are university philosophy departments that are heavily influenced by Roman Catholicism and the philosophy of Aristotle.] If you have been accustomed to the style of the schools and the pulpit, and have never considered human nature in any light except the one that

they shine on it, you may be surprised to hear me talk of virtue as arousing pride, which they look on as a vice; and of vice as producing humility, which they have been taught to consider as a virtue. I don't want to argue with them about words, so I'll just say this: by 'pride' I mean the agreeable impression that arises in someone's mind when the view of his virtue, beauty, riches, or power makes him satisfied with himself, and that by 'humility' I mean the opposite impression. In these senses of the terms, it's obvious that pride isn't always morally wrong and humility isn't always virtuous. The most rigid morality allows us to get pleasure from reflecting on a generous action that we have performed; and no morality judges it to be a virtue to feel any useless remorse when we think about our past villainy and baseness. So let us examine these impressions considered in themselves, investigating their mental and physical causes, without troubling ourselves just now about any merit or blame that may come with them.

8: Beauty and ugliness

Whether we regard the body as a part of ourselves, or agree with the philosophers who regard it as something external to us, there's no denying that it is connected with us closely enough to form one of the double relations that I have said are necessary to the causes of pride and humility. [My pride in my own virtue involves a relation between the idea of *mine* and the idea of *me*. My pride in my own beauty—really my body's beauty—involves a relation between the idea of *my body's* and the idea of *me*. Hume is saying that that's a close enough relation to satisfy

the demands of his theory of pride.] To complete the application of my theory to pride in one's own beauty, all we need now is to find a suitable relation of impressions to go with that relation of ideas. Well, beauty gives us a special delight and satisfaction—and ugliness a special unpleasure—no matter what kind of beauty or ugliness it is, and no matter what kind of thing it is that *has* it, e.g. whether the thing is animate or inanimate. So that completes my theory's account of pride (humility) about one's own beauty (ugliness). We have an

appropriate relation between two ideas (my body's, me) and an appropriate relation between two impressions (pleasure, pride; or unpleasure, humility).

This effect of personal and bodily qualities supports my account of pride and humility not only •by showing that the account fits what happens when someone is made proud or humble by his own beauty or ugliness, but also •in a stronger and even more convincing way. Think about all the hypotheses that philosophers and ordinary folk have come up with to explain the difference between beauty and ugliness: they *all* come down to the thesis that

for something to be beautiful is for it to be put together in such a way as to give pleasure and satisfaction to the soul, whether by the basic constitution of our nature or by custom or by caprice.

That's the distinguishing character of beauty, and constitutes the whole difference between it and ugliness, whose natural tendency is to produce uneasiness. Thus, pleasure and unpleasure don't just *come with* beauty and ugliness—they constitute their very *essence*. You'll have no doubt about this if you give thought to the fact that much of the beauty that we admire in animals and in other objects comes from the idea of convenience and utility. The shape that produces strength is beautiful in one animal, and the shape that is a sign of agility is beautiful in another. For a palace to be beautiful it has to be not merely •shaped and coloured in certain ways but also •planned so as to be convenient to live in. Similarly, the rules of architecture require that a pillar be narrower at the top than at the base, because that shape gives us the idea of security, which is pleasant; whereas the contrary form—•narrower at the base than at the top—gives us a sense of danger, which is uneasy. From countless instances of this kind we can conclude that beauty is just a form that

produces pleasure, as ugliness is a structure of parts that conveys unpleasure; and we get further confirmation of this from the fact that beauty, like wit, can't be defined, but is discerned only by a taste or sensation. (That is, we can't define 'beautiful' by listing the intrinsic qualities that are necessary and sufficient for a thing to be beautiful. The question 'Is x beautiful?' doesn't inquire into x's •intrinsic qualities; all it asks is whether x has a certain •relational property, namely making us feel a certain way.) And since the power of producing pleasure and unpleasure constitute the essence of beauty and ugliness, the only effects there can be of beauty and ugliness must be effects of this pleasure and unpleasure; and of all their effects the most common and remarkable are pride and humility.

This argument is conclusive, I think; but let's suppose that its conclusion is false, and see where that leads us. We're supposing now that the power to produce pleasure and unpleasure is not *the essence of* beauty and ugliness; but we can't avoid the fact that pleasure and unpleasure *always accompany* beauty and ugliness. Now, here are arguments for two conclusions that add up to my account of pride and humility. **(1)** Think about •natural beauty and •moral beauty: each is a source of pride, but all they have in common is their power to produce pleasure. Now, a common effect always points to a common cause; so the real and influencing cause of the pride that comes from both kinds of beauty must be the pleasure that each gives. **(2)** Think about •the beauty of your body and •the beauty of other objects that aren't related to you in any special way. One gives you pride while the others don't—you haven't, for example, the slightest tinge of *pride* in the beauty of the Parthenon. The only way in which your body differs from *all* those other items is that it is closely related to you and they aren't. So this difference in relation-to-you must be the cause of all their

other differences, including the fact that one arouses pride while the others don't. Put these two conclusions together and they amount to my account of pride and humility: pride **(1)** comes from pleasure that is **(2)** given by something that is related to oneself; and the same account, except for switching from 'pleasure' to 'unpleasure', holds for humility. . . . This is good confirmation of my account, though I'm not yet at the end of my arguments for it.

