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The Dawn of Day

Friedrich Nietzsche

Plain modern English

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Contents

Introduction 4
The Author's Preface 10
Book One 17
Book Two 86
BOOK III. 136
Book Four 185
Book Five 256
Footnotes 331

Friedrich Nietzsche

The Dawn of Day

Translated by

John McFarland Kennedy

Author of “The Quintessence of Nietzsche” and “Religions and Philosophers of the East”

There are many dawns that have not yet shone their light. (From the Rig-Veda.)

New York

The MacMillan Company

1911

Introduction

When Nietzsche named his book The Dawn of Day, he was not just giving it a pretty title to catch the eye of the many people who judge books by their titles instead of by what is inside them. The Dawn of Day stands, as a picture, for the dawn of Nietzsche's own philosophy. Up to then, his way of looking at things had been strongly shaped by Schopenhauer, Wagner, and maybe also Comte, even if his actual ideas had not been. Human, All-Too-Human belongs to an in-between period. After he broke with Wagner's circle at Bayreuth, Nietzsche spends both parts of that book trying to stand on his own two feet and win back his freedom of mind. He is feeling his way, step by step, toward a philosophy of his own. The Dawn of Day was written in 1881, while he was refreshed and energized by springtime in Genoa, and it is the dawn of this new Nietzsche. Later, in his autobiography, Ecce Homo, he himself said: "With this book I begin my fight against morality."

This book is like the books he wrote at the height of his powers: The Joyful Wisdom, Zarathustra, Beyond Good and Evil, and The Genealogy of Morals. In it, too, we cannot help being struck by Nietzsche's deep understanding of the human mind. That understanding showed him to be a brilliant judge of people and things, with no equal in the nineteenth century, and maybe in any other century. One example is his sharp, probing study of the Apostle Paul in Aphorism 68. There the soul of "the first Christian" is stripped bare in front of us, without mercy and without illusions. Most people now agree that it was Paul, not Christ, who founded the Christian Church. Yet Nietzsche's judgment of this founder of Christianity has not yet drawn the angry attacks from churchmen that you might expect. No doubt one reason

they seem to ignore it is that the portrait is so accurate. In such a situation, the defenders of the faith, who usually have plenty to say, clearly find it wiser to keep quiet. Likewise, the jab in Aphorism 84 has drawn no reply from the people it was aimed at. Christian scholars and churchmen are still happily carrying on with their "free" way of explaining the Bible, which we might even call dishonest. And now they are using that same method on Nietzsche's own writings. German churchmen are now "explaining away" his books in a very simple-minded yet bold way. They do it with a skill they surely picked up over centuries of cleverly interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

Churchmen are not the only ones who have failed to answer Nietzsche. In matters outside religion, too, most scholars have not managed to reach the depths of his thinking. Take, for example, the question of race. Ten years ago, twenty years after The Dawn of Day came out, Nietzsche's fellow Germans eagerly praised a book that has recently been translated into English: Chamberlain's Foundations of the Nineteenth Century. This book claims that the Germanic peoples are better than every other people in the world, and the reason it gives is that they have kept their race pure. Because of this pure race, it says, they have produced so many great men. According to the book, every "good" man in history was Germanic, and every bad man was something else. The author shows a lot of cleverness in stealing the best cards from his rivals, the Latin peoples. He also steals the very best card of all, Jesus Christ, from the Jews. For Chamberlain argues, in a very convincing-sounding way, that Jesus was not a Jew but an Aryan, that is, a member of the large family of peoples of which the Germanic peoples are one branch.

What would Nietzsche have said about this magic trick? He pointed out again and again that the Germanic peoples are far from being a pure race. In fact, he said, they have done everything they could to destroy even the idea of a pure race forever. Through their Reforma-

tion, through their Puritan uprising in England, and through the democratic philosophies that naturally came after, the Germanic peoples were the spiritual ancestors of the French Revolution. They were also the ancestors of the Socialist system that we are now starting to suffer under. So this "noble" race has done everything possible to wipe out the last trace of race in Europe, and it even blocks the making of a new race. And with a record like that in history, the Germans write books praising themselves as the salt of the earth, the people above all peoples, the race of races. In truth, they are nothing but newly rich people trying to put together a respectable family tree for themselves. We know that such family trees do not need to be honest, and that love of country may even be treated as a good excuse for a false family tree. Still, the wild race frenzy that broke out in Germany after Mr. Chamberlain's book came out was really very foolish, given how false and misleading the book was. We may ask again: what would Nietzsche have said if he had heard his fellow Germans shouting songs in their own honor as the "flower of Europe"? He would surely have brushed off their grand claims with a kindly smile. His study of history had taught him that even slaves need their wild holiday now and then, like the old Roman festival when slaves could act like masters. But there is no doubt about what his answer as a philosopher would be. In Aphorism 272 of The Dawn of Day, a single sentence completely knocks down the view of modern race-peddlers like Chamberlain and his followers. There we read: "It is likely that there are no pure races, only races made pure over time, and even these are extremely rare." Even stronger words can be found in "Peoples and Countries" (Aphorism 20; see The Genealogy of Morals, page 226): "How much swampy ground and lying there must be, if it is possible to raise the question of 'race' in today's mixed-up European stew!" And again, in Aphorism 21: "Rule for living: have nothing to do with any man who takes part in the lying race fraud."

A man like Nietzsche, who makes so little impression on people in general, is certainly not a danger to the public, as some people have thought and even said out loud. So those who guard the State do not need to worry. There is little risk that Nietzsche will stir up a revolution among either the common people or the upper classes. As Goethe used to say, in French, "Only someone who is like the people can move them." Nietzsche's voice has hardly been raised in this country yet. Until it is fully heard, both the common people and the upper classes will calmly go on their way toward the extremes of democracy and anarchy, as they now seem to be doing. Anarchy, though, may be too strong a word. It is doubtful, at least across Europe and America, whether people today are even strong enough for anarchy. A revolt is a sign of strength in a slave, but our modern slaves have no strength left.

Meanwhile, though, it should have become clear what Nietzsche was trying to do. He tried to stop this threatening decline of the human race. He worked to replace the morality of putting others first, which was the cause of this decline, with a different morality, one that goes beyond Christianity. And he succeeded in this aim. Maybe not with the masses or the upper classes, but at least with the small group of thinkers he really wanted to reach. This small group is naturally grateful to the philosopher. He gave them a morality that lets them be "good" without being fools. Sadly, that unpleasant mix of goodness and foolishness is something the morality of Jesus of Nazareth can rarely avoid. No doubt this Christian morality has its own good points, and in many cases its "good" and "evil" match ours. But common sense and certain qualities of the mind are not valued very highly in the Christian list of values (see, for example, First Corinthians, chapter 3, verse 19). So you will notice that a Christian's understanding does not always quite match his otherwise excellent intentions. Still, we followers of Nietzsche must show Christians the same pa-

tience that they always claim to show their opponents. In fact, Nietzsche himself recommends this in Aphorism 103 of this book. That passage is so well known that it hardly needs repeating. But it also proves wrong the silly, though widespread, idea that all kinds of immoral behaviour would be allowed under the influence of this philosopher who called himself a rule-breaker of morals. Here is what he says:

"Of course I would not deny, unless I were a fool, that many actions called immoral should be avoided and fought against. In the same way, I would not deny that many actions called moral should be done and encouraged. But I believe that in both cases, these actions should be done for different reasons than the ones that have ruled up to now. We must learn all over again, so that in the end, perhaps very late, we may be able to do something more: feel all over again."

Now a word about the translation itself, which owes a lot to many excellent suggestions from Mr. Thomas Common. As a rule, it sticks closely to the German text. Only in two or three places did we translate a little more freely, to make the meaning completely clear. In one or two cases, a pun or double meaning could not be properly carried over into English. For example, in Aphorism 50, the German word "Rausch" means both "rush of excitement" and "elation," meaning the lifted-up feelings of a religious fanatic. Then, in Aphorism 63, we have the words "Einleid" and "Einleidigkeit." These do not quite match pity, compassion, or fellow-feeling. In fact, German dictionary makers do not even know these words yet. A word-for-word translation, "one-feeling," would mean almost nothing. What the word really means is that the person suffering and the person sympathising share the same nerves and feelings, which we render as "shared feeling." As Nietzsche rightly points out, Schopenhauer mistook this experience for compassion or pity ("Mitleid" in German). There was no word for it, even in German, until this later student of the mind invented "Einleid." And

again, in Aphorism 554, there is a play on the words "Vorschritt" (leading the way, guidance) and "Fortschritt" (progress).

