

# 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.

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## Part ii: Love and hatred

### 1: The objects and causes of love and hatred

It is quite impossible to *define* the passions of love and hatred, because each produces just one simple impression with no internal complexity, so that trying to define them would be like trying to define 'red' or 'sweet'. And it's altogether unnecessary to give you markers that would help you to identify cases of love and hatred, because your own feeling and experience enable you to pick them out well enough. It would also be a clumsy procedure for me to offer such markers at this stage, because they would have to involve the nature, origin, causes, and objects of love and hatred, and these are precisely what I am going to be discussing throughout Part ii. This is the line I took when I embarked on my discussion of pride and humility in 2<sub>i</sub>; and indeed pride/humility are so *like* love/hatred that my explanation of the latter has to start with an abbreviated account of my reasonings concerning the former.

Whereas the immediate object of pride and humility is ourself, the particular person whose thoughts, actions, and sensations we are intimately conscious of, the object of love and hatred is some other person, whose thoughts, actions, and sensations we are not conscious of. This is obvious enough from experience. Our love and hatred are always directed to some sentient being other than ourselves. We talk of 'self-love', but that's not 'love' in the strict sense, and doesn't produce a feeling that is in the least like the tender emotion that is aroused by a friend or mistress. Similarly with 'self-hatred': we may be disgusted by our own faults and follies, but it's only from harm caused by *others* that we ever feel anger or hatred properly so-called.

Although the object of love and hatred is always some other person, it's clear that this object is not strictly speaking the cause of these passions. It *can't* be, because: Love and hatred are directly contrary in how they feel, yet have the same object as one another; so if that object were also their cause, it would produce these opposite passions in an equal degree—in which case they would cancel out and there would be no such thing as love or hatred. So they must have a cause that is different from the object.

[Don't spend energy trying to see how this argument works, because it doesn't. The analogous argument for pride/humility succeeds, with help from the premise

'Pride and humility have the same object'—namely oneself.

But the present argument needs the premise

'Love and hatred have the same object'—namely someone else,

which is obviously absurd. Hume, for all his brilliance, sometimes goes too fast.]

The causes of love and hatred turn out to be very various and not to have much in common. A person's virtue, knowledge, wit, good sense, or good humour produce love and respect, and the opposite qualities produce hatred and contempt. Love can come from physical accomplishments such as beauty, strength, speed, nimbleness, and hatred from their contraries. And family, possessions, clothes, nation, and climate—any one of these can produce love and respect, or hatred and contempt, depending on what its qualities are.

These causes point us towards a new way of looking at the distinction between the causally operative quality and the thing that has it. A prince who owns a stately palace commands the respect of the people on that account—why?

Because •the palace is beautiful and because •he owns it. Remove either of these and you destroy the passion; which shows that the cause is a complex one.

Many of the points I have made regarding pride and humility are equally applicable to love and hatred; it would be tedious to follow them through in detail. All I need at this stage is the general remark that

•the **object** of love and hatred is obviously some thinking person, that •the sensation of love is always agreeable, and that •the sensation of hatred is always disagreeable.

We can also suppose, with some show of probability, that

•the **cause** of love or hatred is always related to a thinking being, and that •the cause of love produces pleasure and •the cause of hatred produces unpleasure

quite apart from its relation to a thinking being. •For example, through being owned by the Prince the palace causes people to love him, but the palace—just in itself, whoever owns it—gives pleasure.

The supposition that nothing can cause of love or hatred without being related to a person or thinking being is more than merely probable—it's too obvious to be questioned. . . . A person looking out of a window sees me in the street, and beyond me a beautiful palace that has nothing to do with me; no-one will claim that this person will pay me the same respect as if I were owner of the palace.

[Hume goes on to say that it's not so immediately obvious that love/hatred fit the pride/humility story about connections between impressions and ideas, and so on. But he will let himself off from going through all that, he says, because

he is willing to defend on empirical grounds the general thesis (not that he puts it quite like this) that if you •take a complete true theory about pride and humility, and •in that story replace every occurrence of 'oneself' by an occurrence of 'someone else', the result will be a complete true theory about love and hatred. The defence of this starts now.]

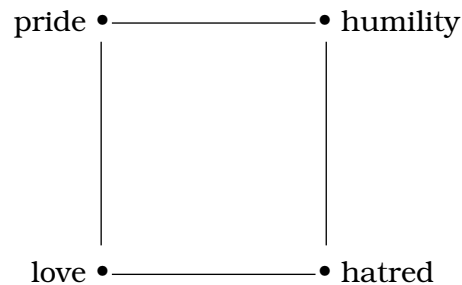
Anyone who is satisfied with his own character or intellect or fortune will almost certainly want to show himself to the world, and to acquire the love and approval of mankind. Now, it's obvious that the qualities and circumstances that cause pride or self-respect are just exactly the ones that cause vanity or the desire for reputation, and that we always put on display the features of ourselves that we are best satisfied with. Well, if the qualities of others that produce love and respect in us were not the very same qualities that produce pride in ourselves when we have them, this behaviour would be quite absurd; no-one in that case could expect other people's sentiments about him to correspond with his own. It's true that few people can create exact theories about the passions, or reflect on their general nature and resemblances; but we don't need that kind of philosophical progress to move through this territory without making many mistakes. We get enough guidance from common experience, and from a kind of presentation [Hume's word] that tells us, on the basis of what we feel immediately in ourselves, what will operate on others. Therefore: since the same qualities that produce pride or humility also cause love or hatred, all my arguments to show that •the causes of pride and humility arouse pleasure or unpleasure independently of the passion will hold just as clearly for •the causes of love and hatred.

## 2: Experiments to confirm this system

Anyone who weighs these arguments will confidently accept the conclusion I draw from them regarding the transition along related impressions and ideas, especially given what an easy and natural mechanism this is. Still, in order to place this system beyond doubt—both its love/hatred part and its pride/humility part—I shall present some new experiments on all these passions, and will also recall a few of the points I have formerly touched on. The ‘experiments’ are mostly thought-experiments.

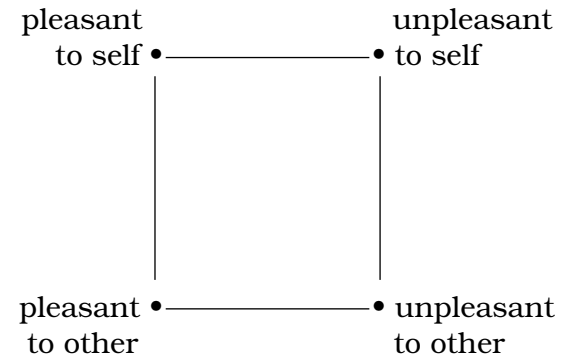
As a framework for these experiments, let’s suppose that I am in the company of a person for whom I have had no sentiments either of friendship or enmity. This presents me with the natural and ultimate object of all these four passions—myself as the proper object of pride or humility, the other person as the proper object of love or hatred.

Now look carefully at the nature of these passions and how they relate to each other. It’s evident that we have here four ‘possible’ emotions, related to one another in ways that can be represented by a square. [He has in mind a square like this:



In this the horizontal lines represent ‘identity of object’ and the verticals represent sameness in respect of pleasant/unpleasant. Hume’s summing up of this could (though

he doesn’t put it this way) be represented by another square in which each corner represents, regarding the passion in question, •how it feels and •to whom it is directed:



Hume continues:] I say then that for anything to produce any of these ·four· passions it must involve a double relation—a relation of ideas to the object of the passion, and a relation of sensation to the passion itself. That’s what I am going to argue for, on the basis of eight experiments. [Through all this, bear in mind how Hume’s terminology works in this context. If you are proud of your wealth and I respect (or ‘love’) you because of it, your *owning* the wealth creates a ‘relation of ideas’, i.e. a relation between my or your idea of that wealth and my or your idea of you; and the wealth’s giving *pleasure* creates a ‘relation of impressions’, i.e. a similarity between that pleasure and your pride and my love. Similarly for my shame (or your contempt) regarding my house.]

**(1)** Take the case I have described, where I am in the company of some other person ·towards whom I have none of the four passions we are considering·, and add to it some object that has no relation (of impressions or of ideas) to any of the four. Let it be an ordinary dull stone that isn’t owned by either of us, and isn’t an independent source of pleasure

or unpleasure—so obviously it won't produce any of the four passions. Now replace the stone by anything you like, *x*, and suppose my mentality to be changed in any way you like; if you do this in such a way that *x* doesn't relate in a certain way to myself or the other person, or relate in a certain other way to pleasure or unpleasure, it won't be credible that *x* should produce in me any of the four passions. Try it out on them, one by one, and you'll see.

**(2)** [In this paragraph and the next, the stuff about 'tilting' towards one 'pole' of an 'axis' goes well beyond Hume's wording, but it does express the meaning of what he says.] Try this again with an object *x* that has just one of the two relations in question, and see what emerges. Specifically, suppose that I *own* the unremarkable stone, so that it has the crucial relation to the object of the passions: it obviously still won't be a source of pride in me or of love or respect in the other person, because there's nothing here to tilt the situation towards one rather than the other pole of the pride/humility axis or the love/hatred axis . . . . No trivial or common object that doesn't independently cause pleasure or unpleasure can ever produce pride or humility, love or hatred, no matter how it relates to any person.

**(3)** So a relation of •ideas is clearly not enough on its own to give rise to any of these passions. Now let us see what can be achieved by a relation of •impressions on its own: instead of the stone let's have an object that is pleasant or unpleasant but has no relation either to me or to the other person. What do we find now? Let's first look at the matter theoretically, as I did in **(2)**. We find that the object does have a small though uncertain connection with these passions, and it does involve a tilt towards one pole of each axis; in terms of how they feel, pleasure is not very different from pride, unpleasure from humility or shame. But nothing in this situation enables the feeling in question to focus on one

person rather than another. For a state to count as one of our four passions, it must not only

*feel* a certain way

but must also

*be targeted at* some particular person

the person who is proud/humble or is loved/hated. And this present situation provides no such target. . . .

Fortunately, this theoretical approach fits perfectly with what we find in experience. Suppose I'm travelling with a friend through a country to which we are both utter strangers; if the views are beautiful, the roads good, and the inns comfortable, this may well put me into a good mood in relation to myself and to my friend. But as this country has no 'special' relation either to myself or to my friend, it can't be the immediate cause of pride or love 'because those are targeted on individual persons'. 'I may say 'I love this country!', but this isn't love strictly so-called'. It is the overflowing of an elevated frame of mind rather than an established passion. And all this can be re-applied to the case of a nasty countryside and the passions of humility and hatred.