[Hume now has two short paragraphs about one's pride in other 'bodily accomplishments', such as strength and agility. This whole range of facts, he rightly says, fit his account.]

[In this next paragraph as originally written, Hume talked about *surprise*—a quality of the surprised person, not of the surprising object. To make the paragraph fit better with his general line of thought, this version talks instead about *surprisingness*—a relational property of the surprising object, not an intrinsic property of it.] You may think or suspect that *beauty* is something real, 'an intrinsic quality of the beautiful thing' and not a mere power to produce pleasure; but you have to allow that *surprisingness* is relational—a thing's being surprising isn't an intrinsic quality of it, but merely its power to create a pleasure arising from novelty. Pride comes into the picture through a natural transition from that pleasure; and it arises *so* naturally that we feel pride in *everything* in us or belonging to us that produces surprise. We are proud of the surprising adventures we have had, the escapes we have made, and dangers we have been exposed to. That's the source of the commonplace kind of lying in which someone, without being prodded by self-interest and purely out of vanity, heaps up a number of extraordinary events that are either fictions of his brain or true stories about someone else. . . .

This phenomenon involves two empirical findings ['experiments'] that we should look at in the light of the known rules by which we judge cause and effect in anatomy, physics,

and other sciences. When we do, we'll find that we have here an undeniable argument for 'my thesis about' the influence of the double relations that I have been discussing. **(1)** We find that an object produces pride merely through the interposition of pleasure, because the quality by which it produces pride is actually just the power of producing pleasure. **(2)** We find that the pleasure causes the pride by a transition along related ideas; because when we cut off that relation the pride is immediately destroyed. We are proud of any surprising adventures in which *we* have been engaged; other people's adventures may give us pleasure, but they won't make us proud because they aren't related in the right way to ourselves. What further proof of my theory could you want?

Possible objection: 'Though nothing is more agreeable than health, and nothing more unpleasant than sickness, people are not usually proud of their health or humiliated by their illness.' It's not hard to account for this 'consistently with my system', if we bear in mind the second and fourth qualifications that I made to the system. I noted that **(2)** no item ever produces pride or humility in someone unless something about it is special to that person; and **(4)** that for something to cause pride or humility in a person *x* it must be fairly constant and must last for a length of time that holds some proportion to [Hume's phrase] the duration of *x* who is its object. Well, **(4)** health and sickness come and go **(2)** with all men, and neither is in any way the special property of one individual When an illness of any kind is so rooted in someone's constitution that he is beyond hoping for recovery, from that moment the illness does become a cause of humility. [Hume writes 'an object of humility', but this must have been a slip; look back at page 149 for his distinction between 'cause' and 'object' where pride and humility are concerned.] This is evident in old men, who are disgusted by the thought of their age

and infirmities. They try for as long as they can to conceal their blindness and deafness, their rheums and gouts, and admitting that they have such infirmities is something they do reluctantly and unhappily. Young men aren't ashamed of every headache or cold they fall into, but the general thought that we are at every moment of our lives vulnerable to such infirmities is more apt than anything else to make us

take a low view of our nature. This shows well enough that bodily pain and sickness are in themselves proper causes of humility, though we tend to filter them out from our thoughts about our merit and character because of our practice of estimating things in comparative terms rather than in terms of their intrinsic worth and value. . . .

9: External advantages and disadvantages

Although a person's pride and humility have his own qualities—the qualities of his mind and body—as their natural and more immediate causes, we find by experience that these passions can also have many other causes, and that the primary cause is somewhat obscured and lost among all the other causes that lie outside the person himself. We base our vanity on •houses, gardens, furniture, as well as on personal merit and accomplishments; and •these external advantages, distant though they are from the person himself, considerably influence his pride of which the ultimate object is himself. This happens when external things come to have some special relation to him, and are associated or connected with him. A beautiful fish in the ocean, an animal in a desert, and indeed anything that he doesn't own and isn't in any other way related to, hasn't the slightest influence on his vanity—however extraordinary and wonderful it may be. To touch his pride it must be somehow associated with *him*. His •idea of it must in some way hang on his •idea of himself, and the transition from •one idea to •the other must be easy and natural.