But all of these are small matters compared with what the book actually says. They interest experts in language more than students of the human mind. This book was written for those who study the mind. Such people are rather rare in our time, but they can read it and gain a great deal from it.

J. M. Kennedy.

London, September 1911.

The Author's Preface

In this book we find an "underground digger" at work. He is digging, mining, and wearing away the ground from below. You can see him, as long as you have eyes for such deep work. You can see how he makes his way slowly and carefully, gently but surely. He shows no sign of the tiredness that usually comes from going a long time without light and air. You might even call him happy, in spite of all his work in the dark. Doesn't it seem as if some belief were leading him on, as if some comfort were paying him back for his hard work? Or does it seem that he actually wants a long stretch of darkness, something hard to understand, hidden and mysterious? Maybe he wants it because he knows that, in time, he will have his own morning, his own rescue, his own rosy dawn. Yes, truly, he will come back. Don't ask him what he is looking for down in the depths. He will tell you himself, this digger who seems like Trophonius, the cave oracle, this underground digger, as soon as he becomes a human being again. When you have been a mole for so long, and all alone like him, you easily forget how to keep quiet.

2.

And so, my kind and patient friends, I will tell you what I was looking for down in the depths. I will tell you here, in this preface written long afterward, which could easily have turned into an obituary or a funeral speech. I can tell you because I have come back, and I have escaped. Don't think that I will push you to take the same dangerous risk! Don't think that I will even push you toward the same being alone! For whoever follows your own way, as I call it, meets nobody. That is what makes it "your own way." No one comes to help him with

his task. He has to face everything completely alone: danger, bad luck, wickedness, and bad weather. He goes his own way. And, as is only fair, he runs into bitterness and is sometimes annoyed, simply because he follows this "own way" of his. For example, he comes to know that not even his friends can guess who he is or where he is going. Now and then they ask themselves: "Well? Is he really moving at all? Does he still have... a path ahead of him?" Back then I had taken on something that not just anybody could have done. I went down into the deepest depths. I tunnelled right to the very bottom. I began to examine and dig up an old faith. For thousands of years we philosophers had built on this faith as the safest of all foundations. We built on it again and again, even though every building we put on it before had collapsed. I began to dig away beneath our faith in morals. But you don't understand me?

3.

Up to now, Good and Evil is the subject we have thought about least deeply. It was always too dangerous a topic. Conscience, a good reputation, hell, and sometimes even the police have never allowed people to be fair and neutral about it, and they still don't. When we stand in front of morality, just as when we stand in front of any authority, we are not even allowed to think, let alone speak. Here we are supposed to obey! Since the world began, no authority has ever let itself be criticised. And to criticise morals, to treat morality as a problem, as something open to question, what! Wasn't that, and isn't that still, immoral? But morality doesn't just have every kind of threat at hand to keep itself safe from critical hands and from the tools that would pick it apart. Its real protection is a kind of magic spell, an art in which it is a true master. It knows how to "enchant" people. Often it can freeze the will to criticise with a single look, or even win that will over to its own side. In fact, there are even cases where morality can

turn the critical will against itself, so that, like a scorpion, it stabs its sting into its own body. For ages, morality has been an expert in every devilish trick of persuasion. Even today, there is no public speaker who would not turn to it for help. (Just listen to our anarchists, for example: how moral they sound when they want to convince you! In the end they even call themselves "the good and the just.") Ever since people began talking and trying to persuade each other on earth, morality has proved to be the greatest seductress of all. And, what matters even more to us philosophers, she is the true Circe of philosophers, like the witch in the old Greek story who bewitched men and turned them into animals. Why is it that, from Plato onwards, all the great builders of philosophy in Europe have built for nothing? Why is it that everything they honestly believed would last "longer than bronze" is now about to sink, or is already lying in ruins? Oh, how wrong is the answer that people still rattle off so easily today when this question is asked: "Because they all skipped the first step, which was checking the foundation, a critique of all reason." That was the disastrous answer given by Kant, and it certainly has not led us modern philosophers onto firmer and safer ground! (And while we are on the subject, one might ask: wasn't it rather strange to demand that a tool should judge its own value and usefulness? That the mind itself should "recognise" its own worth, its own power, and its own limits? Wasn't that even a little bit ridiculous?) The right answer would have been this: all philosophers, Kant included, were building under the seductive spell of morality. They only seemed to be aiming at certainty and "truth." In reality, their eyes were fixed on "majestic moral buildings," to use Kant's own innocent way of putting it once again. Kant describes it as his "less brilliant, but not unworthy" job "to level the ground and lay a solid foundation for putting up those majestic moral buildings" (Critique of Pure Reason, volume two, page 257). Sadly, he did not reach his goal. Quite the opposite, as we have to admit today. With this lofty goal, Kant was simply a true child of

his century, which more than any other can fairly be called the century of high-flown excitement. Luckily, he also stayed a child of that century in its more valuable side (for example, with that solid piece of trust in the senses that he brought into his theory of how we know things). He too had been bitten by the moral tarantula, Rousseau, as if poisoned by a spider. He too felt that moral fanaticism weighing on his soul, the same fanaticism that another follower of Rousseau, Robespierre, felt and openly claimed he was carrying out: "to found on earth the empire of wisdom, justice, and virtue." (That is from Robespierre's speech of June 4th, 1794.) On the other hand, although Kant had this French fanaticism in his heart, no one could have developed it in a less French, deeper, more thorough, and more German way than he did, if the word German can still be used in that sense. To make room for his "moral kingdom," he felt he had to add to it a world that cannot be proved, a logical "beyond." That was why he needed his critique of pure reason! In other words, he would never have wanted it at all if he had not believed one thing mattered more than everything else: making his moral kingdom safe from reason, or better still, invisible to reason. He felt too strongly how easily a moral order of things could be attacked by reason. Because when Kant looked at nature and history, at the deep-rooted immorality of nature and history, he was a pessimist, like all good Germans since the earliest times. He believed in morality not because nature and history prove it, but in spite of the fact that they keep contradicting it. To understand this "in spite of," we might remember a somewhat similar trait in Luther, that other great pessimist. With true Lutheran boldness, Luther once pressed this point on his friends: "If we could understand by reason alone how a God who shows so much anger and cruelty could be merciful and just, what would we need faith for?" For since the earliest times, nothing has made a deeper impression on the German soul, and nothing has "tempted" it more, than that most dangerous of all conclusions, which every true Latin person sees as a sin

against the mind: "I believe it because it is absurd." With this idea, German logic enters the history of Christian teaching for the first time. But even today, a thousand years later, we present-day Germans, late Germans in every sense, still catch the smell of truth, a possibility of truth, behind the famous basic rule of reasoning with which Hegel made the German spirit win over Europe: "Contradiction moves the world; all things contradict themselves." We are pessimists, even in logic.

4.

But logical judgments are not the deepest, most basic thing our bold suspicion digs down to. Our trust in reason goes hand in hand with believing those judgments are valid. And that trust, simply because it is trust, is a *moral* thing ... Perhaps German pessimism still has to take its final step? Perhaps once again it has to set its "I believe" against its "it's absurd" in a frightening way? And if this book is pessimistic even about morals, even beyond trust in morals, shouldn't it be a German book for exactly that reason? Because it really does hold a contradiction, and it isn't afraid of it. In this book, trust in morals is taken back. But why? Out of *morality*! Or what else should we call what happens in it, what happens in *us*? We prefer to use more modest words. But there's no doubt that a "you must" speaks to us too. We too obey a strict law that stands above us. And this is the last command of morals that we can still hear, the last one that we too must *live by*. Here, if anywhere, we are still *people of conscience*. To say it plainly: we will not go back to what we see as rotten, worn out, and replaced. We will not go back to something "not worth believing," whether it is called God, virtue, truth, justice, love for others, or anything else. We will not let ourselves build a dishonest road back to old ideals. We are completely and permanently against anything that tries to step in and mix itself with us. We are against every kind of faith and Christianity

today. We are against the half-hearted warmth of all romantic feeling and patriotism. We are also against that artistic love of pleasure and lack of principle that would gladly make us worship where we no longer believe, since we are artists ourselves. In short, we are against all this European feminism (or idealism, if you prefer that word), which forever "lifts us upward" and, because of that, forever "drags down" and "cheapens." And yet, being people of *this* kind of conscience, we feel connected to that German honesty and devotion that goes back thousands of years. We may be rule-breakers of morals and atheists, the late and uncertain children of those virtues, but we feel related to them. In fact, in a certain way, we even see ourselves as their heirs, the ones who carry out their deepest wish. It is a pessimistic wish, as I have already said, one that is not afraid to deny itself, because it denies itself with *joy*! If you want a formula for it, here it is: in us, what is completed is *morality cancelling itself*.