**(4)** [Hume says here that we may well be convinced by what he has said so far, but that he will push forward in further arguing for his theory of the four passions. He does this with a serial thought- experiment, that can be expressed in terms of the second square on page 177. I start with the thought of some virtue of mine, of which I am proud (top left). I then suppose that the virtue belongs not to me but to you, and this produces love (bottom left). Next, I go back to the starting-point and instead replace the (pleasant) virtue by some unpleasant vice that I have; this produces humility (top right); and if instead I take some vice of yours the result is hatred (bottom right). In Hume's own presentation of all this (which is about five times as long), he says that a virtue

of yours has •one relation that favours my being proud, this being outpulled by the •two relations that favour my having love for you. Similarly with each of the other competitions between adjacent corners of the square. He continues:]

But to make the matter still more certain, switch the examples from virtue and vice to beauty and ugliness, then to riches and poverty, then to power and servitude. With each of these, suitable changes in the relevant relations take us around the square of the passions in the same way as with virtue and vice—and the result is the same no matter what order we adopt in changing the relations. It's true that in some cases we'll get respect (or contempt) rather than love (or hatred); but these are basically the same except for differences in their causes. I'll explain this later.

**(5)** Now let us go through all that again with just one difference: we are now to suppose that the other person in the scene is closely connected with me either by blood or friendship—he's my son or my brother or an old friend of mine. Let us see what difference that makes to all the switches that we went through in **(4)**.

Before we consider what the differences actually are, let us work out what they must be if my theory is right. Here and in **(6)** I'll state all this in terms of an attractive virtue; you can work out for yourself how to adapt it to the case of a nasty vice. Clearly, my theory says that the passion of love must arise towards the person who possesses the virtue—the person who is linked to it by a connection of ideas. [Hume speaks of the person who is connected to the cause of my pleasure 'by these double relations which I have all along required', but that is a mistake. According to his theory there's a relation-of-ideas between *the person* and the virtue, and a relation-of-impressions between *my pleasure at his virtue* and my love for him. The theory doesn't have any person entering into any 'double relation'. When we come to 'experiment' **(6)** we'll again find Hume being careless about what is supposed to be

related to what, and in that case the carelessness will do damage.] The virtue of my brother must make me love him; but then the theory has something further to say: because he is my brother, there's a relevant relation-of-ideas between his virtue and myself; and so according to the theory my love for him will give rise to pride, taking me from the lower-left to the upper-left corner of the square.

That's what my theory says will happen, and I am pleased to find that that's what actually *does* happen in such cases. The virtue of a son or brother not only arouses love but also, by a new transition from similar causes, gives rise to pride; nothing causes greater vanity than some shining quality in our relatives. This exact fit between experience and my reasoning is convincing evidence of the solidity of the theory on which the reasoning was based.

**(6)** [Hume here presents **(a)** a certain empirical fact, **(b)** a reason for thinking that it clashes with his theory, and **(c)** an explanation of **(a)** that reconciles it with the theory. He starts:] This case is strengthened even further if we make a switch in the story, so that instead of starting with

- my brother's virtue, which causes me first to love him and then to be proud of him,

we start with

- my own virtue, with this having no special connection with my brother.

**(a)** Experience shows us that this switch breaks the chain: my mind is not now carried from one passion to another, as in the preceding instance. We never love a brother for the virtue we see in ourselves, though obviously we feel pride when it is he who has the virtue. The transition from pride to love is not so natural as the transition from love to pride. **(b)** This may seem to clash with my theory, because the relations of impressions and ideas are in both cases precisely the same.

[Hume evidently means that his theory might lead us to expect that in this present case

my love for myself because of my virtue will make me proud of my brother because of my virtue;

but *why* might it lead us to expect that preposterous result? Hume's only answer to this is that in the present case 'the relations of impressions and ideas are precisely the same' as they were in (5); but that doesn't explain anything because it isn't true—see the long small-type note immediately before this one. Hume's (c) attempt to reconcile the fact with the theory hinges on an explanation of why, although Gerald and I are symmetrically brothers of one another, it is easier for my imagination to pass from •the thought of him to •the thought of myself than it is for it to go in the opposite direction. That in itself is graspable, but it doesn't fend off a crash because there was no threat of a crash in the first place.]

(7) We have seen that a passion  $P_1$  whose object is item  $x_1$  easily generates a **similar** passion  $P_2$  whose object  $x_2$  is idea-related to  $x_1$ . For example, the ( $P_1$ ) pleasure I get from ( $x_1$ ) my son's virtue generates ( $P_2$ ) pride in me, and of course ( $x_2$ ) the object of my pride is something idea-related to my son, namely myself. The mechanism producing that result ought to work even more smoothly in bringing it about that a passion  $P$  whose object is item  $x_1$  easily generates **the very same** passion  $P$  with an object  $x_2$  that is idea-related to  $x_1$ . And that is what we find. When we either love or hate someone, the passions seldom stay within their first bounds; they stretch out towards all the nearby objects, taking in the friends and relatives of the person we love or hate. When someone is our friend, it is totally natural for us to have friendly feelings towards his brother, without looking into the brother's character. A quarrel with one person makes us hostile to his whole family, even if they had no part in whatever it was that generated the trouble. There are countless instances of this kind of thing.

There's a wrinkle in this that I'll need to deal with before moving on. It's obvious that although all passions pass easily from one object to another related to it, when this transition

- goes from an object to a related one that is somehow lesser, less considerable, than the first object is, the transition happens more easily than when it
- goes in the opposite direction, from the lesser to the greater.

For example, it is more natural for us to love the son on account of the father than to love the father on account of the son; the servant on account of the master than the master on account of the servant; the subject on account of the prince than the prince on account of the subject. Similarly, we more readily come to hate a whole family when our first quarrel is with the head of it than when we are displeased with a son, or servant, or some low-ranked member of the family. In short, our passions, like other objects, fall more easily than they rise!

This phenomenon poses a challenge, because the factor that makes it easier for the imagination •to pass from remote things to nearby ones than to go from nearby to remote also makes it easier for the imagination •to pass from lesser things to greater ones than to go from greater to lesser. Whatever has the greatest influence is most taken notice of; and whatever is most taken notice of presents itself most readily to the imagination. In any subject we're more apt to overlook what is trivial than to overlook what seems to be important, especially if it's the important item that *first* engages our attention. [Hume gives examples: Jupiter before its planets, imperial Rome before its provinces, master before servant, subject before monarch. He continues:] That same mechanism is at work in the common custom of making wives bear the name of their husbands, rather than husbands that of their wives; as also the ceremonial



custom of allowing those whom we honour and respect to *go first* in any parade. There are many other instances of the mechanism, but it's obvious enough without them.

Now, since the imagination finds it just as easy to pass from the lesser to the greater as to pass from the remote to the nearby, why doesn't this easy •transition of ideas help the •transition of passions in the former case as well as in the latter? . . . . The love or hatred of an inferior doesn't easily cause any passion towards the superior, even though the natural propensity of the imagination is to move in that direction; whereas the love or hatred of a superior does cause a passion towards the inferior, again contrary to the propensity of the imagination. . . .

[Having spent two of his pages setting up this problem, Hume now spends two difficult pages solving it. The gist of the solution is as follows. Take the example of

A: **(a1)** love for **(a2)** the father,

B: **(b1)** love for **(b2)** the son.

So far as transition from one idea to another is concerned, the move from **(b2)** to **(a2)** is easier than the move in the opposite direction. So the puzzling fact that the move from A to B is easier than the reverse must come from its being easier to move from **(a1)** to **(b1)** than to move in the opposite direction; that is, it must be that the tendency of the transition of **ideas** is overpowered by a reverse tendency of the transition of **impressions**. Hume then proceeds to show why it is

that the transition of impressions is easier in that direction. The basic thought is that the father is more considerable than the son, so that any passion towards the father will be stronger than the corresponding passion towards the son; and it's easier to pass from a stronger passion to a weaker one than vice versa. So we have one tendency favouring the move from A to B, and another favouring the move from B to A. Why does the A-to-B tendency trump the B-to-A one? Because, Hume says, 'the affections are a more powerful principle than the imagination', meaning that impressions push harder than ideas do. He goes on to say at some length that his theory's ability to resolve this difficulty is further strong evidence for its truth.]

**(8)** [Hume here presents and explains a seeming exception to his thesis that it's easier to pass from love or hatred to pride or humility than to pass from pride or humility to love or hatred. His handling of this is hard to grasp, and seems not to be needed for anything that comes later; so let's let ourselves off from trying to master it.]

. . . . If we consider all the eight experiments that I have explained, we shall find that the same mechanism appears in all of them—that it's by means of a transition arising from a double relation of impressions and ideas that pride and humility, love and hatred, are produced. And this double-transition mechanism explains not only the straightforward cases but also the seemingly anomalous ones. . . .

### 3: Difficulties solved

After so many and such undeniable proofs drawn from daily experience and observation, there seems to be no need to explore in detail all the causes of love and hatred. What I shall do in the rest of Part ii is ·in this section· to remove some difficulties concerning particular causes of these passions, ·in sections 4 and 5 to discuss some rather special cases·, and ·in sections 6–11· to examine compound affections arising from the mixture of love and hatred with other emotions.

We all know that any person acquires our kindness, or is exposed to our ill-will, in proportion to the pleasure or unpleasure we receive from him, and that the passions stay exactly in step with the sensations in all their changes and variations. We are sure to have affection for anyone who can find ways to be useful or agreeable to us, by his services, his beauty, or his flattery; and, on the other side, anyone who harms or displeases us never fails to arouse our anger or hatred. When we are at war with some other nation, we detest them as ‘cruel’, ‘perfidious’, ‘unjust’, and ‘violent’, but always judge ourselves and our allies to be fair, moderate, and merciful. If our enemies’ general is successful, it’s hard for us to allow that he is *a man* at all. He is a sorcerer (·we tend to think·); he is in touch with demons; . . . he is bloody-minded, and takes pleasure in death and destruction. But if our side succeeds, then our commander has all the opposite good qualities—he’s a pattern of virtue, as well as of courage and steadiness. His treachery we call ‘policy’; his cruelty is an evil inseparable from war. In short, we deal with each of his faults either by trying to minimize it or by dignifying it with the name of the closest virtue. It is evident that this same way of thinking runs through common life.

Some people add another condition to this; they require not only that the unpleasure and pleasure arise from the person, but that it arise knowingly, having been designed and intended by the person. A man who wounds and harms us by accident doesn’t become our enemy on that account; and we don’t feel any ties of gratitude to someone who accidentally does something that is helpful to us. We judge the actions by •the intentions; it’s through •those that the actions become causes of love or hatred.