But here's a remarkable fact: although the relation of •resemblance conveys the mind from one idea to another in the same way that •contiguity and •causation do, it is seldom a basis for either pride or humility. [The gist of the rest of the paragraph is this: Sometimes resemblance may seem to enter into the causing of pride, but really it doesn't. I resemble you in respect of some of the fine parts of your character, and my pride may rest on this fact; but it's basically a fact about •my character, not about •how I resemble you.]

Sometimes a man *x* will be vain about resembling a great man *y* in facial features or other tiny details that don't contribute in the least to his reputation; but this isn't a widespread phenomenon, and it's not an important part of the story of pride. Here is my explanation of *why* it isn't. *x* wouldn't be vain about a trivial resemblance to *y* unless he admired him for some very shining qualities; and these qualities are the real causes of *x*'s vanity—causing it by their relation to him. Well then, *how* are they related to him?

(1) the admired person y's good qualities are parts of him, and this connects them with

(2) y's trivial qualities, which are also supposed to be parts of him.

(3) x's trivial qualities, which are connected with the

(4) the person x as a whole.

This creates a chain of several links between x and the shining qualities of the person y whom he resembles. But the chain doesn't convey much force, for two reasons: •there are so many links in it; and •when x's mind passes from (1) to (2) the contrast between them will make him aware of how trivial (2) are, which may even make him a little ashamed of the comparison and resemblance.

Thus, •contiguity and •causation are the only two relations that are needed for the causation of pride and humility—relations, that is, between the cause of the passion and its object, namely the person whose pride or humility it is. And what these relations are—so far as our present topic is concerned—is nothing but qualities by which the imagination is carried from one idea to another. In the light of that, let us consider what effect these relations can possibly have on the mind, and how they become so essential for the production of the passions. The general association-of-ideas mechanism can't be the whole story, because:

It is obvious that •the association of ideas operates so quietly and imperceptibly that we are hardly aware of it, and know about it more from its effects than from any immediate feeling or perception. •It produces no emotion, gives rise to no new impression of any kind, but only modifies ideas that the mind used to have and could recall when there was a need for them.

So it's obvious that when the mind feels either pride or

humility when it thinks about some related item, there is, along with the thoughts that can be explained in terms of the association of ideas, an emotion or original impression [Hume's phrase] that is produced by some *other* mechanism. The question then arises:

Are we dealing here with just the passion of pride itself, or is there an involvement of some other impression that is related to pride?

It won't take us long to answer this in favour of the second alternative. There are many reasons for this, but I'll focus on just one. [The next part of this paragraph is dense and difficult. Here is the gist of it, not in Hume's words: We must consider two possible mechanisms for producing pride:

(1) The cause of pride or humility produces that passion immediately, without causing any other emotion along the way.

(2) The cause of pride or humility produces that passion indirectly, by causing some other emotion E that in its turn causes the pride or humility.

If (1) were right, there would be no work to be done by the relation of ideas. But our experience shows us that the relation of ideas *does* figure in the causation of pride and humility; so of the two possible mechanisms (2) must be the actual one. Hume continues:] It's easy to see how the relation of ideas *could* play a part in this: it could facilitate the transition from E to pride. . . . I go further: I say that this is the only conceivable way for the relation of ideas to help in the production of pride or humility. An easy transition of ideas can't in itself cause any emotion; the only way it can have any role in the production of any passion is by helping the transition from one impression (E) to a related impression (pride or humility). And this is confirmed by another point: How much pride a given item x causes in a person y depends not only on •how glowing x's pride-making qualities are

but also on •how closely x is related to y. That is a clear argument for *the transition of affections along the relation of ideas*, because every change in the relation produces a corresponding change in the passion. [The italicised phrase is verbatim from Hume]. . . .

You'll see this even better if you look at some examples. Men are vain of the beauty of their country, of their county, of their parish. Here the idea of beauty plainly produces a pleasure, which is related to pride—this being a similarity between two impressions. The object or cause of this pleasure is related to self, i.e. to the object of pride—this being a relation between two ideas. It's this double relation of impressions and ideas that enables a transition to be made from the one impression to the other, from pleasure to pride.

Men are also vain about temperateness of the climate in which they were born; the fertility of their native soil, and the goodness of the wines, fruits, and other foods produced by it; the softness or the force of their language; . . . and so on. These items plainly involve the pleasures of the senses, and are basically considered as agreeable to touch, taste or hear. How could they possibly become objects of *pride* except through the relation-of-ideas transition that I have been discussing?

Since we can be vain about a country, a climate, or any inanimate item that has some relation to us, it's no wonder that we are vain about the qualities of people who are our relatives or friends. If a quality is one that I would be proud of if I had it, then I shall be proud—though less so—if (say) my brother turns out to have it. Proud people take care to display the beauty, skill, merit, trustworthiness, and honours of their relatives, these being some of the most considerable sources of their own vanity.