5.

But in the end, why do we have to announce so loudly and so fiercely what we are, what we want, and what we don't want? Let's look at this more calmly and more wisely, from a higher and more distant point of view. Let's say it as if we were only talking among ourselves, so quietly that the rest of the world doesn't hear it, or hear *us*! Above all, let's say it *slowly*.... This preface comes late, but not too late. After all, what do five or six years matter? A book like this, and a problem like this, are in no rush. Besides, my book and I are friends of going *slowly*. I didn't study the art of careful reading for nothing. Maybe I still practise it: I am a teacher of slow reading. I've even come to write slowly. These days it is not just my habit but my taste, maybe a twisted taste, to write only things that will drive anyone who is "in a hurry" to despair. The art of careful reading is an old, respected skill that asks one thing above all from those who follow it: to step aside,

to give themselves spare time, to go quiet, to become slow. It is like the patient craft of a goldsmith, but used on language. It is an art that has to do slow, delicate work, and it achieves nothing unless it goes *slowly*. That is exactly why the art of careful reading is more needed now than ever. That is exactly why it is so attractive and exciting in an age of "work," which means an age of rushing, of rude and wild hurry, that wants to "get things done" right away, even every book, old or new. The art of careful reading will probably not "get things done" so fast. It teaches you how to read *well*: that is, slowly, deeply, carefully, wisely, thinking about what lies behind the words, with the doors of your mind left a little open, with gentle fingers and eyes ... My patient friends, this book speaks only to perfect readers who know the art of careful reading. *Learn* to read me well!

RUTA, NEAR GENOA,

Autumn, 1886.

Book One

1.

JUDGING AFTER THE FACT.—Anything that lasts a long time slowly gets so filled with reason that it becomes hard to believe it ever came from something unreasonable. Doesn't almost every accurate account of how something began seem to us strange, even disrespectful to something holy? In fact, isn't the true historian always contradicting what people believe?

2.

A BIAS OF THE EXPERTS.—Learned people are quite right when they say that people in every age believed they *knew* what was good and evil, what deserved praise and what deserved blame. But it is a bias of the experts to say *that we now know it better* than any other age did.

3.

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING.—When people gave every single thing a gender, male or female, they did not think they were just playing a game. On the contrary, they thought they had gained a deep understanding. It was only much later, and only partly, that they admitted how huge their mistake was. In the same way, people have given everything that exists a moral meaning. It is as if they threw a cloak of

moral importance over the shoulders of the world. One day, all of that will be worth exactly as much, and no more, as people's belief today that the sun is male or female.(2)

4.

AGAINST THE MADE-UP CLASH OF THE HEAVENS.—Once again, we must sweep all this *false* grandeur out of the world, because it goes against the fairness that everything around us has a right to. And for that reason, we must not see the world as more out of tune with itself than it really is, and we must not wish it to be so!

5.

BE THANKFUL!—The most important thing humanity has achieved through all its past efforts is this: we no longer have to live in constant fear of wild animals, savage enemies, gods, and our own dreams.

6.

THE MAGICIAN AND HIS OPPOSITE.—What is amazing in science is the opposite of what is amazing in a magician's tricks. The magician wants to make us believe we are seeing a very simple cause and effect, when really a very complicated chain of causes is at work. Science, on the other hand, forces us to give up our belief in simple cause and effect exactly where everything looks so easy to understand, and where we are only being fooled by how things look. The simplest things are *very* "complicated"—we can never be amazed by them enough!

7.

RETHINKING OUR SENSE OF SPACE.—Has most of human happiness been built out of real things or imaginary things? One thing is certain, anyway: the huge distance between the highest point of happiness and the lowest point of unhappiness was only set up with the help of imaginary things. Because of this, under the influence of science, *this* kind of sense of space keeps getting smaller and smaller. It is the same way science has taught us, and is still teaching us, to see the earth as small—yes, even to see the whole solar system as just a tiny dot.

8.

TRANSFIGURATION.—Confused people who suffer, muddled dreamers, and people carried away in wild ecstasy: these are the three groups into which the painter Raphael divided humankind. We no longer see the world this way—and Raphael himself would not dare to now. His own eyes would show him a new transfiguration, a new way the world is changed and lit up.

9.

WHAT THE MORALITY OF TRADITION MEANS.—Compared with the way people lived for thousands of years, we people of today are living in a very immoral age. The power of custom has grown remarkably weak. And our sense of morality has become so refined and lifted up that we could almost say it has evaporated into thin air. That is why we latecomers find it so hard to get a basic idea of where morality came from. And even if we do get it, the words to explain it stick in our throats, because they would sound so crude if we said them out loud! Or they would seem so much like an insult to morality! Take, for example, the basic principle: morality is nothing else (and

above all, nothing more) than obeying customs, whatever kind of customs they may be. But customs are simply the traditional way of acting and of judging what is valuable. Where there is no tradition, there is no morality. And the less life is ruled by tradition, the smaller the circle of morality becomes. The free person is immoral, because he *wants* to depend on himself and not on tradition. In all the earliest stages of humanity, "evil" meant the same thing as "individual," "free," "doing as one likes," "unusual," "unexpected," and "unpredictable." In those early conditions, always judged by this standard, any action that was done *not* because tradition ordered it, but for some other reason (for example, because it was useful to the person), was called immoral. This was true even if it was done for the very same reasons that custom had once set up. And even the person who did it felt it was immoral, because it had not been done out of obedience to tradition.

What is tradition? It is a higher authority that people obey, not because it orders what is useful to us, but simply because it orders. And how is this feeling for tradition different from a general feeling of fear? It is the fear of a higher mind that gives orders, the fear of a power we cannot understand, of something greater than a person. There is *superstition* in this fear. In early times, morality covered education and health, marriage, medicine, farming, war, when to speak and when to stay silent, how people dealt with each other, and how people dealt with the gods. Morality demanded that a person follow its rules without thinking of *himself* as an individual. So, in the beginning, everything was custom. And anyone who wanted to rise above it first had to turn himself into a kind of lawmaker and medicine man, a sort of half-god. In other words, he had to create customs, which was a dangerous and frightening thing to do!—Who is the most moral person? On one hand, it is the person who obeys the law most often. For example, it is someone like the Brahmins, the priests of India, who carry an awareness of the law with them wherever they go, bring it

into the smallest moments of their day, and keep training their minds to find chances to obey the law. On the other hand, it is the person who obeys the law in the hardest cases. The most moral person is the one who makes the biggest *sacrifices* for morality. But what are the biggest sacrifices? Answering this question will lead to several different kinds of morality. But the difference between the morality of *obeying most often* and the morality of *obeying in the hardest cases* is extremely important. Let us not be fooled about the reasons behind the moral law that demands, as a sign of being moral, that we obey custom in the hardest cases! It demands that we conquer ourselves, not because this brings good results for the individual, but so that custom and tradition will seem to rule, in spite of everything the individual wants and everything that would benefit him. The individual must sacrifice himself—that is what the morality of tradition demands.

On the other hand, there are moralists, like the followers of Socrates, who tell the *individual* to practise self-control and moderation because this is the best thing he can do for himself and the key to his greatest personal happiness. These moralists are *exceptions*. If we ourselves don't see them that way, it is only because we were brought up under their influence. They all take a new path, and because of this they draw the strongest disapproval from everyone who stands for the morality of tradition. They cut themselves off from the community as rule-breakers of morals, and they are, in the fullest sense of the word, wicked people. In the same way, any Christian who "looked, above all else, for his *own* salvation" must have seemed wicked to a good, old-fashioned Roman. Wherever a community exists, and so also a morality of tradition, people feel that any punishment for breaking a custom falls, above all, on the whole community. This punishment is thought to come from beyond nature. How it shows itself and how far it reaches are very hard to understand, and people look into these questions with superstitious fear. The community can force any one of

its members to make up for any harm that came from what he did, whether the harm was done to another person or to the community itself. It can also bring a kind of revenge down on the person by trying to show that, because of what he did, a storm of God's anger has broken over the community. But above all, the community treats the guilt of the individual as *its own* guilt, and it carries the punishment of that lone person as its own punishment. Deep in their hearts, people complain: "Morals have grown loose, if things like this can happen." And every action done by someone on his own, every way of thinking that is his own, causes fear. No one can measure how much the more unusual, rare, and original minds must have suffered over time by being seen as wicked and dangerous, *and, yes, because they even saw themselves that way*. Under the strong rule of the morality of tradition, originality of every kind came to carry a guilty conscience. And even now, this thought darkens the sky of the best minds more than it needs to, like clouds that don't have to be there.