But here we must make a distinction. If what pleases or displeases us in someone else is constant and inherent in his person and character, it will cause us to love or hate him independently of what he *intends*; but otherwise—i.e. when someone pleases or displeases us by some short-lived action rather than a durable character-trait—we won’t love or hate him unless ·we think that· he intended to produce the displeasing result. Someone who is disagreeable because he is ugly or stupid is the object of our aversion [Hume’s word], though he certainly hasn’t the least intention of displeasing us by these qualities. But if the unpleasure he gives us comes not from •a quality that he has but from •an action that he performs—something produced and annihilated in a moment—unless it comes from a particular forethought and design it won’t be sufficiently connected with *him* ·to cause anything like love or hatred in us·. It’s not enough that the action arises from him, has him as its immediate cause and author. This relation on its own is too feeble and inconstant [Hume’s phrase] to be a basis for love or hatred. ·When considered apart from any intention or purpose, the action is really just a bodily movement·; it doesn’t reach down into the person’s sensing and thinking part; it doesn’t

come from anything durable in him, or leave anything behind it in him—it passes in a moment, and is as though it had never been. In contrast with this, an *intention* shows certain qualities of the person that

- are still qualities of him after the action has been performed,
- connect the action with him, and
- make it easier for us to move between ideas of the action and ideas of him.

We can never think of him without reflecting on these qualities, unless repentance and a change of life have altered him in a relevant way, in which case our the passion is likewise altered.

[The word ‘injury’ in what follows isn’t restricted to bodily damage. It means more generally ‘harm’, though restricted to harm deliberately inflicted. In a moment we’ll see Hume implying that an ‘injury’ minus the nasty frame of mind in which it was done is ‘mere harm’. He *also* sometimes labels as ‘injury’ something that wasn’t deliberate; in the interests of clean line-drawing, those occurrences will be put between quotation-marks.] I have just given one reason why an intention is needed if either love or hatred is to be aroused, but there is also another. The intention with which an action is performed doesn’t just •strengthen the relation of ideas between the action and the person•; it is often needed to •produce a relation of impressions between our perception of the action and our feelings about it•, i.e. needed for the action to give us pleasure or unpleasure. That is because, as we can all see, the principal part of any injury is the contempt and hatred that it shows in the person who injures us; without that, the mere harm gives us a less acute unpleasure. Similarly, a bit of help is agreeable mainly because it flatters our vanity, and shows the kindness and respect of the person who gives it. Remove the intention and the help is much less gratifying. . . .

Admittedly, removing the intention doesn’t entirely remove the (un)pleasantness of what is done. But then it doesn’t entirely remove love and hatred either. We all know that men become violently angry over ‘injuries’ that they have to admit were entirely involuntary and accidental. This emotion doesn’t last long, but it’s enough to show that there’s a natural connection between uneasiness and anger, and that a relation of ideas doesn’t have to be very sturdy for a relation of impressions to operate along it. But when the impression has lost some of its violence, the defect of the relation begins to be better felt—i.e. when the man becomes less angry he becomes more aware of the fact that the real object of his anger doesn’t have much to do with the person he thought he was angry with. And because a person’s ‘long-term’ *character* isn’t involved in ‘injuries’ that he causes in a casual and involuntary way, such ‘injuries’ are seldom the basis for any lasting enmity.

Compare that with a parallel phenomenon. When something unpleasant happens to us because of someone’s conduct, our strength of feeling about this may be reduced not because the person •wasn’t acting deliberately but because he •was only doing what his duty required him to do. If we are in the least reasonable, we won’t be *angry* with someone who deliberately harms us, if the source of this intention is not hatred and ill-will but justice and equity, despite the fact that he is the cause—the *knowing* cause—of our sufferings. Let us look into this a little.

[Hume goes on to remark that this latest phenomenon isn’t total or universal. A criminal will usually be hostile towards the judge who condemns him, although he knows that he deserves the sentence. And all of us are at least somewhat like this. And a second point: When something unpleasant happens to us through somebody’s action, our immediate reaction is angry and hostile, and that leads us to

look for evidence that the other person was malicious,] so as to justify and establish the passion. Here the idea of injury

doesn't produce the passion—it arises from it. . . .

#### 4: Love for people with whom one has some connection

Having given a reason why various actions that cause real pleasure or unpleasure arouse little if any love or hatred towards the people who performed them, I now need to show what is going on in the pleasure or unpleasure of many items that we find by experience *do* produce these passions.

According to my theory, love and hatred can be produced only where there is a double relation of impressions and ideas between the cause and effect. But though this is universally true, it's a conspicuous fact that the passion of love can be aroused by a single relation of a different kind ·from either of these·, namely a relation between ourselves and the person we love. ·Clearly that's a relation between persons, not between impressions or between ideas; but· it doesn't make the other two kinds of relation irrelevant; what it does, rather, is to bring them along with it.

**(1) ·The connection phenomenon·:** What I'm talking about is the relation that holds between x and y if x is *united by some connection* [Hume's phrase] to y. If someone is united to me by some connection, I'll give him a share of my love (greater or lesser depending on what the connection is), without enquiring into his other qualities. Thus

- blood-relatedness of parents to their children

produces parental love, which is the strongest tie the mind is capable of; and lesser degrees of love come with

- more distant blood-relationships.

And it's not only those—*any* kind of relatedness whatsoever tends to produce love. We love

- our countrymen,
- our neighbours,
- others in our trade or profession, even
- those who have the same name as we do.

Every one of these relations is regarded as a *tie* of a sort, and entitles the person to a share of our affection.

**(2) ·The acquaintance phenomenon·:** There's another phenomenon that is parallel to this, namely the fact that love and kindness towards a person can arise from our merely being acquainted with him, without any kind of relation. When we have become used to being in the company of a certain person, without finding that there's anything specially good about him, we can't help preferring him to strangers who we are sure are all-round better than he is. These two phenomena—the effects of •connection and of •acquaintance—will throw light on one another, and can both be explained in terms of the same mechanism.

Those who enjoy speaking out against human nature have said that man is utterly incapable of supporting himself, and that when you loosen his grip on external objects he immediately slumps down into the deepest melancholy and despair. They say that this is the source of the continual search for amusement in gaming, in hunting, in business, by

which we try to forget ourselves and arouse our spirits from the lethargic state that they fall into when not sustained by some brisk and lively emotion. [The ‘(animal) spirits’—mentioned in the very first paragraph of Book II— belong to a physiological theory popularized by Descartes. They were supposed to be a superfine superfluid stuff that could move fast and get in anywhere, doing the work in the body that is actually done by impulses along the nerves. Hume quite often brings them in, apparently with confidence; but the phrase ‘it is natural to imagine’ on page 219 may be a signal that he knows how wildly hypothetical the theory of ‘spirits’ is.] I agree with this line of thought to this extent: I admit that the mind can’t entertain itself unaided, and naturally looks for external items that can produce a lively sensation and stir up the spirits. When such an item appears, the mind awakes, so to speak, from a dream, the blood flows more strongly, the heart is elevated, and the whole man acquires a vigour that he can’t achieve in his solitary and calm moments. That is why *company* is naturally such a pleasure: it presents us with the liveliest thing there is, namely a rational and thinking being like ourselves, who lets us in on all the actions of his mind, shares with us his innermost sentiments, and lets us see his various emotions at the very moment when they are produced. . . .

Given this much, all the rest is easy. Just as the company of strangers is agreeable to us *for a short time* because it enlivens our thought, so the company of people we are **(1)** connected to or **(2)** acquainted with must be especially agreeable because it enlivens us more and for a longer time. If someone is connected with us ·in some way like those listed near the start of this section·, our conception of him is made lively by the easy transition from ourselves to him. And having long been acquainted with a person also makes it easier to think of him and strengthens our conception have of him. The ‘connections’ phenomenon

and the ‘acquaintance’ phenomenon have just one thing in common, namely that they both produce a lively and strong idea of the object. (·I can give a round-about argument for that last statement·. The **(1)** ‘connections’ phenomenon is parallel to our ·reasonings from cause and effect; the **(2)** ‘acquaintance’ phenomenon is parallel to what happens in ·education; and the only thing that ·reasoning has in common with ·education is that they both lead to the formation of strong and lively ideas.) Their role in producing love or kindness must depend on the force and liveliness of conception that goes into the forming of love. Such a conception is especially agreeable, and makes us have an affectionate regard for everything that produces it, when the proper object of kindness and good-will. [By the words after the last comma Hume presumably means to imply that we wouldn’t have affection for a *non-person* that happened to cause us to have a strong agreeable conception.]

**(3) ·The resemblance phenomenon·:** It is obvious that people get together according to their individual temperaments and dispositions—that cheerful men naturally love others who are cheerful, as serious men are fond of others who are serious. This happens not only when they notice this resemblance between themselves and others, but also by the natural course of their disposition and a certain sympathy that always arises between people of similar characters. When they notice the resemblance, it operates by producing a relation of ideas in the way a **(1)** connection does. In cases where they don’t notice it, some other mechanism must be at work; and if this other mechanism is *like* the one that operates in **(1)**, this phenomenon must be accepted as further evidence for my over-all account of these matters. ·I now proceed to show what this other mechanism is·.

The idea of ourselves is always intimately present to us, and noticeably enlivens our idea of any other object

to which we are related in any way. The enlivening of this idea gradually turns it into a real impression (remember that the only difference between ideas and impressions is in their degree of force and vivacity). Now, this change from idea to impression is bound to happen more easily if the object in question is a person who is temperamentally like ourselves, because in that case we are naturally apt to have the same impressions that the other person has, so that any given impression will arise from the slightest of causes. [The impressions that Hume is writing about here are *feelings*. The thought is that it won't take much to make me amused by something that amuses Peter if we are both cheerful people.] When that happens, the resemblance changes the idea into an impression not only by means of the relation, and by transfusing the original vivacity into the related idea; but also by presenting such materials as take fire from the least spark [that last clause is verbatim Hume]. So this is a second way in which love or affection arises from resemblance. Out of all this we learn that a sympathy with others is agreeable only because it gives an emotion to the spirits. Why? Because an easy sympathy and correspondent emotions are the only things that are common to **(1)** connection, **(2)** acquaintance, and **(3)**

·temperamental· resemblance.

The range of things that a person may be proud of can be seen as a similar phenomenon. After we have lived for a considerable time in a city, however little we liked it at first, our dislike gradually turns into fondness as we become familiar with—*acquainted with*—the streets and buildings. The mind finds satisfaction and ease in the view of objects to which it is accustomed, and naturally prefers them to others that may be intrinsically better but are less known to it. This same quality of the mind seduces us into having a good opinion of ourselves, and of all objects that belong to us. They appear in a stronger light, are more agreeable, and consequently are fitter subjects of pride and vanity than any others are.

[Hume now devotes two pages to putting some of his theoretical apparatus to work in a fairly unconvincing explanation of why the tie between a child and his widowed mother becomes weaker if the mother remarries, whereas the remarriage of a widower doesn't equally weaken the tie between him and his child. The explanation leans heavily on the view, encountered earlier, that men are greater or more significant than women.]