Just as we are proud of riches in ourselves, so—to satisfy our vanity—we want everyone connected with us to be rich also, and are ashamed of any of our friends and relations who are poor. So we get the poor as far from us as possible on the family tree, and claim to be of a good family, and to be descended from a long succession of rich and honourable ancestors.

I have often noticed that **(1)** people who boast about how old their families are are glad when they can add to this that their ancestors for many generations have continuously owned the same portion of land, and that their family has never changed its possessions or moved into any other county or province. I have also noticed that **(2)** they are even more vain when they can boast that these possessions have been passed down the male line, with none of the honours and fortune going through any female. I'll try to explain these facts through my account of pride.

Obviously, when someone boasts of the antiquity of his family he isn't boasting merely about how many ancestors he has and how far back they go; his vanity rests on their riches and good name, which are supposed to reflect some glory onto him because of his relation to them. He first considers these items, gets an agreeable feeling from them, and then—returning to himself through the relation of parent and child—is filled with pride through the double relation of impressions and ideas. Because the passion thus depends on these relations, whatever strengthens (weakens) any of them must also increase (diminish) the passion. Now, **(1)** the relation of ideas arising from kinship is certainly strengthened if it is accompanied by the *identity* of the family's possessions down through the years; if they have through all that time owned the *very same* estate, that makes it even easier for today's heirs and descendants to make mental connections between themselves and their ancestors;

and this increases their pride and vanity.

Similarly with the transmission of the honours and fortune through a succession of males without their passing through any female. It is a quality of human nature (I'll discuss it in ii.2) that the imagination naturally turns to whatever is important and considerable, at the expense of attention to lesser things that are also available to be thought about. Now, in the society of marriage the male sex has the advantage above the female [those are Hume's exact words], which is why the husband first engages our attention; and whether we're thinking about him directly or only through his relation with other items that we're thinking about, it is easier for our thought to reach him than to reach his wife, and there's more satisfaction in thinking about him than in thinking

about her. It's easy to see that this must strengthen a child's relation to its father and weaken its relation to its mother. Why? Because:

A relation between x and y is nothing but a propensity to pass from the idea of x to the idea of y, and whatever strengthens the propensity strengthens the relation. From the idea of the children we are more prone to pass to the idea of the father than to the idea of the mother; so we should regard their relation to their father as closer and more considerable than their relation to their mother.

That's why children usually have their father's name, and are rated as high-born or low-born on the basis of *his* family. . . .

10: Property and riches

But the relation that is rated as the closest—the one that does more than any other to make people proud—is *ownership*. I can't fully explain this relation until I come to discuss justice and the other moral virtues ·in Book III·. For present purposes it will suffice to define

- person x *owns* object y—or y is a *property* of x as meaning
- x is related to y in such a way that the laws of justice and moral equity allow x the free use and possession of y, and don't allow this to anyone else.

So if justice is a virtue that has a natural and basic influence on the human mind, ownership can be regarded as a particular sort of causation, the effect being **(1)** the owner's

liberty to do as he likes with y, or **(2)** the advantages he gets from y. [Put a little differently: If x owns y according to Hume's definition of what this means, then *by the laws of justice* x is free to do as he likes with y, and no-one else is; so if the laws of justice are a kind of causal law governing the basic operations of the human mind, then x's ownership of y **(1)** causes] a state of affairs in which no-one interferes with x's use of y, and **(2)** causes all the benefits x gets from using y. And the same holds if justice is, as some philosophers think, an artificial and not a natural virtue. For in that case honour and custom and civil laws take the place of natural conscience, and produce some of the same effects. Anyway, this much is certain: the mention of the •property naturally carries our thought to the •owner, and vice versa;

this shows a perfect relatedness of those two ideas, and that's all I need for my present purpose. [Hume proceeds to argue like this: given that any idea of *something I own* is related to my idea of *myself*, and that the *pleasure* I take in any of my nice possessions is related to the *pleasure* involved in being proud of something, it follows by Hume's account of pride that any person will be proud of any good possessions that he has. Whether this consequence is true, Hume says,] we may soon satisfy ourselves by the most cursory view of human life.