10.

THE SENSE OF MORALITY AND THE SENSE OF CAUSE AND EFFECT PULL AGAINST EACH OTHER.—As our understanding of cause and effect grows, the area that morality covers shrinks. Every time someone has been able to grasp which effects must follow from a cause, and to see them as separate from everything accidental and from things that merely happen to come afterward (what is called *post hoc*, "after this"), that person has also destroyed a huge number of *made-up causes*. These made-up causes had until then been believed in as the foundation of morals. The real world is much smaller than the world of our imagination. And each time this happens, people also throw away some of their anxiety and some of the pressure they feel, and some of their respect for the authority of tradition is lost. Morality as a whole gets smaller. On the other hand, anyone who

wants to make morality bigger has to know how to stop people from being able to check and control the results of actions.

11.

THE MORALS AND MEDICINES OF ORDINARY PEOPLE.—Everyone is always busy, to a greater or lesser degree, shaping the morals that rule in a community. Most people bring up one example after another to show the *supposed link between cause and effect*, between guilt and punishment. In this way they support it as if it were well grounded, and they strengthen people's belief in it. A few people make new observations about actions and what follows from them, draw conclusions from these, and set down laws. A smaller number raise objections and let belief in these things grow weaker. But they are all alike in the rough and *unscientific* way they go about their work. Whether it is a matter of objecting to a law, giving examples of it or observations about it, or proving it, confirming it, stating it, or disproving it, we always find that the material and the method are completely worthless. They are just as worthless as the material and the approach of all folk medicine. Folk medicine and folk morals are closely related. They should not be judged and valued in such different ways, as people still usually do. Both are very dangerous, and both are fake sciences.

12.

THE RESULT AS A HELPING CAUSE.—In the past, the results of an action were not seen as coming from that action. Instead, they were seen as an extra help added on purpose, that is, added by God. Can you imagine a bigger confusion than that? Completely different methods and means have to be used when dealing with actions and when dealing with their effects!

13.

TOWARDS A NEW EDUCATION OF HUMANKIND.—All of you who mean well and are willing to help: help us! Lend a hand in the effort to get rid of that idea of punishment which has spread over the whole world! There is no weed more harmful than this one! This idea has not only been applied to the results of our actions—and how horrible and senseless it is to mix up cause and effect with cause and punishment!—but something worse has followed. Because of this hateful way of explaining things through punishment, pure chance in what happens has been robbed of its innocence. Yes, people have even taken their foolishness so far that they want us to see life itself as a punishment. From this, it would seem that the education of humankind has until now been handed over to strange, bad-tempered jailers and executioners.

14.

WHAT MADNESS HAS MEANT IN THE HISTORY OF MORALITY.—For thousands of years before our time, and during our own time right up to today, all human communities have lived under the heavy pressure of the "morality of tradition." (We ourselves live in a small world of exceptions, in what you might call a bad neighbourhood.) And yet, in spite of all that pressure, new and different ideas, ways of valuing, and urges have shown up again and again. If that happened, I say, it only happened with the help of a terrible partner. Almost everywhere, it was madness that cleared the road for the new thought and broke the spell of an old tradition and superstition. Do you understand why this had to happen through madness? It had to come through something that looks and sounds as frightening and unpredictable as the devilish moods of the wind and the sea, and so demands the same fear and respect. It had to come through something that shows, as clearly as the fits and foaming mouth of someone hav-

ing a seizure, that the person is not in control of himself. Those signs seemed to show the mad person as a mask and a megaphone for some god speaking through him. It had to come through something that filled even the person carrying the new thought with awe and fear of himself, something that silenced all his regrets and pushed him on to become its prophet and its martyr.—Now, in our own time, we keep hearing people say that genius has a touch of madness in it, rather than plain good sense. People in earlier ages were much more ready to believe the reverse: that wherever signs of madness showed up, some amount of genius and wisdom was there too—something "divine," as they whispered to each other. More than that, they said so quite strongly. "All the greatest blessings of Greece have come from madness," said Plato, and in saying it he wrote down what the whole ancient world believed. Let us go one step further. All those outstanding people who felt an unstoppable drive to throw off the burden of some morality or other had no choice—*if they were not truly mad*—but to pretend to be mad, or to actually become mad. And this is true for people who brought in new things in every area of life, not only in religion and politics. Even the man who changed the rhythm rules of poetry had to defend himself by claiming madness. (That is why, even into gentler times, madness stayed a kind of accepted custom among poets. Solon, for example, made use of it when he urged the people of Athens to win back the island of Salamis.)—"How can a person make himself mad when he is not mad and does not dare to pretend to be?" Almost all the great men of the ancient world gave themselves over to this terrible line of thinking. A secret body of knowledge grew up around it, full of tricks and strange diets, and it was passed down from one generation to the next. Along with it came the feeling that such plans and thoughts were innocent, even holy. The ways of becoming a medicine man among Native Americans, a saint among Christians in the Middle Ages, an angakok, or spirit-healer, among the people of Greenland, or a Pagee among the people of Brazil, are basic-

ally the same: pointless fasting, never having sex, living alone in a wilderness, climbing a mountain or a pillar, "sitting on an old willow tree that looks out over a lake," and thinking about nothing at all except whatever might bring on wild ecstasy or a disturbed mind.

Who would dare to look out over the wilderness of the bitterest and most pointless sufferings of the spirit, where probably the most creative people of every age have wasted away? Who could bear to listen to the sighs of those lonely, tormented minds? They cried: "O heavenly powers, give me madness! Madness, so that at last I can believe in myself! Give me wild ravings and fits, sudden flashes of light and stretches of darkness. Terrify me with shivering and fever like no human being has ever felt before, with crashing noises and haunting ghosts. Let me growl and whimper and crawl around like an animal, if only I can come to believe in myself! Doubt is eating me alive. I have killed the law, and now I fear the law the way a living person fears a dead body. If I am not *above* the law, then I am the most lost and miserable creature of all. Where does this new spirit living inside me come from, if not from you? So prove to me that I am one of you—nothing but madness will prove it to me." And all too often this burning desire got what it wanted. At the very time when Christianity was showing how richly it could produce saints and martyrs, and believed it was proving itself true that way, Jerusalem had large asylums for the insane, filled with shipwrecked saints—people whose last spark of good sense had been put out by floods of madness.

15.

THE OLDEST WAYS OF FINDING COMFORT.—First stage: In every bad luck or discomfort, a person sees something that he must make someone else suffer for, it does not matter who. In this way he finds out how much power he still has left, and that comforts him. Second stage: In every bad luck or discomfort, a person sees a punishment,

that is, a way of paying for guilt, and a way to free himself from the wicked spell of a wrong, whether real or only apparent. Once he sees the *benefit* that bad luck brings with it, he believes he no longer needs to make another person suffer for it. He gives up this kind of satisfaction, because now he has a different one.

16.

THE FIRST RULE OF CIVILISATION.—Among primitive tribes there is a certain group of customs that seem to have no purpose except to be customs. So they set down strict rules that are, on the whole, unnecessary. For example, the Kamchadal people of Siberia have rules forbidding anyone to scrape snow off their boots with a knife, to stick a piece of coal on the point of a knife, or to put a piece of iron into the fire—and anyone who breaks these rules is to be put to death! Yet these laws do serve a purpose: they keep people constantly reminded of tradition, and of how absolutely necessary it is for them to obey it. And all of this supports the great rule that stands at the very start of all civilisation: any custom is better than no custom at all.

17.

GOODNESS AND WICKEDNESS.—At first, people projected their own personalities onto Nature. Everywhere they looked, they saw themselves and people like them—that is, their own nasty and unpredictable moods—hidden, so to speak, behind clouds, thunderstorms, wild animals, trees, and plants. That was when they declared that Nature was evil. Later came a time, the time of Rousseau, when they tried to set themselves apart from Nature. They were so tired of one another that they wanted their own little hiding places, where humans and human misery could not get in. That was when they invented the idea that "nature is good."

18.