### 5: Esteem for the rich and powerful

Nothing has a greater tendency to give us a respect for someone than his being rich and powerful; and nothing has a greater tendency to give us contempt for someone than his being poor and living poorly; and because respect and contempt are kinds of love and hatred, this is a good place to explain these phenomena.

In this case we ·as theorists· are fortunate: rather than having to look around for some mechanism that could produce this effect, we have only to choose the best out of three candidates for this role. It may be that we get satisfaction from others' wealth, and respect the possessors of it, because:

(1) the objects a rich person possesses—his house, furniture, pictures, gardens—are agreeable in themselves, and must therefore give pleasure to anyone who sees them or thinks about them. Or because

(2) we expect the rich and powerful to do us some good by giving us a share in their possessions. Or because

(3) sympathy makes us share in the satisfaction of everyone we come into contact with, including rich people.

These three mechanisms could work together in producing the present phenomenon. But which of them has the largest role?

The mechanism (1) involving reflection on agreeable objects has more influence than we might think it does at first glance. We seldom reflect on something that is beautiful and agreeable (or ugly and disagreeable) without an emotion of pleasure (or unpleasure); and though these feelings of pleasure or unpleasure don't show up much in our ordinary casual way of thinking, it is easy to find them when we are reading or engaging in conversation. Men of wit always direct the conversation towards subjects that are entertaining to the imagination; and the subjects of poets are always like that. Mr. Philips wrote an excellent poem on cider; beer would have been less satisfactory because it doesn't look or taste as good as cider does. (He would have preferred wine to either of them, if only his native country had provided him with that agreeable liquor!) We can learn from this that everything that is agreeable to the senses is also to some extent agreeable to the imagination, creating a mental image of the satisfaction that comes from applying the item to the bodily organs—e.g. an image of the satisfaction of tasting cider.

This delicacy of the imagination may be one of the causes of our respect for the rich and powerful, but there are many reasons for not regarding it as the only one, or even as the

main one. [Hume now embarks on two pages of reasoning to show that mechanism (1) does less work than mechanism (3). He gives three reasons for this. (a) If someone is rich and powerful, we tend to respect *him*, not just *his possessions*. The only way to bring the owner of the wealth and power into the story of our respect and admiration is by our responding not merely to the thought of

•our enjoying his wonderful possessions

but also to the thought of

•*his* enjoying his wonderful possessions.

Our having a good feeling about that is *sympathy*, i.e. mechanism (3). (b) We respect the rich and powerful even if they don't make use of their wealth and power. It's true that a man's money can carry our imaginations to ideas of enjoyment of things that the money could buy; but this connection is pretty remote; there's a stronger connection between our pleasant thoughts and the rich person's own satisfaction in being able to purchase good things; and that again is (3) the sympathy mechanism. (c) Hume says his third reason may to some people 'appear too subtle and refined', but we can follow it. It concerns our respect for the wealth of a miserly man who doesn't spend much. We can see that the man's character is so settled that it isn't probable—it is hardly even *possible*—that he will use his wealth to get things that we would enjoy (and would therefore enjoy thinking about, in the manner of mechanism (1)). But from his own point of view such uses of his money are thoroughly on the cards—'For me to acquire a handsome house and garden', he may think, 'would be as easy as raising my arm.' This is just a fact about how human beings view themselves—each of them regards as on the cards for himself various kinds of behaviour that his character actually puts *off* the cards. So our respect for the wealthy miser can't owe as much to (1) our responding to our sense of possible

pleasures from his wealth as to **(3)** our sympathetic response to *his* sense of the possibility of those pleasures. Hume continues:]

So we have found that the mechanism **(1)** involving the agreeable idea of the objects that riches make it possible to enjoy largely comes down to the mechanism **(3)** involving sympathy with the person we respect or love. Now let us see what force we can allow to mechanism **(2)**, involving the agreeable expectation of advantage.

Riches and authority do indeed give their owner the power to do *us* service, but obviously this power isn't on a par with his power to please *himself* and satisfy *his own* appetites. His power to do himself good will come close to his actually doing himself good—self-love will take care of that. But what can narrow the gap between his power to do *us* good and his actually doing *us* good? It will have to be his having friendship and good-will towards *us* along with his riches. Without that detail it's hard to see what basis we can have for hoping for advantage from the other person's riches; yet the plain fact is that we naturally respect the rich even before we find them to have any such favourable disposition towards *us*.

Indeed we respect the rich and powerful not only where they show no *inclination* to serve *us* but also when we are so much out of the sphere of their activity that they can't even be thought to be *able* to serve *us*. Prisoners of war are always treated with a respect suitable to their condition [here = 'social status'], and a person's condition is determined to a large extent by his wealth. If birth and rank come into it also, that provides another argument for my present thesis. What does it mean to say that a man is of 'good birth' except that he is descended from a long series of rich and powerful ancestors, and acquires our respect by his relation to people we respect? So we respect his ancestors partly on account

of their riches; but those ancestors, being dead, can't bring any advantage to *us*.

Our disinterested [= 'not *self*-interested'] respect for riches also shows up in everyday life and conversation. A man who is himself moderately well off, when he comes into a company of strangers, naturally treats them with different degrees of respect and deference as he learns of their different fortunes and conditions; though he couldn't possibly solicit any advantage from them, and perhaps wouldn't accept it if it were offered. . . .

You might want to oppose these arguments of mine by an appeal to the influence of general rules. Thus:

We're accustomed to expecting help and protection from the rich and powerful, and to respect them on that account; and we extend the same attitude to others who resemble them in their fortune but from whom we can't hope for any advantage. The *general rule* still holds sway, and steers the imagination in such a way as to draw along the passion in the same way as when its proper object is real and existent.

But that can't be what is happening here. For a general rule to become established in our minds and to extend itself beyond its proper bounds, there has to be a certain uniformity in our experience, with very many more cases that fit the rule than ones that don't. But that is not how things stand with regard to advantage from the rich and powerful. Of a hundred men of credit and fortune that I meet with, there may be none from whom I can expect advantage, and there certainly aren't many, so that a *custom* of expecting such help can't possibly be established in my mind.

So, wanting to explain our respect for power and riches, and our contempt for meanness and poverty, all we are left with is **(3)** the mechanism of sympathy, by which we have some of the sentiments of the rich and poor, and share in



their pleasure and unpleasure. •Riches give satisfaction to their possessor x; •this satisfaction is conveyed to the onlooker y by his imagination, which •gives him an idea that resembles the original impression (·i.e. x's satisfaction·) in force and vivacity. This agreeable idea or impression •is connected with love, which is an agreeable passion. . . .

[We will be better 'reconciled' to this view, Hume says, if we look at the prevalence and power of sympathy all through the animal kingdom, and especially] in man, who is the creature •most desirous of society and •best fitted for it by his qualities. There's nothing we can wish for that doesn't involve society. A perfect solitude is perhaps the greatest punishment we can suffer. When there is no-one else around, every pleasure fades and every unpleasure becomes more cruel and intolerable. Whatever other passions we may be driven by—pride, ambition, greed, curiosity, revenge, or lust—the soul or animating force of them all is *sympathy* . . . . Let all the powers and elements of nature work together to serve and obey one man; let the sun rise and set at his command; let the sea and rivers roll as he pleases, and the earth furnish spontaneously whatever may be useful or agreeable to him; he will still be miserable until you give him access to at least one person with whom he can share his happiness and whose respect and friendship he can enjoy.

This conclusion from a •general view of human nature is confirmed by •special cases where the force of sympathy is very remarkable. Most kinds of *beauty* are derived from sympathy. When we judge some senseless inanimate piece of matter to be beautiful, we are usually taking into account its influence on creatures who think and feel. A man who shows us a house takes particular care, among other things, to point out the convenience of the rooms, the advantages of how they are laid out, and how little space is wasted on stairs, antechambers and passages; and indeed it's obvious

that the chief part of the beauty consists in such details as these. The observation of convenience gives pleasure, because convenience is a beauty. But *how* does it give pleasure? The beauty in question isn't a •formal one; it has to do with people's •interests; but *our own* self-interest doesn't come into it. So our pleasure in this beauty must come from our sympathizing with the house's owner: we enter into *his* interests by the force of imagination, and feel the same satisfaction that the house naturally occasions in him. . . .

Nothing makes a field more agreeable than its fertility, and the beauty that this gives it can hardly be matched by any advantages of ornament or situation [=, roughly, 'any advantage of prettiness or of having a fine view']. Similarly with individual trees and plants. For all I know, a plain overgrown with gorse and broom may be intrinsically as beautiful as a hill covered with vines or olive-trees, but it will never seem so to anyone who knows the value of each. Yet this is a beauty merely of imagination, and isn't based on what appears to the senses. 'Fertility' and 'value' plainly refer to *use*; and use points to riches, joy, and plenty; and though we have no hope of sharing in these, we enter into them by the strength of our imagination and to some extent ·sympathetically· share them with the owner.

The most reasonable rule in painting is that figures should be balanced, each placed with great exactness on its own centre of gravity. A figure that isn't justly balanced is disagreeable; but why? Because an unbalanced figure it conveys the ideas of •falling, of •harm, and of •pain; and these ideas are unpleasant when they become forceful through sympathy.

Add to this that main element in personal beauty is an air of health and vigour, and a physique that promises strength and activity. The only way to explain this idea of beauty is in

terms of sympathy.

The minds of men are mirrors to one another, not only because •they reflect each others' emotions but also because •those rays of passions, sentiments and opinions can often reverberate and gradually fade away. [Hume is likening •the workings of sympathy with •the effect on a ray of light of a facing pair of mirrors that bounce the light back and forth between them; the 'gradually-fade-away' feature is special to sympathy, and doesn't carry over to the mirrors.] Thus the pleasure that a rich man receives from his possessions is thrown onto the onlooker, in whom it causes pleasure and respect; these feelings are perceived and sympathized with by the rich man, thus increasing his pleasure; and this, being reflected back yet again, becomes a new basis for pleasure and respect in the onlooker. The basic satisfaction in riches comes from their power to enable one to enjoy all the pleasures of life; and this, being the very nature

and essence of riches, must be the **primary** source of all the passions that arise from riches. Of these resultant passions, one of the most considerable is the love or respect that others have, which has to come from their sympathy with the pleasure of the possessor. But he also has a **secondary** satisfaction in riches, arising from the love and respect that come to him because of them; and this satisfaction is simply a second reflection of that basic pleasure that came from himself. This secondary satisfaction or vanity becomes one of the main advantages in being rich, and is the chief reason why we either want to be rich ourselves or respect riches in others. This, then, is a **third** rebound of the original pleasure. After that it's hard to distinguish images from reflections of them, and thus hard to go on counting 'rebounds', because of their faintness and confusion.