Everything a vain man owns is the best to be found anywhere! His houses, coaches, furniture, clothes, horses, hounds, excel all others—he thinks. And it's easy to see that the slightest advantage in any of these gives him a new subject of pride and vanity. His wine, if you'll believe him, has a finer flavor than any other; his cookery is more exquisite; his table more orderly; his servants more expert; the air in which he lives more healthful; the soil he cultivates more fertile; his fruits ripen earlier, and to greater perfection; this object is remarkable for its novelty; this other for its antiquity; here's one that is the workmanship of a famous artist; there's another that used to belong to such-and-such a prince or great man. In short, any object that is—or is related to something that is—useful, beautiful, or surprising gives rise to the passion of pride through being owned. The only thing these objects have in common is that they give pleasure. That's their only common quality, so it must be what produces the passion that is their common effect. Every new example ·of this phenomenon· is further confirmation ·of my system·, and countless instances are available; so I venture to assert that there has hardly ever been a system so fully proved by experience as the one I have put forward here.

Given that, ·as my system asserts·,

owning something that gives pleasure either by its utility, its beauty, or its novelty produces ·not only pleasure but· also pride, through a double relation of impressions and ideas,

it's not surprising that **the power of coming to own** the thing should have the same effect. That's the right way to look at riches—they are the power to come to own things that please, which is the only reason they have any influence on the passions. In many contexts paper will be considered as riches, because it can confer the power of acquiring money; and what makes money count as riches is not its qualities of solidity, weight, and fusibility, but only its relation to the pleasures and conveniences of life. This is obvious, and we can take it for granted; and then from it we can get one of my strongest arguments to prove the influence of the •double relations on pride and humility.

I have remarked that the distinction we sometimes make between •a power and •the exercise of it is entirely frivolous, and that no-one and nothing should be credited with •having an ability unless he or it •puts the ability into action [I.iii.14, page 81]. This is indeed strictly true as a matter of sound scientific thinking, but it certainly isn't true of how our passions work, because many things work on *them* through the idea and supposition of •power, independently of •its actual exercise. We are pleased when we acquire an ability to procure pleasure, and are displeased when someone else acquires a power of giving unpleasure. Experience shows that this is the case; but understanding why it's the case is another matter, and I now embark on that explanation.

According to the scholastic doctrine of free will, a person who doesn't do x because he has strong motives for not doing it may nevertheless have the power to do x, this being an aspect of his free will. That *could* lead people to distinguish

power from its exercise; but in fact it has very little to do with that distinction as made by ordinary folk, whose everyday ways of thinking are not much influenced by this scholastic doctrine. According to common notions, a man who wants to do x and is blocked from doing it by very considerable motives going the other way *doesn't* have the power to do x. **(1)** When I see my enemy pass me in the streets with a sword by his side, while I am unarmed, I don't think I have fallen into his power, because I know that his fear of the law is as strong a restraint as any iron one, and that I'm as safe as if he were chained or imprisoned. But **(2)** when someone gets an authority over me that he can exercise as he pleases, with no external obstacle and no fear of punishment for anything he does to me, *then* I attribute a full power to him, and consider myself as his subject or underling.

According to the system presented in Book I, the only *known* difference between these two cases is this:

In **(1)** we conclude, from past experience that the person never will perform the action in question, whereas in **(2)** he possibly or probably [Hume's phrase] will perform it.

Because the will of man is often fluctuating and inconstant (nothing more so!), we can't be absolutely sure about someone's future actions, ·in the manner of **(1)**·, unless he has *strong* motives. When we see someone who is free from strong motives, we take it be possible that he'll do x and possible that he won't; we may hold that motives and causes will settle how he acts, but that ·conviction· doesn't remove •the uncertainty of our judgment concerning these causes, or •the influence of that uncertainty on the passions. ·So we do after all have a connection between power and the exercise of it·. We ascribe a power of doing x to anyone who has no very powerful motive to refrain from x, and we deny that the power is possessed by anyone who does have such a motive;

from which we can infer that power *is* always related to its actual or probable exercise; we regard a person as having an ability ·or power· when we find from past experience that he probably will—or at least possibly may—exercise it. Add to this •the fact that our passions always look to the real existence of objects, and •the fact that our beliefs about what is ·or will be· real always come from past instances, and out comes •the conclusion that the power to do x consists in the possibility or probability of doing x, as discovered by experience of how the world goes.

If some other person and I are inter-related in such a way that he has no very powerful motive to deter him from harming me, so that it's uncertain whether he will harm me or not, I am bound to be uneasy in this situation and can't consider the possibility or probability of that harm without feeling a concern. The passions are affected not only by •certainty about what is going to happen but also—though not so strongly—by •the ·thought of the· possibility that something is going to happen. Even if the harm never comes, and I eventually learn that strictly speaking the person didn't have the power to harm me because he *didn't* harm me, my earlier uneasiness about this is real. And all this applies equally to agreeable passions in relation to the belief that someone can or probably will bring me some benefit.