THE MORALITY OF CHOOSING TO SUFFER.—Picture people living in a constant state of war, in a small community whose very survival is always under threat, and whose moral rules are as strict as they can possibly be. In other words, picture souls that are strong, revengeful, spiteful, full of suspicion, ready to face the worst disasters, and toughened by hardship and by strict rules. What is the greatest pleasure for such people? The pleasure of cruelty. In fact, for souls like these, in a situation like this, being clever and endless in cruelty would even be seen as a virtue. A community like this would take delight in doing cruel things, because for once it could throw off the dark weight of always being worried and always being careful. Cruelty is one of the oldest pleasures at their celebrations. Because of this, people come to believe that the gods also enjoy watching cruelty and are delighted by it. And in this way a belief spreads that suffering you choose for yourself, a martyrdom you take on willingly, has a special meaning and value of its own. Over time, tradition in the community shapes people's habits to fit this belief. From then on, people grow more suspicious whenever things are going very well for them, and more confident when they find themselves in great pain. They think the gods may turn against them because they are happy, and look kindly on them because they are suffering. Not because the gods feel compassion! Compassion is looked down on, and seen as unworthy of a strong soul that others fear. No, the gods are pleased because watching human suffering puts them in a good mood and makes them feel powerful, and a cruel mind loves to bathe in the sense of power. That is why the "most moral man" in the community was thought of as the most moral: because he suffered often, went without things, lived a life of hard work, and punished his own body cruelly. And, to say it again and again, this was not seen as a way of training himself, or controlling himself, or seeking his own happiness.

It was seen as a virtue that put the evil gods in a good mood toward the whole community, a virtue that kept sending up to them the smell of a sacrifice that paid for wrongs. Think of all the great thinkers who led nations and managed to stir up the slow but fertile swamp of custom of their traditions. Every one of them needed this element of willingly chosen suffering, and also madness, in order to be believed. And above all, as always happens, they needed it in order to believe in themselves! The more their minds went down new paths, and so were tortured by stabs of conscience, the more cruelly they fought against their own bodies, their own desires, and their own health. It was as if they were paying the gods back in pleasure, so that the gods would not grow angry that the old customs were being ignored and new goals were being set up.

No one should rush to think that we have now completely freed ourselves from this kind of reasoning by feeling! Let even the bravest among us ask themselves honestly about this very point. In every age, even the smallest step forward in free thinking and in living your own life has come with suffering, both of body and of mind. And not only the steps forward, no! Every kind of movement and change has required countless martyrs, all through thousands of years, years in which people searched for their way and laid down the foundation stones of everything. Yet we never think of those years when we talk about "recorded history," which is a ridiculously tiny slice of humanity's whole existence. And even in this so-called recorded history, which is mostly just a lot of noise about the latest new things, there is no more important story than the old, old tragedy of the martyrs who tried to move the swamp of custom. Nothing has cost more than the tiny bit of human reason and feeling of freedom that we are now so proud of. But it is exactly this pride that makes it almost impossible for us today to be aware of that enormous stretch of time before "recorded history," when the "morality of tradition" ruled everything. It

makes it almost impossible for us to see that stretch of time as the real, deciding age that shaped the character of humankind. It was an age when suffering was seen as a virtue, cruelty as a virtue, pretending as a virtue, revenge as a virtue, and rejecting reason as a virtue. On the other hand, being well off was seen as a danger, the desire for knowledge as a danger, peace as a danger, and compassion as a danger. It was an age when being pitied was taken as an insult, work as an insult, madness as a sign of the divine, and every kind of change as wicked and full of the seeds of ruin! Do you imagine that all this has changed, and that humanity must have changed its character too? Oh, you poor students of the human mind, learn to know yourselves better!

19.

MORALITY AND DULLING THE MIND.—Custom holds what people in earlier times learned about what they thought was useful and what they thought was harmful. But the feeling we have about custom, which is morality, is not tied to those lessons themselves. It is tied to how old the custom is, how sacred it seems, and the fact that nobody questions its authority. So this feeling stops us from gaining new experiences and from improving our morals. In other words, morality stands in the way of creating new and better morals. It makes the mind dull.

20.

FREE-DOERS AND FREE-THINKERS.—Compared with free-thinkers, people who act freely are worse off, because people clearly suffer more from the results of actions than from the results of thoughts. But remember that both kinds of people are looking for their own satisfaction. Free-thinkers already get their satisfaction from thinking about forbidden things and saying them out loud. So

when it comes to motives, there is no difference between the two. When it comes to results, though, the verdict will go against the free-thinker, as long as we do not judge by the most shallow and crude outward look, that is, not the way everyone usually judges. We owe it to all those people who broke away from the authority of some custom through their actions to undo a lot of the slander that has been heaped on them. They are usually called criminals. Up to now, everyone who has overturned a rule of established morality has always been seen at first as a wicked person. But later, when it turned out that the old rule could not be brought back, and people slowly got used to the change, the label they gave that person changed little by little. History is almost entirely about these "wicked" people, who were later recognized as good people.

21.

"KEEPING THE LAW."—Sometimes following a moral rule leads to results different from the ones that were expected and promised. Instead of bringing the moral person the happiness they hoped for, it brings bad luck and misery. In those cases, the careful and fearful person always has an excuse ready: "Something was missing in the way the law was carried out." And if things get really bad, a deeply suffering and beaten-down humanity will even declare: "It is impossible to follow this rule properly. We are too weak and too sinful. Deep down in our souls, we are not able to be moral. So we have no right to happiness and success. These moral rules and promises were made for beings better than us."

22.

DEEDS AND FAITH.—Protestant teachers are still spreading the basic mistake that only faith matters, and that good deeds will naturally follow from faith. This teaching is definitely not true. But it looks so

attractive that it has won over minds very different from Luther's, for example the minds of Socrates and Plato. And yet the plain facts and experience of everyday life prove the opposite. Even the most certain knowledge and the strongest faith cannot give us the strength or the skill we need to act. Nor can they give us practice in that delicate and complicated machinery we need before any idea can be turned into action. So, I say, let us first and above all have deeds! And that means practice! practice! practice! The faith we need will come later—you can be sure of that!

23.

WHERE WE ARE MOST SENSITIVE.—For thousands of years, people believed that things—nature, tools, all kinds of possessions—were alive and had souls, and that they could block and interfere with human plans. Because of this, people felt powerless far more often and far more strongly than they needed to. They had to keep their things under control the same way they controlled people and animals: by force, by pressure, by flattery, by deals, and by sacrifices. This is where we can find the source of most superstitious customs. That means the source of a large part of human activity, maybe even the biggest part, and yet a part that was wasted and useless!—But because the feeling of powerlessness and fear was so strong, and was constantly stirred up for such a long time, the sense of power in human beings grew extremely sensitive. In this way, a person can match even the most finely tuned set of scales. This sense of power has become humanity's strongest drive. And the ways people found to create this feeling make up almost the whole history of culture.

24.

HOW A RULE IS PROVED.—Whether a recipe is good or useless—say, a recipe for baking bread—is usually proved by whether the ex-

pected result happens or not, as long as, of course, the instructions were followed carefully. But it is different with moral rules. Here the results cannot be checked, explained, or predicted. These rules are actually based on guesses with very little scientific value, and they can neither be proved nor disproved by looking at results. In earlier ages, though, all knowledge was rough and primitive, and people accepted something as true on the tiniest bit of evidence. Back then, people decided whether a moral recipe was good or useless the same way we now judge any other rule: by looking at the results. Suppose the native people of Alaska believe in a command that says: "You must not throw a bone into the fire or give it to a dog." This command is backed up by the warning: "If you do, you will have no luck when hunting." And yet, in one way or another, it almost always happens that someone has "no luck when hunting." So it is not easy to disprove the rule this way. That is even more true because the whole community, not just one person, is seen as the one who suffers the punishment. And besides, something is almost certain to happen that seems to prove the rule right.

25.

CUSTOMS AND BEAUTY.—To be fair to custom, we must not overlook one thing. In all the people who follow it with their whole heart from the very beginning, the body parts and mental abilities used for attack and defense start to waste away. That means these people slowly become more beautiful! Because it is the use of these parts, and the feelings that go with them, that creates ugliness and keeps it going. That is why the old baboon is uglier than the young one, and why the young female baboon looks most like a human, and so is the best-looking.—Let us draw our own conclusions from this about where female beauty comes from!

26.

ANIMALS AND MORALS.—Think of the rules that polite society insists on. For example: stay away from anything silly, wild, or too pushy. Hold back your good qualities just as much as your strongest desires. Bring yourself down to the common level right away. Give in to good manners and play yourself down. Generally speaking, all of this can be found as a kind of social morality even at the lowest level of the animal world. And it is only down at this low level that we can see the deepest purpose behind all these pleasant, careful rules. That purpose is this: you want to get away from those who are hunting you, and you want help in finding prey. That is why animals learn to control and disguise themselves so well that some of them can even change the colour of their bodies to match their surroundings (scientists call this the "chromatic function"). Others can pretend to be dead, or take on the shapes and colours of other animals, or of sand, leaves, moss, or mushrooms (English naturalists call this "mimicry").