## 6: Benevolence and anger

Ideas may be compared to the extension and solidity of matter; impressions—especially reflective ones—may be compared to colours, tastes, smells, and other sensible qualities. Ideas can never be totally coalesced with one another; they have a kind of *impenetrability* by which they exclude each other and can't form a compound by mixing but only by conjunction. [Compare what happens when you add a pint of sand to a pint of dry rice, and stir. The most intimate mixture we can have will still have sand-grains and rice-grains distinct from one another; and this is what Hume is calling 'conjunction'. If the grains were mutually penetrable, we might have a compound in which *every part*, however

small, contained both rice and sand; which is what Hume here calls 'mixing'.] On the other hand, impressions can be entirely united with one another; like colours, they can be blended so totally that each of them loses itself and contributes to •the whole only by making some difference to the uniform impression that arises from •it. This is true not only of ordinary impressions but also of passions. Some of the most challenging and puzzling phenomena of the human mind come from this property of the passions.

What ingredients can be united with love and hatred? In trying to answer that, I have started to become aware of

a misfortune that has befallen every system of philosophy [here = 'of philosophy or science'] that the world has seen. When we are explaining the operations of nature in terms of some particular hypothesis, we often find that along with •many experiments that square perfectly with the principles we want to establish there is •some phenomenon that is more stubborn, and won't so easily bend to our purpose. We needn't be surprised that this happens in natural science: we're so much in the dark about the essence and composition of external bodies that in our reasonings (or rather our conjectures!) concerning them we are bound to get caught up in contradictions and absurdities. But the perceptions of the mind are perfectly known, and I have been enormously cautious in forming conclusions about them; so I have always hoped to keep clear of the contradictions that every other system has fallen into. The difficulty that I am about to present, then, isn't at all contrary to my system; it merely departs a little from the simplicity that until now has been the system's principal force and beauty.

The passions of love and hatred are always followed by, or rather combined with, benevolence and anger. It is this combination that chiefly distinguishes love and hatred from pride and humility. Pride and humility are pure emotions in the soul: they aren't accompanied by any desire, and they don't immediately arouse us to action. But love and hatred are not self-sufficient in that way—there's more to them than just how they feel—they carry the mind to something further. Love is always followed by a desire for the happiness of the person beloved, and an aversion to his misery; and hatred produces a desire for the misery of the hated person, and an aversion to his happiness. Given the extent to which pride/humility is parallel with love/hatred, this remarkable *difference* between them is worth attending to.

Why are love and hatred thus combined with this desire and this aversion? There are two possible answers. **(1)** The first says that the desire and aversion are not merely •inseparable from love and hatred but are •integral parts of them. On this view, love and hatred have not only ·the two elements that we have already met, namely·:

**(a)** a cause that arouses them, namely pleasure or un-pleasure, and

**(b)** an object to which they are directed, namely a person or thinking being,

but also ·one that I didn't include in my initial account of these two passions·,

**(c)** an end that they try to attain, namely the happiness or misery of the person in **(b)**.

The thesis is that love or hatred is a single passion in which these three elements are smoothly blended. So **(c)** doesn't *accompany* love and hatred; it's a *part of* them

But our experience doesn't support this. It's certainly true that whenever we love someone we *do* want him to be happy, and whenever we hate someone we *do* want him to be miserable; but these desires don't arise until the ideas of the happiness of our friend or misery of our enemy are presented by the imagination; the desires are not absolutely essential to love and hatred. They're the most obvious and natural expressions of love and hatred, but not the only ones. Those two passions can express themselves in a hundred ways, and can last in us for a considerable time without our having any thoughts about the happiness or misery of their objects; which clearly shows that these desires are not any essential part of love and hatred.

**(2)** ·So we are left with the second hypothesis, namely that· benevolence and anger are passions different from love and hatred, and are only *conjoined* with them by the basic constitution of the mind. Just as •nature has given

certain appetites and inclinations to the body, increasing or lessening or varying them according to the situation of the fluids or solids, •she has done the same for the mind. A desire for the happiness or misery of someone is something that nature arouses in our mind, according to whether we love or hate the person, and the nature and intensity of the desire varies in accordance with the nature and intensity of the love or hatred. This isn't an absolutely necessary state of affairs: love and hatred *could* have occurred without any such accompanying desire, or the connection of those desires

with love and hatred *could* have been entirely reversed. That is, if nature had wanted it this way, love could have had the effect that hatred actually does, and hatred the same effect as love. I can't see anything *self-contradictory* in supposing love to be accompanied by a desire to produce misery, or hatred to be accompanied by a desire to produce happiness. If the sensation of the passion and desire be opposite, nature could have altered the sensation without altering the tendency of the desire, and by that means made them compatible with each other. [The last sentence is exactly as Hume wrote it.]

## 7: Compassion

But although the desire for the happiness or misery of others, according to our love or hatred for them, is an arbitrary and basic instinct implanted in our nature, we often have counterfeits of it, which aren't upshots of our basic nature but arise from secondary sources. *Pity* is a concern for the misery of others, and *malice* is a joy in it, without any friendship or enmity—any love or hate—to bring about this concern or joy. We pity even strangers, and people who mean nothing to us; and we sometimes feel malice towards someone to whom we aren't otherwise connected. If our ill-will toward someone else comes from his having harmed or insulted us, that isn't strictly malice—it's revenge. But if we examine these feelings of pity and malice, we'll find that they are secondary ones, arising from basic ones that are varied by some particular turn of thought and imagination.

My earlier account of sympathy [page 171] makes it easy to explain the passion of pity. We have a lively idea of everything

that is related to us. All human creatures are related to us by resemblance. So their persons, their interests, their passions, and their pains and pleasures must have a strong effect on us, producing in us an emotion similar to the one in them, because a lively idea is easily converted into an impression. If this is true in general, it must be especially true of affliction and sorrow, which always have a stronger and more lasting influence than any pleasure or enjoyment.

A spectator of a dramatic tragedy goes through a long series of feelings—terror, indignation, and so on—which the poet represents through his characters. The spectator must sympathize with all these changes, and take in the fictitious joy as well as all the other passions represented on the stage. Why joy? Because a tragedy can't be a really good one unless it involves some reverses of fortune—indeed many tragedies end happily. [Hume goes on to say that •what has to be explained here is the fact that

each passion represented on the stage is followed by the appearance in the spectators' minds of the very same passion, 'first as an idea and then as an impression';

that •this must be explained by some kind of carry-over from actor to audience; and that •the only remotely plausible account of this carry-over is that it comes through the mechanism of *sympathy*. Then:]

Some philosophers explain pity in terms of who-knows-what subtle reflections on •the instability of fortune and on •our being liable to the same miseries that we see in others; but the facts don't support them. For example, there's the fact that x's pity for y depends to a large extent on y's being near to x and even within x's range of eyesight; which shows that pity comes from the imagination •and not from any high-flown philosophical reflections on fortune or fate•. Notice also that women and children, who are most guided by imagination, are most subject to pity; the same infirmity that makes them faint at the sight of a naked sword, even when it's in the hands of their best friend, fills them with pity for anyone whom they find in any grief or affliction.

A rather remarkable fact about sympathy •in general, and thus about pity in particular• is that the communicated passion of sympathy sometimes gets *strength* from the *weakness* of its original, and even arises by a carry-over from feelings that don't actually exist! For example, when someone obtains an honourable office or inherits a great fortune, our joy in his prosperity is •greater in proportion as the sense *he* seems to have of it is •less, i.e. in proportion as his enjoyment of his good fortune is calm and level-headed. Similarly, a man who is not dejected by his misfortunes is pitied all the more on account of his patience; and if he has that virtue to such an extent that he really isn't

suffering at all, this still further increases our compassion. [The 'virtue' of 'patience' is an attitude to •one's own misfortunes—the attitude of putting up with •them without whining or complaining, even within one's own mind]. When a good man suffers what would ordinarily be regarded as **(1)** a great misfortune, we form

**(2)** a notion of his condition;

our imagination moves from that to

**(3)** a lively idea of the sorrow that would *usually* result from that;

and that turns into

**(4)** an impression of that sorrow,

•meaning that *we* become sad about *his* misfortune•, •overlooking the greatness of mind that raises him above such emotions, or •noticing it and being led by it to an even greater admiration, love, and tenderness for him. In our move from **(2)** to **(3)** our imagination is influenced by the general rule that *most* people who suffer such a misfortune are made very sad by it. The same mechanism is at work when we blush for the conduct of someone who behaves foolishly in our presence, even if *he* shows no sense of shame and seems to have no awareness of his folly. This comes from sympathy, but it's a selective sympathy that views its object only on one side, without considering the other side that •has a contrary effect and •would entirely destroy the emotion that arises from the first appearance. [The 'one side' is the misfortune (or foolish conduct) that would ordinarily produce sorrow (or shame); the 'other side' is the person's actual lack of sorrow (or shame).]

In some cases, our concern for someone who is unfortunate is increased by his lack of concern about his misfortune, although his lack of concern does not come from any great-minded virtue. A murder is made worse by its victim's being murdered when he was peacefully asleep. And when an infant prince is captive in the hands of his enemies, historians find him •more worthy of compassion the •less

aware he is of his miserable condition. In such a case we are acquainted with the person's situation, that gives us a lively idea and then sensation of the sorrow that *generally* comes with such a misfortune; and this idea becomes even more

lively, and the sensation more violent, by contrast with the security and calmness that we observe in the person himself. Our imagination is always affected by contrasts, . . . and pity depends entirely on the imagination.<sup>1</sup>

### 8: Malice and envy

The next task is to explain the passion of malice, which imitates the effects of hatred just as pity does those of love, giving us a joy in the sufferings and miseries of others who haven't in any way harmed or wronged us.

Men are so little governed by reason in their feelings and opinions that their judgments about things are always based more on •comparisons than on the things' •intrinsic worth and value. If something that is in itself pretty good is not *as good* as something that a man is already thinking about or is used to, it will affect his passions as though it were defective and bad. This is a feature of the soul, and is similar to what we experience every day in our bodies. Heat one of your hands and cool the other, then plunge both into ·tepid· water; you'll experience the water as cold to one hand and hot to the other. When a small degree of a quality comes after a greater degree, it produces the same sensation as if it were less than it really is, and even sometimes as if it were the opposite quality. A gentle pain that follows a violent one seems like as nothing, or rather becomes a pleasure; just as

a violent pain following a gentle one is doubly grievous and unpleasant.