Another point: My satisfaction at the thought of a possibly coming good is greater when it's in my own power to take the good or leave it, with no hindrance from any external obstacle and no very strong motive ·going the other way. It's easy to see why·. All men want pleasure, and by far their best chance of getting it comes when there's no external obstacle to its being produced and no perceived danger in going after it. In such a case, a man's imagination easily anticipates the satisfaction, giving him the same joy as if he were convinced that it actually exists right now.

But this doesn't fully explain the satisfaction that comes with riches. A miser gets delight from his money—i.e. from the power it gives him of getting all the pleasures and conveniences of life—though he knows he has possessed his wealth for forty years without ever using it, so that he has no reason to think that the real existence of these pleasures is any closer than it would be if he suddenly lost everything. But though he can't **(1)** *rationally infer* that he is near to getting pleasure from the use of his riches, he certainly **(2)** *imagines* it to come closer when all external obstacles are removed and he isn't deterred from taking it by any motive of self-interest or fear. For a fuller treatment of this matter, see my account of the will in iii.2, where I shall explain the false sensation of liberty that makes us imagine that we can do anything that isn't very dangerous or destructive. Whenever •someone else has no strong reason of self-interest to forgo a certain pleasure, we judge from experience that the pleasure will exist and that he will probably obtain it. But when •we ourselves are in that situation, our imagination creates an illusion that the pleasure is even closer and more immediate. The will seems to move easily in every direction, and throws a shadow or image of itself even on the side where it doesn't actually settle; and this image makes the enjoyment seem to come closer, giving us the same lively satisfaction that we would have if it were perfectly certain and unavoidable.

It will be easy now to pull all this together into a proof that when riches make their owner proud or vain (as they always do!), this comes about through a double relation of impressions and ideas. •It goes like this•:

- The very essence of riches consists in the power of getting the pleasures and conveniences of life.
- The very essence of this power consists in the prob-

ability of its being exercised and in its causing us to anticipate—by true *or false* reasoning—the real existence of the pleasure.

- This anticipation of pleasure by a person x is in itself a very considerable pleasure; and its cause—namely, x's wealth—is related to x.

So there you have it: all the parts of my account of the cause of pride are laid before us exactly and clearly. •The relation of ideas is the relation between x's idea of •his ownership of the wealth in question and his idea of •himself. And the relation of impressions is the relation between •the pleasure of anticipating pleasure from spending the wealth and •the pleasure involved in pride•.

[The section ends with two paragraphs on slavery and related themes. One makes the point that •having power over others is a source of pride for the same reason that wealth is; and that •being enslaved is a source of humility for the same reason that poverty is. Then:] The vanity of power (and the shame of slavery) are greatly increased by facts about the persons over whom we exercise our authority (or who exercise it over us). Suppose statues could be constructed having such an admirable mechanism that they could move and act in obedience to our will; *owning* such a statue would obviously be a source of pleasure and pride; but not as much pleasure and pride as one gets from having that same authority over creatures that can think and feel. [Hume's reason for this is obscure, but he says that it will recur when he discusses malice and envy. He doesn't explain—or even describe—the effect that facts about a slave-owner have on the humiliation of his slaves. And when he does return to this topic [see page ??] he still writes obscurely.]

11: The love of fame

In addition to these basic causes of pride and humility there's another cause which, though secondary, is just as powerful in its effect on the feelings. It is *the opinions of others*. Our reputation, our character, our name, are tremendously important to us; and the other causes of pride—virtue, beauty, and riches—have little influence when they aren't backed up by the opinions and sentiments of others. To explain this phenomenon I'll have to cast my net wider, and first explain the nature of sympathy. [In Hume's day 'sympathy' had a broad sense that comes from the Greek origin of the word, meaning 'feeling with': my 'sympathy' for you could consist in my sorrowing over your sorrow *or rejoicing in your joy*. In Hume's hands, we'll see in a moment, the word is even broader, covering not just fellow-feeling but also fellow-*thinking*.]

We are prone to sympathize with others, to have their inclinations and sentiments passed on to us, even if they are quite different from or even contrary to our own. This quality of human nature is notable both in itself and in its consequences. It is conspicuous not only in •children, who firmly accept every opinion proposed to them, but also in •men of great judgment and understanding, who find it hard to follow their own reason or inclination in opposition to that of their friends and daily companions. This mechanism is the source of the great uniformity we see in how the members of a single nation feel and think; this uniformity is much more likely to have arisen from sympathy than from any influence of the soil and the climate, which, though they are constant, couldn't make the character of a nation constant over a century. A good-natured man immediately joins in the mood of those he is with, and even the proudest and most surly person will pick up *something* of the frame of mind of

his countrymen and his acquaintances. Your cheerful face makes me feel serene and contented; your sad or angry face throws a sudden damp on me. Hatred, resentment, respect, love, courage, cheerfulness, and melancholy—all these passions are ones that I feel more through their being passed on •from others• than from my own natural temperament and disposition. Such a remarkable phenomenon is worth studying; let us trace it back to its basic causes.