In the same way, a person hides himself behind big general words like "man" or "society." Or he fits himself to, and clings to, princes, social classes, political parties, the popular opinions of his day, or the people around him. And we can easily find, among animals, the match for all those clever ways we have of making ourselves happy, grateful, powerful, and attractive. Even our sense of truth, which deep down is really just a sense of safety, is something humans share with animals. We do not want to be fooled, either by others or by ourselves. We listen with some suspicion when our own strong feelings push us to act. We hold ourselves back and stay on guard against ourselves. Now, an animal does all of this just as a human does. And in the animal, too, self-control comes from a sense of what is real, which we could call common sense or caution. In the same way, an animal notices the effect it has on the minds of other creatures. So it learns to look at itself from their point of view, to see itself "from the outside." It has its own level

of self-knowledge. An animal judges how its friends and enemies move. It learns their habits by heart and acts to suit them. It gives up, once and for all, fighting against single animals of certain kinds. And when certain kinds of animals come near, it can also tell whether they mean well and come in peace. The beginnings of justice, like the beginnings of wisdom—in short, everything we call the virtues praised by Socrates—come from our animal nature. They grow out of the instincts that teach us to look for food and to avoid our enemies. Remember that the higher kind of person has only raised and polished himself in two ways: in the quality of his food, and in his idea of what goes against his nature. If we keep that in mind, it may not be going too far to say that the whole thing we call morality has an animal origin.

27.

WHY IT IS VALUABLE TO BELIEVE IN FEELINGS THAT GO BEYOND HUMAN LIMITS.—Marriage, as an institution, stubbornly holds on to the belief that love, even though it is a passion, can still last as a passion. It even holds that lasting, lifelong love can be taken as the normal rule. This is a noble belief, and marriage clings to it firmly, even though it is proven wrong so often that it is almost the usual thing. In this way the belief becomes a "pious fraud," a lie told for a holy purpose. And by holding on to it, marriage has lifted love up to a higher rank. Some institutions have granted a passion the belief that it will last, and have made people responsible for making it last, even though the very nature of that passion is to pass. Every such institution has raised that passion to a higher level. From then on, a person gripped by such a passion no longer thinks, as people used to, that it makes others look down on him or puts him in danger. Just the opposite: he believes it lifts him up, both in his own eyes and in the eyes of his equals. Let us remember the institutions and cus-

toms that have done this. Out of the burning devotion of one moment, they have made faithfulness that lasts forever. Out of the pleasure of being angry, they have made revenge that lasts forever. Out of despair, they have made mourning that lasts forever. Out of one quick, careless word, they have made a duty that lasts forever. Many lies and much fakeness came into the world because of these changes. But each time, at the price of these drawbacks, something else came too: a new idea that goes beyond human limits and lifts humankind higher.

28.

A MOOD USED AS A REASON.—Where does that cheerful eagerness to act come from inside us? People have thought about this question a great deal. The oldest answer, and one we still hear today, is: God causes it. This is how He lets us know that He approves of what we are doing. In the old days, when people went to ask the oracles for advice, they did it so they could come home filled with this cheerful eagerness. And whenever doubts came to someone, because different choices of action came to mind, he would settle them by saying: "I will do whatever gives me that feeling." In other words, they did not choose what made the most sense. They chose a plan whose very idea filled their heart with courage and hope. A cheerful outlook was put on the scales as a reason, and it turned out to weigh more than good sense. That is because the mood was explained in a superstitious way, as the work of a god who was promising success. And through this reasoning, the god let his own reason speak as the highest kind of good sense. Now think about what happened when clever people who hungered for power took advantage of this prejudice—and they still do! "Create the right mood!"—that way you can skip all reasons and beat every objection!

29.

PEOPLE WHO PUT ON A SHOW OF GOODNESS AND OF SIN.—Among the people of ancient times who became famous for being good, it seems there were many who were putting on a show for themselves. This was especially true of the Greeks. They were natural actors, so they must have done it without even realizing it, and they saw no reason not to. On top of that, everyone was trying to outdo someone else's goodness with his own. So why shouldn't they have used every trick to show off their good qualities, especially in front of each other, even if only for practice? What good was a virtue that you could not show off, and that did not know how to show itself off?—Christianity ended the careers of these actors of goodness. Instead, it came up with a disgusting habit of showing off and parading one's sins. It brought into the world a state of lying about how sinful you are. (Even today, strict believing Christians think this is good manners, the proper fashionable thing to do.)

30.

Cruelty in a refined form, passing as virtue. Here we have a kind of morality that rests completely on our hunger to stand out above others. So do not think too highly of it! In fact, we may well ask what sort of urge this is, and what it really means at its core. By the way we present ourselves, we try to hurt the other person. We try to make him envious and to wake up his feeling that he is weak and lowly. We try to make him taste how bitter his own lot is by putting a little of our honey on his tongue. And while we give him this so-called gift, we look sharply and proudly into his eyes, enjoying our win.

Look at a man like this, who has now become humble, and perfectly humble at that. Then go looking for the people he has been preparing a torture for, for a long time, through that very humility. You will

surely find them! Here is another man who is kind to animals, and people admire him for it. But there are certain people he wants to be cruel to, and this kindness is exactly the tool he uses. Look at that great artist. Long before he made it, he enjoyed imagining how envious his beaten rivals would be. That pleasure would not let his talents rest until he had become a great man. How many bitter moments in other people's hearts has he demanded as the price of his own greatness! Think of the nun and her purity: with what threatening eyes she looks into the faces of other women who live differently from her! What a spiteful joy shines in those eyes! The main idea is short. The ways it can be played out might be countless, but they would not easily grow boring. That is because it is still such a strange and new idea, and almost a painful one, to claim that the morality of standing out is, deep down, nothing but joy in refined cruelty. When I say "deep down," I mean that this is true each time in the first generation. When the habit of some impressive action is passed down from parents to children, the root, so to speak, is not passed down, only the fruit. This is because only feelings, not thoughts, can be inherited. So if we assume that upbringing does not plant the root again, then in the second generation the joy in cruelty is no longer felt. All that is left is pleasure in the habit itself. And this joy is the first step toward what we call "good."

31.

Pride in the mind. Human beings are proud. That pride fights against the theory that we came from animals, and it puts a wide gap between nature and humans. This pride rests on a mistaken belief about what the mind is, and that belief is fairly new. During the long time before written history, people thought the mind was everywhere. They did not see it as something special that belonged only to them. Instead, everything to do with the mind and spirit, including all urges, spite,

and likes and dislikes, was seen as something shared, open to everyone. So early humans were not ashamed of coming from animals or trees. In fact, the noble peoples felt honoured by such legends. They saw the mind as the thing that joins us to nature, not the thing that cuts us off from her. In this way people were raised to be modest. And this too came from a mistaken belief.

32.

The brake. It shocks us to suffer for moral reasons and then to find out later that this suffering was based on a mistake. That is because there is a special comfort in feeling that our suffering proves there is a "deeper world of truth," deeper than any other world. We would much rather suffer and, by suffering, feel that we stand above everyday reality. We feel this because we think suffering brings us closer to that "deeper world of truth." We prefer this to living without suffering and so without this feeling of something grand and lofty. So it is pride, and the usual way we feed that pride, that pushes against this new way of understanding morality. Then what force must we use to get rid of this brake? A greater pride? A new pride?

33.

Looking down on causes, results, and reality. Sometimes bad things happen to a community, like sudden storms, poor harvests, or diseases spreading. These make people in the community suspect that someone has broken the traditions, or that new traditions must be made up to calm some new evil spirit and its whims. But suspicion and thinking of this kind dodge the work of looking for the real, natural causes. They simply assume that an evil spirit is the cause. This is one source of a twisted habit of human thinking that has been passed down through the ages. And a second source follows close behind it. Working on the same idea, people paid much less attention to

the real, natural results of an action than to the supernatural results, meaning the so-called punishments and favours of God. For example, there is a rule that certain baths must be taken at certain times. And people take the baths, not to get clean, but because the rule says so. We are not taught to avoid the real results of being dirty, only the supposed anger of the gods because a bath was skipped. Pushed by fear and superstition, people began to suspect that these washings mattered much more than they seemed to. They gave them hidden and extra meanings. Little by little they lost their feel for reality and their pleasure in it. In the end, reality is thought to be worth something only so far as it is a symbol. So a man who lives under the morality of tradition learns to look down, first, on causes, second, on results, and third, on reality itself. He weaves all his higher feelings, like awe, a sense of the grand, pride, thankfulness, and love, into a world that is only imagined: the made-up higher world. And even today we can see what came of this. Wherever human feelings are lifted up, and in whatever way, that imagined world shows up. It is sad to have to say it, but for now a scientist must treat all higher feelings with suspicion, because they are so mixed up with illusion and wild exaggeration. This does not mean they must be doubted in themselves and forever. But there is no doubt that, of all the slow cleansings that lie ahead for humanity, the cleansing of the higher feelings will be one of the slowest.