No-one can doubt this as a thesis about our passions and sensations

—·i.e. the thesis that comparisons enter into how strong a passion is caused in us by a given sensory input·—

but there may be some doubt about it as a thesis concerning our ideas and objects

—·i.e. the thesis that comparisons enter into what idea or image is caused in us by a given object·.

When an object *x* *seems* larger or smaller because of a comparison with an object *y* that one was looking at just before, no change is occurring in the image and idea of *x*, or in the retina or in the brain or organ of perception. The size of *y* won't make any difference to •how one's eyes refract the rays of light from *x*, or in •how the optic nerves convey the images of *x* to the brain, or even in •what *x*'s size is according to the imagination. So the question is: how can it happen

<sup>1</sup> To prevent all ambiguity, I should explain that (1) when ·in I.i.3· I contrasted •imagination with •memory, I was taking imagination to be merely the faculty that presents our fainter ideas. (2) Everywhere else, and especially when I contrast 'imagination' with •understanding, I am construing 'imagination' more broadly, as excluding only our demonstrative and probable reasonings. [This is in fact the first occurrence of 'understanding' in II.ii; what Hume is referring to is his explanation of pity (on page 192) in terms of 'imagination' rather than in terms of 'subtle reflections' on fate etc.]

that, from the same impression and the same idea, we form such different judgments about *x*, at one time admiring its great size and at another despising its smallness? This variation in our judgments must come from a variation in some perception; but the impression of *x* doesn't vary, nor does the idea of *x*; so the variation must concern some other impression that accompanies the impression of *x*. [The words 'seems larger or smaller' replace Hume's words 'augments or diminishes to the eye or imagination'. But that formulation can't be what he means, because he goes on to say that the larger/smaller variation *doesn't* involve either the eye or the imagination.]

In order to explain this, I'll briefly bring in two mechanisms—one to be more fully explained later on, the other already fully explained. **(1)** I think it is safe to accept as a general truth that every object that is presented to the senses, and every image formed in the imagination, is accompanied by some •emotion or movement of spirits that is proportional to it. Because we are so accustomed to this •sensation we may be unaware of it •as a separate factor in our mental situation• and may confound it with the object or idea. But with some careful and exact experiments we can easily isolate it from those. I'll start with examples involving extension and number—'How big?' and 'How many?'. It is well known that •any very large object (the ocean, an extended plain, a vast chain of mountains, a wide forest) and any very numerous collection of objects (an army, a fleet, a crowd) arouse in the mind an emotion that we do feel; and that •the admiration arising from the appearance of such objects is one of the liveliest pleasures that we are capable of. Now, as this admiration is made to grow or shrink by the growth or shrinkage of the objects, we can conclude, in line with the rules of causation I expounded in I.iii.15 [rule 7 on page 83], that it is a compound effect—a combination of several different •simpler• effects, each arising from some

part of the cause. So every part of extension, and every unit of number, has a separate emotion accompanying it when it is conceived by the mind. That emotion isn't always agreeable, •because sometimes it is too faint/slight/minor to be either pleasant or unpleasant•; but it contributes to the production of admiration, which *is* always agreeable. How does it make that contribution? By combining with other such emotions, and helping to agitate the spirits enough to produce a perceptible emotion. If this is granted with respect to extension and number, there can't be any problem about accepting it also with respect to virtue and vice, wit and folly, riches and poverty, happiness and misery, and other such objects that are always accompanied by an evident emotion.

**(2)** The second of the two mechanisms that I mentioned is the one that makes us adhere to general rules. This has an enormous influence on our actions and our understanding, and can even affect our senses. When we have found by experience that a certain •kind  $K_1$  of• object is always accompanied by an object of some other kind  $K_2$ , •the general-rule mechanism comes into play•:

Every time a  $K_1$  object appears, even if this is in circumstances very different from previous appearances of such an object, we naturally fly to the conception of  $K_2$  and form an idea of a  $K_2$  object—an idea that's as lively and strong as if we had inferred the object's existence by sober and rigorous reasoning.

When this happens, nothing can undeceive us—not even our senses! Instead of correcting this false judgment, the senses are often perverted by it, and seem to authorize its errors.

These two mechanisms, combined with the influence of *comparison* that I have mentioned, produce this result:

Every object is accompanied by some emotion proportioned to it—a great object with a great emotion, a small object with a small emotion.

Because of this, a great object following a small one makes a great emotion follow a small one. Now, when a great emotion follows a small one, that makes it greater than it would otherwise have been; and we naturally infer from that increase in the emotion that the object is also greater than it would ordinarily be. How do we infer that? By applying a general rule to the effect that a certain degree of emotion goes with a certain magnitude of the object; and it doesn't occur to us that comparison—the effect of the move from small to large—might change the emotion without changing anything in the object. Those who are acquainted with the metaphysical part of optics [see I.iii.9, especially page 61], and know how we transfer the judgments and conclusions of the understanding to the senses, will easily conceive this whole operation.

But setting aside this new discovery of an emotional impression that secretly accompanies every idea, we must at least acknowledge the mechanism through which objects appear greater or less by comparison with others. We have so many examples of this that there can't be any argument as to whether it is real; and it's this mechanism that I invoke to explain the passions of malice and envy.

[Hume will here be using 'happiness' to refer *not* to an emotional state but rather to a general state of being in good 'condition and circumstances'. Some of his early uses of 'happiness' and 'happy' may also have been like that; but it's especially important to grasp the point *here*, where happiness is repeatedly said to lead to or be accompanied by pleasure. And all of this applies equally to 'misery'.]

It's obvious that when we reflect on our own condition and circumstances, we have more or less satisfaction or dissatisfaction in proportion as they appear more or less fortunate or unhappy, in proportion to how much riches, power, merit, and reputation we think we have. Now, our judgments about objects are usually based not on their intrinsic value but

on how they compare with other objects; and from that it follows that our estimate of our own happiness or misery (and thus the pleasure or unpleasure we feel because of it) depends on our observation of the happiness or misery of others. Someone else's misery gives us a more lively idea of our happiness, and his happiness gives us a more lively idea of our misery. So the former produces delight in us, and the latter produces unpleasure.

So we have here a kind of *pity in reverse*, with the beholder having sensations that are the opposite of those that are felt by the person whom he considers. [Hume goes on to say that what's at work here is a very general mechanism that makes our estimate of where a thing *x* falls on any scale depend partly on the place on that same scale of something else *y* to which we compare *x*. He continues:] A small object makes a great one appear still greater. A great object makes a little one appear less. Ugliness of itself produces unpleasure, but it increases, by contrast, the pleasure we get from a beautiful object. . . . So the case must be the same with happiness and misery. The direct survey of someone else's pleasure naturally gives us pleasure, and therefore produces unpleasure when compared with our own. His unpleasure considered in itself is unpleasant to us, but it augments the idea we have of our own happiness and so gives us pleasure.

If you think it strange that we may feel a reversed sensation from the happiness and misery of others, bear in mind that such comparisons can also give us a kind of malice against ourselves, making us rejoice for our past unpleasures and grieve for our past pleasures. The prospect of past unpleasure is agreeable to us when we are satisfied with our present condition; and the prospect of our past pleasures give us unpleasure if we don't at present enjoy anything that matches them. . . . This phenomenon could be described as a kind of malice against one's past self, enjoying



the thought of how miserable one *was*.

Indeed, someone may have this malice against his *present* self, carrying it to the point where he deliberately seeks affliction, trying to increase his unpleasures and sorrows. There are two situations in which this can happen: **(1)** when someone who is dear to him is in distress, and **(2)** when he feels remorse for a crime that he has committed. Both of these irregular appetites for evil [Hume's phrase] arise from the comparison mechanism. **(1)** Someone who basks in pleasure while his friend is suffering feels the reflected suffering from his friend more acutely because of how it contrasts with his own initial pleasure. Shouldn't the contrast make his present pleasure even greater? In theory it might; but in the case as I have described it, *grief* is the predominant passion, and every addition falls to that side and is swallowed up in it, without operating in the least on the opposite feeling. **(2)** Similarly with the penances that men inflict on themselves for their past sins and failings. When a criminal reflects on the punishment he deserves, the idea of it is magnified by a comparison with his present ease and satisfaction; this comparison forces him, in a way, to seek unpleasure so as to avoid such a disagreeable contrast.

This accounts for •envy as well as •malice. The only difference between those two is this:

- Envy is aroused by someone else's present enjoyment, which by comparison lessens our idea of our own satisfaction.
- Malice is the unprovoked desire to make things bad for someone else, in order to get pleasure from the comparison.

The enjoyment that is the object of envy is usually greater than our own. A superiority naturally seems to overshadow us, and presents a disagreeable comparison. But even when the other person's enjoyment is less than our own, we still

want a greater distance between his enjoyment and ours, so as to increase our idea of ourself—i.e. our idea of how satisfactory things are with us—even further. When this distance decreases, the contrast is less to our advantage, and consequently it gives us less pleasure, even to the point of being disagreeable. That's the source of the kind of envy that men feel when they see their inferiors approaching or overtaking them in the pursuit of glory or happiness. This envy involves the effects of comparison twice repeated. A man who •compares himself to his inferior gets pleasure from the comparison; and when the inferior person *rises*, thus reducing the gap, what should have been merely a decrease of pleasure becomes a real unpleasure because of a new •comparison with its preceding condition [the last six words are Hume's.]

It's worth noting that when x is envious of y's superiority in some respect, what makes x envious is not the •great size of the relevant difference between himself and y but rather its •smallness. A common soldier doesn't envy his general in the way he envies his sergeant or corporal; an eminent writer doesn't encounter great jealousy in hack writers for tabloids as much as he does in authors who are closer to his own level. You might think that the greater the difference of level the greater must be the unpleasure from the comparison; but then look at it in this way: the sheer size of the level-difference between (for example) the hack writer and the eminent author cuts off the relation between them, and either •keeps the hack from comparing himself with the other or •reduces the effects of the comparison. Resemblance and proximity always produce a relation of ideas, and two ideas can't be related unless there is resemblance and proximity between them. No matter what other features may bring them together, in the absence of a bond or connecting quality to join them in the imagination they can't remain

united for long or have any considerable influence on each other. The next paragraph will concern proximity; after that the topic will be resemblance.

[Hume now gives a one-sentence account of what is going on when an affluent slave-owner gets satisfaction from the difference between his condition and that of his slaves. It is extremely obscure, as is the earlier passage to which Hume relates it (section 10<sub>i</sub>); but we can follow his general point when he continues:] When the imagination in comparing objects doesn't pass easily from one of the objects to the other, the action of the mind is to a large extent interrupted, and the imagination in considering the second object makes a kind of fresh start with it. In cases like that, the impression that accompanies an object isn't made to seem greater by the fact that it follows a lesser one of the same kind. These two impressions are distinct, and produce their distinct effects without interacting with one another. The lack of relation between the ideas breaks the relation of the impressions, and this separation prevents them from operating together.