When a person *x* has a feeling that is passed on through sympathy to another person *y*, what *y* first knows about it are its effects, the external signs in *x*'s face and speech that convey to *y* an idea of the feeling. This idea is immediately turned into an impression, and becomes so forceful and lively that it becomes the very passion itself, producing in *y* as much emotion as do any of his feelings that start within himself. This switch from idea to impression, though it happens in an instant, is a product of certain opinions and thoughts that the philosopher should look into carefully, even if *y* himself isn't aware of them.

It's obvious that the idea (or rather impression) of a person is always intimately present to him, and that his consciousness gives him such a lively conception of *himself* that nothing could possibly be livelier. So anything that is related to him will be conceived by him in a similarly lively manner (according to my scheme of things); that relatedness, even if it's not as strong as that of causation, must still have a considerable influence. Resemblance and contiguity [= 'togetherness in space or in time'] are relations that we shouldn't neglect, especially when we are informed of the real existence of an object that is resembling or contiguous. (•When the 'object' is someone else's feeling, how are we informed of

its existence? By observing the external signs of it in his face, speech, and other behaviour, and performing a cause-and-effect inference on those signs.)

It's obvious that nature has made all human creatures very much alike: the parts of our bodies may differ in shape or size, but their structure and composition are in general the same. And what holds for our bodies is also true of the structure of our minds, which is why we never observe in other people any passion or drive that doesn't have some kind of parallel in ourselves. Amidst all the variety of minds there's a very remarkable resemblance that must greatly contribute to making us enter into the sentiments of others and easily and happily accept them. And so we find that where the general resemblance of our natures is accompanied by any special similarity in our manners, or character, or country, or language, it makes our sympathy for one another even easier. . . .

•Resemblance isn't the only relation having this effect; it gets new force from other relations that may accompany it. The sentiments of others have more influence on us when the others are nearby than when they are far away. •Blood-relationships, which are a species of causation, sometimes contribute to the same effect; so does •personal acquaintance, which operates in the same way as education and custom, as we'll see more fully in ii.4. When all these relations are combined, they produce in our consciousness the strongest and liveliest conception of the sentiments or passions of others.

[Hume now reminds us of his thesis that the only systematic difference between ideas and impressions is the greater 'force and vivacity' of the latter, so that when an idea becomes lively enough it *becomes* an impression. He continues:] The lively idea of any object always approaches its impression, and we sometimes feel sickness and pain

from the mere force of imagination, making an illness real by often thinking about it. This happens most notably with •opinions and feelings—it's with •them that lively ideas are most often converted into impressions. Our feelings depend more on ourselves—on the internal operations of our minds—than any other impressions, which is why they arise more naturally from the imagination and from every lively idea we form of them. This is the nature and cause of sympathy; this is how we enter so deeply into the opinions and feelings of others

[In a long paragraph Hume now develops his view that the obvious and well-known *facts* of sympathy are good evidence both for his thesis about how ideas differ from impressions and for his theory of sympathy. Indeed, he says, the facts are so clear that there's hardly any need for any explanatory theory.]

Now let us turn from •the general topic of sympathy to •the influence of sympathy on pride and humility when these passions arise from praise and blame, from reputation and infamy. No-one ever **praises** anyone for a quality that wouldn't produce **pride** in anyone who possessed it. The songs of praise focus on his power, or riches, or family, or virtue—all of which are subjects of pride that I have already explained. According to my system, then, if the praised person saw himself in the same way that his admirer does he would *first* receive pleasure and *then* pride or self-satisfaction. Now, it is utterly natural that we should accept the opinions of others whom we admire, both **(1)** from sympathy, which makes all their sentiments intimately present to us, and **(2)** from reasoning, which makes us regard their judgment as evidence to support what they affirm. These two mechanisms—sympathy and authority—influence almost all our opinions, and are bound to have a special influence on our judgments of our own worth and character.

Such judgments are always accompanied by passion (I.iii.10); and nothing is more apt to disturb our thinking and rush us into unreasonable opinions than their connection with passion, which spreads itself across the imagination and gives extra force to every related idea. . . .

All this seems very probable in theory; but to make this reasoning fully secure we should examine the facts concerning the passions, to see if they agree with it.

A fact that gives good support to my account is this: although fame in general is agreeable, we get much more satisfaction from the approval of people whom we admire and approve of than from the approval of those whom we hate and despise; and, similarly, we are mainly humiliated by the contempt of persons on whose judgment we set some value, and don't care much about the opinions of the rest of mankind. If our mind had a *basic* instinct for wanting fame and wanting to avoid infamy, we would be equally influenced by fame and infamy no matter where they came from—the judgment of a fool is still the judgment of another person.