34.

MORAL FEELINGS AND MORAL IDEAS.—It is clear how moral feelings get passed on. Children see that adults strongly like some actions and strongly dislike others. Then, like apes who imitate by nature, the children copy those likes and dislikes. Later in life, when these learned and well-practised feelings have soaked all the way through them, they think it is the proper and polite thing to offer

some kind of reason for these likes and dislikes. But these "reasons" have nothing to do with where the feeling came from or how strong it is. People simply go along with the rule that, since they are thinking beings, they must give reasons for what they are for and against. And on top of that, the reasons have to be ones they can point to and that others will accept. To this extent, the history of moral feelings is completely different from the history of moral ideas. The feelings are powerful before we act. The ideas are powerful mostly after we act, because then we feel we have to explain ourselves about what we did.

35.

FEELINGS AND HOW THEY COME FROM JUDGMENTS.—People say, "Trust your feelings!" But feelings are not something final or original. Feelings are built on judgments and ways of valuing that were handed down to us in the form of feelings, as likes and dislikes. The urge that comes from a feeling is the grandchild of a judgment. Often that judgment was wrong! And it was certainly not your own judgment! So trusting our feelings just means obeying our grandfather and grandmother more than the gods inside ourselves, which are our reason and our experience.

36.

A FOOLISH RESPECT FOR THE PAST, WITH HIDDEN MOTIVES.—What! The people who invented the ancient civilisations, the first makers of tools and measuring lines, the first builders of carts, ships and houses, the first people to study the laws of the sky and the multiplication tables—are we really being told that they were completely different from the inventors and observers of our own time, and better than them? And that those first slow steps forward were worth more than all the discoveries we have made through our travels and our voyages around the world? That is the voice of prejudice talking.

It argues this way in order to make the modern mind look less important. And yet it is easy to see that in earlier times, chance was the greatest discoverer and observer of all. Chance was the kind helper who whispered ideas to those clever ancient people. Today, even the smallest invention takes more intelligence, more discipline and more scientific imagination than existed in all those long ages of the past.

37.

WRONG CONCLUSIONS FROM USEFULNESS.—Even when we have shown that something is extremely useful, we have still not come any closer to explaining where it came from. In other words, usefulness alone can never explain why something had to exist. But until now people have believed exactly the opposite, even in the most exact sciences. Take astronomy, for example. Haven't we heard people say that the moons around the planets exist because they are (supposedly) useful? The idea was that they make up for the weaker sunlight that reaches planets farther from the sun, so that the people living on those planets would not go without light. And this usefulness was said to be the final purpose of the moons and the explanation of where they came from. This may remind us of the reasoning of Christopher Columbus: the earth was made for human beings, so if there are lands, people must live on them. As he put it: "Is it likely that the sun would shine its rays on nothing, and that the stars would keep watch all night for nothing, over seas no one sails and lands where no one lives?"

38.

URGES CHANGED BY MORAL JUDGMENTS.—Take one and the same urge. If tradition blames it, it turns into the painful feeling of cowardice. But if a morality like Christianity embraces it and calls it good, it turns into the pleasant feeling of humility. In other words,

this instinct will come under the influence of either a clear conscience or a guilty conscience! In itself, like every instinct, it has no such moral character or name, or any other. It does not even come with a definite feeling of pleasure or displeasure. It only gains all these qualities, as a kind of second nature, when it comes into contact with urges that have already been labelled good and evil, or when people see it as a trait of beings whom they have already judged and ranked from a moral point of view. That is why the ancient Greek idea of envy was completely different from ours. The poet Hesiod counted envy among the qualities of the good and kindly Eris, the goddess of rivalry. And it was not thought offensive to say that even the gods felt some kind of envy. This is easy to understand in a world driven mostly by competition, where competition was seen as good and valued as good.

The Greeks were also different from us in how they valued hope. They saw it as blind and deceiving. Hesiod speaks strongly about it in one of his poems. In fact, he speaks so strongly that no modern scholar has fully understood the passage, because it goes against the modern mind, which learned from Christianity to see hope as a virtue. For the Greeks, though, the door to knowing the future seemed only partly closed. In countless cases they were taught that it was a religious duty to ask about the future, in situations where we are content just to hope. So it happened that the Greeks, thanks to their oracles and fortune-tellers, did not think much of hope. They even lowered it to the level of something bad and dangerous.

The Jews, in turn, saw anger differently from the way we do, and they made it holy. That is why they raised the dark grandeur of the angry man to a height so great that a European cannot even imagine it. They shaped their angry and holy God, Jehovah, after the image of their angry and holy prophets. Compared with those prophets, even the

Europeans who have shown the greatest anger are, you might say, only second-hand copies.

39.

THE MISTAKEN BELIEF IN "PURE SPIRIT."—Wherever people believed in being purely spiritual, that belief went too far and wrecked people's nerves. It taught that the body should be looked down on, ignored, or made to suffer. It taught that people should be tortured and despised because of their natural urges. This produced gloomy, tense, and beaten-down souls. On top of that, these people thought they knew why they were miserable and how they might fix it! "The problem *must* be in the body! It is still doing far too *well*!"—that was what they decided. But the truth was that the body, through its pain, kept protesting again and again against this endless mockery. In the end, these virtuous champions of pure spirit were all gripped by a constant, extreme nervousness. They learned to see joy only in the form of wild trances and other early signs of madness. Their way of thinking reached its peak when it came to treat these trances as the highest goal of life, and as the measuring stick by which everything on earth had to be *condemned*.

40.

THINKING HARD ABOUT RITUALS.—Many moral rules were carelessly based on a single event, and people soon could not understand them anymore. It was just as hard to work out for sure what the rules were meant to do as it was to know what punishment would come from breaking them. People even had doubts about the right order of the ceremonies. But while they guessed wildly about these things, the thing they were studying grew more and more important. In fact, the most ridiculous part of a ritual was exactly what became the most sacred thing of all. We should not underestimate how much energy

people have spent on this over thousands of years. And we should least of all underestimate what came out of this *thinking hard about rituals*! This is where we find the huge training ground of the mind. Religions grow up and keep spreading inside it. But this is also where we find the ancient, respected, and yet frightening first world of science. This is where the poet, the thinker, the doctor, and the lawmaker grow up. People were afraid of what they could not understand, and that fear, in an unclear way, demanded ceremonies from them. Over time, that fear turned into a fascination with things that are complicated. Where people could not untangle something, they learned to create something instead.

41.

HOW TO JUDGE THE VALUE OF THE THINKING LIFE.—Those of us who live the thinking life should not forget the kinds of harm and bad luck that thinking has brought upon people who live the active life. In short, we should remember what kind of bill the active life could hand back to *us* if we brag too much in front of it about the good we have done. First, it would point to the so-called religious types. They make up most of the people who love the thinking life, so they are its most common kind. They have always acted in ways that made life hard for practical people, and tried, whenever they could, to make those people sick of life. They knew how to darken the sky, blot out the sun, make joy look suspicious, make hope seem worthless, and freeze the hand that wants to act. And just as well, they knew how to offer comforts, charity, and blessings for miserable times and miserable feelings. Second, the active life can point to the artists. They are a kind of people who live the thinking life too. They are rarer than the religious types, but you still run into them often. As people, they are usually unbearable, moody, jealous, violent, and quarrelsome.

But we have to weigh this against the joyful and uplifting effects of their works.

Third, there are the philosophers. They combine religious and artistic qualities, but they add a third thing: a love of logical argument and debate. They cause harm in the same way the religious people and artists do. On top of that, they have worn out many people around them with their passion for arguing, although there have always been very few of them. Fourth, there are the thinkers and the scientists. They rarely tried to make a big impression, and they were happy to keep quietly to their own path. Because of that, they caused little envy or trouble. Often people made fun of them and laughed at them, and in this way, without meaning to, they made life easier for the people of the active life. In the end, science turned out to be very useful to everyone. And *because it is so useful*, many people who were meant for the active life are now slowly working their way toward science, sweating hard, racking their brains, and cursing as they go. But that is not the fault of the thinkers and scientists. It is "pain you brought on yourself."(3)

42.