I have been discussing cases where proximity is lacking, i.e. where the people being compared are far apart on the relevant scale; but I stand by my statement that resemblance is also essential for a comparison to produce envy. A poet is not apt to envy a philosopher, or a poet of a different kind, of a different nation, or of a different age. All these differences prevent or weaken the comparison, and consequently reduce the passion of envy.

That is also the reason why objects appear large or small only when compared with others of the same kind. If we see a horse on a mountain, its apparent size isn't altered by the fact that we are also seeing the mountain; but when we see a Flemish horse beside a Welsh horse, one appears much bigger (and the other much smaller) than when it is seen in contexts that don't involve any other horses.

[Now Hume says that this same phenomenon can be seen at work in history, when one side in a civil war is willing to hire foreign mercenary soldiers rather than come to terms with their fellow-countrymen on the other side. In the many wars between Italian city states, he says, the two sides were not strongly related; they both had the label 'Italian', spoke the same language, and were geographically close, that was all; yet that was enough relatedness to make the 'envy' mechanism kick in, causing the lesser of the warring states to *suffer* at the thought of the other state's superiority; and to seek help from foreign forces that were also superior to them, this superiority not being 'grievous' because it wasn't accompanied by any significant 'relation'. He continues:] The mind quickly perceives its various advantages and disadvantages; it finds its situation to be most unpleasant when superiority—i.e. the superiority of someone else—is combined with other relations; so it tries to calm itself down as much as possible by separating itself as much as possible from the superior person, thus breaking the association of ideas that makes the comparison so much more natural and powerful. When it can't break the association, it feels a stronger desire to remove the superiority; which is why travellers are commonly so lavish in their praise of the Chinese and Persians and so grudging about the merits of nations that are neighbours to their own native country! The point about the neighbours is that they are strongly enough related to the travellers to count as *rivals*, whose superiority would be a source of grief.

[There are similar phenomena in the arts, Hume says, though the similarity that he points out is really rather remote. His main example: **(1)** we would object to a play of which part was tragic and part light and funny, but **(2)** we don't mind tragic play and a comic one being published in a single volume; the point being that in **(1)** the two items are

more closely 'related' than the items in (2).]

In short, no ideas can affect each other by comparison or by the passions they separately produce unless they are united by some *relation* that can make it easy for the mind to move between them, thus making it easy to move from •the emotions or impressions that accompany one of them to •the emotions or impressions that accompany the other, so that a single impression relating to one of them can be carried over, intact, to the other. This mechanism is very remarkable, because it is analogous to what we have seen concerning •the understanding and •the passions. Suppose I am confronted by two objects that aren't connected by any kind of relation, that each of these objects separately produces a passion, and that these two passions are opposites—what will be the emotional upshot of all this? We find from experience that the lack of relation between the objects or ideas blocks the natural contrariety of the passions: the break in the •transition of the thought keeps the emotions at a distance

from each other, and prevents their opposition. For example, my •utter delight over the success of my friend's book is not lessened, not eaten into or diluted, by my •total gloom over the latest news about slavery in Jamaica. It is the same case with comparison. [He means that just as two passions don't interact if they aren't sufficiently related, our thoughts about x aren't affected by thoughts of how x compares with y if x and y aren't sufficiently related.] From these two phenomena we can build a secure argument:

- The absence of relation between two ideas can prevent the associated impressions from interacting as they naturally would.
- When the absence of an object or quality removes any usual or natural effect, we can certainly conclude that its presence contributes to the production of the effect.

Therefore:

- The relation of ideas contributes to the transition •or interaction• of impressions.

### 9: The mixture of benevolence and anger with compassion and malice

So there you have my attempt to explain pity and malice. Both arise from the imagination; whether it generates pity or malice in any particular case depends on the light in which it places its object.

•Pity: When it considers the sentiments of others *directly*, entering deep *into* them, our imagination makes us feel the passions it surveys •in the other person•.

This happens with all passions, but most especially with

grief or sorrow. On the other hand,

Malice: When we *compare* the feelings of others to our own, we feel a sensation directly opposite to the original one, i.e. a joy from the grief of others, and a grief from their joy.

But these are only the first foundations of the affections of pity and malice. Other passions are afterwards mingled with them: there is always a mixture of love or tenderness with pity, and of hatred or anger with malice. Now, these mixtures

seem to count against my system. Pity is an unpleasure, and malice is a joy, each arising from the misery of others; so we would expect pity to produce hatred, and malice to produce love. I'll now try to reconcile the 'mixture' facts with my theory.

For a passion to pass from one person to another there has to be a double relation of impressions and ideas—a single relation won't do the work. To understand the full force of this double relation, you have to grasp a crucial fact about the nature of the passions being transferred:

What determines the character of any passion is not merely the present sensation—the momentary unpleasure or pleasure—but rather the whole bent or tendency of it from the beginning to the end.

Up to here I have been discussing cases where two passions are related to one another because they feel the same; but passions can also be related because their impulses or directions—the behaviour or at least the desires associated with them—are alike. This can't happen with pride or humility, because they are only pure sensations, ways of *feeling* with no direction or tendency to action. So if we want examples of this special relation of impressions, we'll have to look to emotions that are accompanied by a certain appetite or desire, e.g. *love* and *hatred*.

[Hume's next paragraph is hard to grasp. (1) One of its aims is to show how **pity** is connected with **love**. The link is provided by **benevolence**. Hume has already shown, he says, that benevolence is connected with love in a natural and basic way; and he expresses this by using the formula—

'a desire for the happiness of a beloved person and an aversion to his misery'

—to characterize the 'desire' component of **benevolence**. He then uses a very similar formula—

'a desire for the happiness of someone else and an

aversion to his misery'

—to characterize the 'desire' component of **pity**. He concludes from this that these two passions are 'similar' and 'related'.

(2) The paragraph's other aim is to show how **malice** is connected with **hatred**. The link is **anger**. Hume claims to have shown that anger is connected with hatred in a natural and basic way, and brings this out by using the formula—

'a desire for the misery of a hated person and an aversion to his happiness'

—to characterize the 'desire' component of **anger**. Then he uses the very similar formula—

'a desire for the misery of someone else and an aversion to his happiness'

—to characterize the 'desire' component of **malice**. He concludes from this that anger is 'correspondent to' and 'related to' malice. The paragraph concludes:] It is by this chain that the passions of pity and malice are connected with love and hatred.

There are adequate empirical grounds for this hypothesis. If a man is starting to resolve to perform a certain action (never mind why), he is naturally drawn to every other view or motive that can strengthen his resolution, giving it authority and influence on his mind. To confirm us in any plan that we have formed, we hunt for motives drawn from self-interest, from honour, from duty. So it's not surprising that pity and benevolence, malice and anger, being **the same desires arising from different mechanisms**, should become so totally mixed together that they can't be told apart. . . .

Here is another empirical fact: benevolence and anger—and thus love and hatred—arise when our happiness or misery depend in any way on the happiness or misery of another person, even if we have no further relation to him. I'm sure you will agree that this is such a striking fact that it's all right for me to stop for a moment to consider it.

Suppose that two people in the same trade seek employment in a town that can't support them both; it's clear that the success of either of them is incompatible with the success of the other, and that anything serving the interests of either of them goes against the interests of his rival. Now suppose that two merchants, though living in different parts of the world, enter into a partnership; in this case, their interests go the same way, and anything that favours either of them favours both. It's obvious that the rivalry in the first case will generate hatred, and that the partnership in the second case will generate love. Let us consider to what mechanism is at work here.

[It can't be the standard mechanism of double-relations-of-impressions-and- ideas, Hume says. If *that* were in play, my frame of mind towards my rival would be like this: I hate him when he causes me unpleasure, and love him when he causes me pleasure. But the fact is that I hate him all the time, even though he often brings me pleasure through his misfortunes in our common trade. Similarly with my partner: he may often cause grief in me through his misfortunes in business, but I love him all the time. After dismissing one other suggested explanation, Hume continues:]

So the only explanation we can give of this phenomena involves the parallel direction mechanism mentioned above. ·I mean the mechanism I was invoking a page back, when I wrote that 'passions can be related because their impulses or directions are alike', meaning the behavioural impulses and the direction of the desires involved in them·. Our concern for our own interests gives us a pleasure in the pleasure of our partner and an unpleasure in his unpleasure, in the same way that by sympathy we feel a sensation matching that of a person who is present with us. And on the other side, our concern for our own interests makes us feel unpleasure in the pleasure of our rival, and pleasure in his unpleasure—i.e. the same contrariety of feelings as arises from comparison and malice. . . .

[The remainder of this section will not be presented here. It consists of five pages of very dense exposition and argument, presenting •various supposed facts about when and towards whom we have this or that passion, •reasons why those facts present challenges to Hume's theories, and •attempts by him to meet the challenges. This material is ingenious, but doesn't offer today's philosophically interested readers enough, at the bottom line, to warrant the truly exhausting labour of following it in detail.]

### 10: Respect and contempt

I now turn to the passions of respect and contempt. In considering the qualities and circumstances of another person, we can either

- (1) regard them as they really are in themselves,
- (2) compare them with our own qualities and circumstances, or
- (3) combine both of those two methods of consideration.

The good qualities of others from the first point of view produce (1) love; from the second (2) humility; from the third (3) respect, which is a mixture of love and humility. And the different ways of regarding the bad qualities of others can lead us to (1) hatred or (2) pride or (3) contempt, which is a mixture of hatred and pride.

There's no need for me to prove that humility is an ingredient in respect, and pride an ingredient in contempt; you'll find it obvious that this is so if you attend to what it feels like to have respect or contempt for someone. It's equally obvious that this mixture arises from tacitly comparing ourselves with the respected or contemned person. While x's condition and talents don't change, he may go from causing respect in y to causing contempt in him because y has moved from being x's inferior to being his superior. It's clear from this that the passions in question come from the subject's *comparing* himself with the object.

I have remarked that the mind has a stronger propensity for pride than for humility, and have tried to explain this in terms of the basic mechanisms of human nature. Whether or not you accept my explanation, you can't deny the phenomenon, of which there are many examples. Among other things it is the reason why there is a much greater mixture of pride in contempt than of humility in respect, and why we

are more elevated with the view of someone below us than cast down by the presence of someone above us. Contempt or scorn is such a large ingredient in pride that one can hardly detect any other passion in it, whereas humility plays a smaller part in esteem or respect—love is a much bigger ingredient than humility is. The passion of vanity is so alert that it springs into action at the slightest prompting, whereas humility requires a stronger impulse to make it exert itself.

But now a question arises: . . . Why does anything ever cause pure •love or •hatred, rather than always producing the mixed passions of •respect and •contempt?