As well as valuing a wise man's approval more than a fool's, we get an extra satisfaction from the former when it is obtained after a long and intimate acquaintance. This is also accounted for by ·the role of contiguity in· my system.

The praises of others never give us much pleasure unless we agree with them, i.e. unless they praise us for qualities in which we do (·in our opinion·) chiefly excel. A recipient of praise won't value it much if he is

- a mere soldier being praised for eloquence,
- a preacher praised for courage,
- a bishop praised for humour,
- a merchant praised for learning.

However much a man may admire a given quality, considered in itself, if he is aware that he doesn't have it he won't get pleasure from the whole world's thinking that he does,

because their praise won't be able to draw his own opinion after them.

It often happens that a man of good family who is very poor leaves his friends and his country and tries to earn a humble living among strangers rather than among those who know about his birth and upbringing. 'I shall be unknown', he says, 'in the place I am going to. Nobody will suspect what my family background is. I'll be removed from all my friends and acquaintances, and that will make it easier for me to bear my poverty and low station in life.' When I examine these sentiments I find that in four different ways they support the position that I am defending. [Regarding the next bit and some other places in this work: •To 'contemn' someone is to have or show contempt for him—a useful verb. •In Hume's day the noun 'contempt' had a broader meaning that it does today. For us, contempt for someone is an attitude of actively despising him; but for Hume it could be merely the attitude of regarding him as negligible, treating him as of no account; though on page ?? we'll find him saying that contempt is a species of hatred.]

First, the sentiments in question show that we suffer most from the contempt of people who are both related to us by blood and live in our neighbourhood; from which we can infer that the unpleasantness of being contemned depends on sympathy, which depends on the relation of objects to ourselves. So we try to diminish this sympathy and uneasiness by getting away from those who are •blood-related to us and •contiguous to us, putting ourselves in a contiguity to strangers.

Secondly, there's something to be learned here about *how* relations come into the forming of sympathy. After my shame over my poverty has led me to go to another country to live among strangers, I am still •blood-related to my kindred and •contiguity-related to my new neighbours; ·and both groups still despise my poverty·. But those •two relations

don't have much force to create sympathy—i.e. to cause me to have towards myself the dismissive attitude that my distant kindred and my close neighbours have towards me—because they aren't united in the same persons. This shows that what are required for sympathy are not •relations *period*, but •relations that have influence in converting our ideas of the sentiments of others into the sentiments themselves.

Thirdly, we should think some more about this matter of sympathy's being reduced by the separation of relations. Suppose I am **(2)** living in poverty among strangers, and consequently am treated with little respect; I prefer that to my situation **(1)** when I was every day exposed to the contempt of my relatives and neighbours. In **(1)** I felt a double contempt—from my relatives and from my neighbours—this double contempt being strengthened by the relations of •kindred and •contiguity. But in **(2)** the people to whom I am •kin are different from those I •live near to, these two inputs of contempt don't coalesce, and that reduces their power to make me feel the contempt for myself that I know those two groups have. . . .

Fourthly, a person in **(2)** naturally conceals his birth from those among whom he lives, and is very unhappy if anyone suspects that he comes from a family that is much wealthier and socially more elevated than he is now. We always value things by *comparison*: an immense fortune for a private gentleman is beggary for a prince; a peasant would

count himself fortunate if he had 'wealth' that a gentleman couldn't scrape by on! If someone has been accustomed to a more splendid way of living, or thinks he is entitled to it by his birth and social rank, everything below that level strikes him as disagreeable and even shameful; and he tries very hard to conceal his claim to a better fortune. *He* knows that he has come down in the world; but his new neighbours know nothing of this, so that the odious comparison comes only from his own thoughts, and isn't reinforced by a sympathy with others; and that must contribute very much to his ease and satisfaction.

Any objections to my thesis that the pleasure we get from praise arises from the passing on of sentiments will turn out—when properly understood—to *confirm* the thesis. Here are three of them. •Popular fame may be agreeable even to a man who despises ordinary people; but that's because the very number of them gives them additional weight and authority. •Plagiarists are delighted with praises that they know they don't deserve; but this is building castles in the air, with the imagination entertaining itself with its own fictions and trying to make them firm and stable through a sympathy with the sentiments of others. •Proud men are very shocked by contempt though they don't agree with it; but that's because of the conflict between the passion that is natural to them and the one that comes to them from sympathy. . . .

12: The pride and humility of animals

[In this section Hume argues that the phenomena of pride and humility in non-human animals can be explained by his theory and not in any other way. Based as it is on such notions as that of the pride of peacocks and vanity of nightingales, the section has a certain charm but little serious intellectual interest.]