All through my discussion I have been supposing that the passions of love and pride are similar in their sensations, being always agreeable; and that humility and hatred are also alike in their sensations, being always unpleasant. That is indeed true ·as far as it goes·, but we can see that between the two agreeable passions, as well as between the two unpleasant ones, there are differences—even contrarieties. Nothing invigorates and exalts the mind as much as pride and vanity do, whereas love or tenderness are rather found to weaken it and make it slack. The same difference is observable between the unpleasant passions. Anger and hatred give new force to all our thoughts and actions, whereas humility and shame deject and discourage us. We need to have a clear idea of these qualities of the passions, so let's keep it in mind: pride and hatred invigorate the soul, love and humility weaken it.

Now, love and pride are alike in the agreeableness of how they feel, and that's why they are always •aroused by the same objects; but they are also unlike because of the contrariety I have just described, which is why they are

•aroused in very different degrees. [Hume tries to illustrate this with a couple of examples, but they or Hume's analyses of them aren't described fully enough for one to follow his line of thought.

[In the following paragraph he offers to answer his question 'Why does anything ever produce pure love or hatred, rather than the mixed respect and contempt?' The placing of this paragraph seems to imply that his answer will involve the invigorate/weaken point that he has been making, but in the upshot it doesn't. It goes like this: Certain personal qualities—including 'good nature, good-humour, facility, generosity and beauty'—are especially apt to produce love in others, but haven't such a strong tendency to arouse pride in ourselves. And those qualities, though very productive of love in others, won't cause much humility in them. No quality in you will cause humility in me by comparison with you unless it's a quality that I would be (non-comparatively) proud of if I had it myself; and no quality in you will cause pride in me by comparison with you unless it's a quality that I would feel (non-comparatively) humble about if I had it myself. Now, suppose someone *x* has a quality that is •just right for producing love in others but is •not very apt to produce pride in *x* himself; the effect of this on another person *y* will be •a great degree of love in *y* for *x* but •a

much lower degree of humility in *y* from the comparison with *x*; with the result that although *y* does have both love and humility with respect to *x*, the humility ingredient in his compound state isn't enough to turn his state from love into respect—it is barely enough for him even to feel it. And the analogous story can be told about qualities in *x* that are apt to make *y* •hate *x* but not very apt to make him •contemn *x*.]

[The section ends with two paragraphs devoted to explaining the 'curious phenomenon' of our preference to keep people whom we contemn at a distance from ourselves. The core of the explanation can be briefly stated (in terms of 'rich' and 'poor', but of course those are only examples). **(1)** Seeing a rich man gives us at least a 'faint touch of respect'; seeing a poor one gives us a touch of contempt. These are conflicting emotions, but the conflict doesn't disturb us if the rich man and the poor one are not *related* in any relevant way [see the book-success/slavery example near the end of section 8]. But if they are physically close to one another, that's enough of a relation to set up an unpleasant dissonance in our minds. **(2)** The rich man wants to keep the poor one at a distance, because if he doesn't he will seem to the rest of us to be unaware of the dissonance and thus, perhaps, unaware of his own high status.]

### 11: The amorous passion, or love between the sexes

Of all the compound passions that come from mixing love or hatred with other emotions, none is more worth attending to than the love that arises between the sexes—both •because of its force and violence and •because it constitutes overwhelming evidence for certain interesting philosophical theses. It's clear that this emotion in its most natural state comes from the combination of three different impressions or passions—•the pleasing sensation arising from beauty, •the bodily appetite for generation, and •a generous kindness or good-will. [Those three sources are given in Hume's exact words.] Things I have already said explain how kindness arises from the perception of beauty, and the 'pleasing sensation' component is too obvious to need discussing. The question that remains is: how is the bodily appetite for generation aroused by the perception of beauty? [The 'appetite for generation' is of course *sexual desire* or, if you like, *lust*; but it will do no harm to stay with Hume's terminology. When 'lust' appears here, it will be because that's the word Hume used.]

The appetite for generation is obviously pleasant (when it's not too extreme), and it is strongly connected with all the agreeable emotions. Joy, mirth, self-satisfaction, and kindness all encourage this desire, as do as music, dancing, wine, and good cheer. On the other hand, sorrow, melancholy, poverty, and humility are destructive of it. All this makes it easy to grasp why this appetite should be connected with the sense of beauty.

But there's another mechanism that contributes to the same effect. Two desires will be connected if there is a real relation between them; one such real relation is •feeling the same, another is •having parallel directions. The second of these is my present topic (I have mentioned it before). To get

a proper grasp of the extent of this relation, consider this:

Any principal desire may be accompanied by subordinate ones that are connected with it. Any further desires that run parallel to those subordinate desires thereby come to be related to the principal one.

Thus, **(1)** hunger often counts as the primary inclination of the soul, and **(2)** the desire to come to food as the secondary or subordinate one, because it's impossible to satisfy **(1)** without satisfying **(2)**. So if something other than hunger inclines us to come near to food, it naturally increases our appetite; as something that inclines us to set our food at a distance is contradictory to hunger and lessens our inclination to eat.

[An example of what Hume is getting at here might be this: We start with two states of my soul:

**(a)** my hunger,

**(b)** my desire to get my fork into that steak,

where I have **(b)** because I have **(a)**. A friend who is already sitting at the table says 'Come and join us for dinner'. That gives me

**(c)** a desire to sit at the dinner-table,

a desire that doesn't come from hunger. Because **(b)** and **(c)** have parallel directions—meaning that they aim at the same behaviour—my acquisition of **(c)** intensifies **(a)**. To illustrate the other half of Hume's story, suppose that my wife says 'The folk next door haven't had steak for years; it would mean such a lot to them if we gave them that one'; and this creates

**(d)** a desire for the steak to be sent to next-door.

This goes in the opposite direction to **(b)**, and thus lessens **(a)**.]

Now, we all know that when our food *looks* attractive, that sharpens our appetite; and that if it *looks* terrible we aren't willing to eat it, however, wonderful it may *taste*. That is an example of the double phenomenon I have been talking about. All this is easily applicable to the appetite for generation.

These two relations, resemblance and parallel desires, cre-



ate such a strong connection between •the sense of beauty, •the bodily appetite for generation, and •benevolence that they become in a manner inseparable; and we find from experience that it doesn't matter which of them comes up first, because any one of them is almost sure to be accompanied by the other two. Someone who is inflamed with lust feels at least a momentary kindness towards the object of it, and at the same time sees her as unusually beautiful; it often happens that someone begins with kindness and respect for the intelligence and merit of the other person, and moves on from that to the other two passions. But the commonest kind of love is the one that starts with the sense of beauty and then spreads itself into kindness and into the bodily appetite for generation. It isn't easy for •kindness or respect to be united with •the appetite for generation: they are too remote for that, because •one may be the most refined passion of the soul, while •the other is the most gross and vulgar [here calling it 'vulgar' just means that *anybody* might have it]. The love of beauty is nicely half-way between them, sharing something with each; which is why it is uniquely fitted to produce both.

This account of love isn't special to my system; it is unavoidable on any theory. The three feelings that make up this passion are obviously distinct, with each having its own distinct object. So it is certain that their ability to produce one another comes from the relations amongst them. But the relations among •the passions is not sufficient on its own; there have to be also relations among •ideas: the beauty of one person never inspires us with love for someone else! This is further evidence of the truth of my theory about the double relation of impressions and ideas. . . .

This matter of sexual appetite also serves to illustrate my claims about the origin of pride and humility, love and hatred. I have pointed out that although *self* is the object of pride and humility, and *some other person* is the object of love and hatred, these objects can't unaided be the causes of the passions. If they were, pride and humility would always be caused together, cancelling one another out; similarly with love and hatred. So here is the picture I have drawn of the mind:

The mind has certain organs that are naturally fitted to produce a passion; when that passion is produced, it naturally turns the view to a certain object. But this object isn't sufficient to produce the passion, so there has to be some other emotion which, by a double relation of impressions and ideas, can set these mechanisms in action and give them their first impulse.

This situation is still more remarkable with regard to the appetite of generation. Sex is not only the object of that appetite but also its cause: as well as being caused by that appetite to think about sex, we are also caused by thinking about sex to have that appetite. But because this cause loses its force if it comes into action too frequently, it has to be enlivened by some new impulse; and we get that impulse from the beauty of the person—i.e. from a double relation of impressions and ideas. Since this double relation is necessary where an emotion has a distinct cause and a distinct object, how much more necessary it is for an emotion that has only a distinct object without any determinate cause!

## 12: The love and hatred of animals

Let us now move on from the passions of love and hatred (and mixtures containing them) to those same passions as they display themselves in lower animals. When we look into this we find not only that love and hatred are common to every animal that can sense and perceive, but also that on my account of the causes of love and hatred those causes are so simple that it's easy to believe that they are at work in mere animals as well as in mankind. They don't require any force of thoughtfulness or insight; everything is done by springs and mechanisms that aren't exclusive to man or to any one species of animals. This clearly constitutes support for my system.

Love in animals doesn't have other animals of the same species as its only object; it stretches beyond that, taking in almost every sensing and thinking being. A dog naturally loves a man more than another dog, and it very commonly finds that this affection is returned.

Animals can't have much in the way of pleasures or unpleasures of the imagination; so they can judge objects only by the perceptible good or evil that they produce, which has to be the basis for the animals' feelings about them. And so we find that we can get an animal to love or hate us by bringing it benefits or by hurting it.

Love in the lower animals isn't caused by *relations* as much as it is in our species, because they aren't intellectually agile enough to trace relations, except in very obvious instances. Yet it's easy to see that sometime relations have a considerable influence on them. For example, *acquaintance*—

which has the same effect as relation—always produces love in animals either to men or to each other. For the same reason, any likeness among them is a source of affection. An ox that is in an enclosed space with horses will naturally keep company with them; but he will leave them and join up with one of his own species if one is introduced into the enclosure.

The feelings of parents for their young comes from a special instinct in animals, as well as in our species.

It's obvious that sympathy—the passing on of passions—occurs among animals as much as it does among men. Fear, anger, courage, and other states are frequently passed from one animal *x* to another animal *y* without *y*'s knowing anything about the cause of *x*'s state. Grief also is acquired through sympathy among animals, producing almost all the same emotional and other consequences that it produces in our species. . . .

Everyone has noticed that dogs hunting in a pack are ever so much more animated than when they are hunting singly; and it's obvious that it must be sympathy that makes the difference. And huntsmen know that this effect follows in a greater degree—even in *too* great a degree—when two packs that are strangers to each other are joined together. We might wonder why this should be, if we didn't have experience of the same thing in ourselves.

Animals are conspicuously given to envy and malice. Perhaps those are more common than pity because they require less effort of thought and imagination.