WHERE THE THINKING LIFE CAME FROM.—In savage times, people held gloomy, negative views about humans and the world. When a person felt fully strong, he always tried to act in line with those views. In other words, he turned his ideas into action through hunting, robbing, surprise attacks, cruelty, and murder, including the milder versions of these acts that the community allowed. But when his strength fades, and he feels tired, sick, sad, or fed up, he loses his wishes and desires for a while. Then he is a somewhat better man, meaning he is less dangerous. Now his gloomy ideas come out only in words and thoughts. He aims them, for example, at his companions, his wife, his life, or his gods, and his judgments about them will be

bad ones. In this mood he becomes a thinker and a prophet. Or he adds to his superstitions and invents new rituals. Or he mocks his enemies. But whatever he comes up with, everything his mind produces will reflect his mood. It will show more fear and tiredness, and it will show that he values action and pleasure less. What these creations contain has to match these poetic, thoughtful, priestly moods. The negative judgment has to win out.

Later on, all the people who acted all the time the way this man acted in those special moments were called poets, thinkers, priests, or "medicine men." That means the people who handed out gloomy judgments and lived sad lives with little action. Most people would have liked to ignore them, because they were not active enough, and to throw them out of the community. But doing that was a little risky. These inactive people had discovered and were following the trail of superstition and divine power, and nobody doubted that they had secret sources of power they could use. That was how the *ancient breed of thinking people* was valued. They were looked down on exactly as much as they were not feared! This is how Thinking first showed up on earth: wearing a mask, looking unclear, with a bad heart and often a troubled mind. It was weak and frightening at the same time. People despised it in private, and in public they covered it with every sign of superstitious respect. Here, as always, we have to say: what a *shameful origin*!

43.

HOW MANY STRENGTHS A THINKER NOW NEEDS TO BRING TOGETHER.—To rise above what the senses tell us, to lift yourself up to abstract thinking: this is what people used to see as being raised to a higher level. But today we can no longer share that feeling. People used to enjoy themselves among the faintest, most shadowy pictures of words and things. They played with beings you could not see, could

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not hear, and could not feel. And they thought this meant living in another, higher world, the made-up higher world. That world grew out of a deep contempt for the world we know through our senses, this tempting and wicked world of ours. "These abstract ideas no longer lead us astray, but they may lead us the right way"—with words like these, people flew upward. In the earliest days of science, it was not what these mind-games were about, but the games themselves, that were seen as "the higher thing." That is why Plato admired dialectics, the art of argument by question and answer. And that is why he believed so eagerly that dialectics had to be connected with the good man, the one who had risen above what his senses told him. Little by little, people discovered not only knowledge itself, but also the different ways of getting it: the conditions and mental steps that come before knowledge in a human being. And every time, it seemed as if the newly found mental step, or the newly felt condition, was not just a way of getting knowledge. It seemed instead to be the very content, the goal, and the whole sum of everything worth knowing. What does a thinker need? Imagination, inspiration, the ability to think in abstract terms, a spiritual mind, inventiveness, a feeling for what is coming, the ability to reason from examples to rules, the art of argument, the ability to reason from rules to examples, a critical eye, the ability to gather material, a way of thinking that leaves out his own person, quiet reflection, a wide view of things, and last but not least, justice and love for everything that exists. But in the history of the thinking life, each one of these tools was at some time thought of as a goal and final purpose. And each of them gave the people who discovered it that perfect happiness which fills the human soul when its final purpose suddenly becomes clear to it.

44.

ORIGIN AND MEANING.—Why does this thought keep coming back to me, again and again, each time in brighter and brighter colours? The thought is this. In earlier times, people who searched for the origin of things always believed they had found something of the greatest importance for every kind of action and judgment. Yes, they even always assumed that the salvation of humanity depended on understanding where things came from. But now it is the other way around. The more closely we study origins, the less they matter to our interests. In fact, all the ways of valuing things and all the interest we have attached to things start to lose their meaning the further back we go in our knowledge, and the closer we get to the things themselves. The more we understand an origin, the less important it becomes. Meanwhile, the things closest to us, around us and inside us, slowly begin to show their rich colours, their beauty, their mysteries, and their many meanings, which earlier people never even dreamed of. In past ages, thinkers used to pace around wildly, like wild animals in cages. They kept staring at the bars that shut them in, and now and then they jumped up against them, trying in vain to break through. And truly happy was the one who could look through a gap at the world outside, and could imagine that he saw something of what lay out there, far beyond.

45.

A TRAGIC END FOR KNOWLEDGE.—Of all the things that lift people up, human sacrifices have at times done the most to raise humanity to a higher level. And perhaps one powerful thought, the idea of humanity sacrificing itself, could be made stronger than every other hope, and could in this way win out even over the strongest. But to whom should this sacrifice be made? We can already swear to this: if such an idea ever rose like a group of stars over the horizon, then the

knowledge of truth would be the one single but enormous goal that would be worth a sacrifice of that size—because no sacrifice is too great for it. In the meantime, no one has ever explained how far humanity as a whole could take steps to help knowledge move forward. And even less has anyone explained what kind of thirst for knowledge could drive humanity so far that it would sacrifice itself, with the light of a wisdom it hopes for shining in its eyes. Perhaps one day, to help knowledge grow, we will be able to talk with the people living on other stars. And perhaps, over thousands of years, wisdom will be carried from star to star. Then the excitement about knowledge may rise to such a dizzying height!

46.

DOUBTING DOUBT.—"What a good pillow doubt is for a well-balanced head!" This saying of the writer Montaigne always made Pascal angry, because nobody ever wanted a good pillow as badly as Pascal did. What on earth was wrong with him?

47.

WORDS BLOCK OUR WAY.—Whenever early humans set down a word, they believed they had made a discovery. But the truth was very different! They had run into a problem. And while they thought they had solved it, they had really put an obstacle in the way of solving it. Now, with every new piece of knowledge, we trip over words that have turned to stone and ideas that have been mummified. And we would rather break a leg than break one of those words while doing so.

48.

"KNOW YOURSELF" IS THE WHOLE OF SCIENCE.—Only when a person has come to know all things will he be able to know himself. For things are nothing more than the edges, the borders, of what a human being is.

49.

THE NEW BASIC FEELING: THAT IN THE END WE WILL DECAY AND PASS AWAY.—In earlier times, people tried to show how great human beings are by pointing to their descent from the gods. But this road is now closed to us, because the ape stands at its entrance, along with other frightening animals. They bare their teeth in a knowing way, as if to say: "No further this way!" So now people try the opposite direction. They say that the road humanity is travelling down, where it is heading, will prove how great it is and how closely it is related to God. But sadly, this too is useless! At the far end of this road stands the burial urn of the last human being, the one who buries all the rest. On it is written, in Latin: "I consider nothing human to be foreign to me." However high humanity may climb—and perhaps in the end it will not even be as high as where it started!—it has no more chance of reaching a higher order of being than the ant or the earwig has of becoming related to God and eternity at the end of its time on earth. What is to come will drag along behind it everything that has already happened. Why should any little star, or any little kind of creature on that star, be an exception to this never-ending drama? Away with such soppy, sentimental ideas!

50.

BELIEF IN THE RUSH OF EXCITEMENT.—Some people have moments of lofty, overwhelming ecstasy. The rest of the time, they usu-

ally feel miserable and empty, because ordinary life feels so dull next to those moments, and because the ecstasy wears their nerves out so badly. These people come to believe that the moments of ecstasy show who they really are, their true "self." Their misery and gloom, on the other hand, they blame on something outside them, the "not-self." That is why they think about their surroundings, the times they live in, and the whole world they exist in with a wish for revenge. This rush of excitement seems to them to be their true life, their real self. Everywhere else they look, they see only people who are trying to block and stop this rush of excitement, whether it is a rush of the mind, of morals, of religion, or of art.

Humanity owes a large share of its troubles to these wild dreamers. They never stop planting the weed of being unhappy with yourself and with the other person, of looking down on the world and on the times, and, most of all, of being tired of the world. A whole hell full of criminals could perhaps not cause such unlucky and far-reaching results. It could not cause such heavy and troubling effects, which spoil both earth and sky, as this small "noble" group causes. They are people without restraint, full of fantasies, half-mad, and geniuses too. They cannot control themselves or feel any joy inside until they have completely lost themselves. The criminal, on the other hand, often shows remarkable self-control, sacrifice, and cleverness, and so he keeps these qualities alive in the people who fear him. Because of him, the sky of life may sometimes look cloudy and threatening, but the air always stays fresh and strong.—What is more, these dreamers put all their strength into the job of filling humanity with the belief that the rush of excitement is the same as life itself. What a terrible belief! Today, native peoples are quickly spoiled and destroyed by "fire-water," meaning strong liquor. In the same way, humanity as a whole has been slowly but completely spoiled by these spiritual "fire-

waters," the intoxicating feelings, and by the people who keep the craving for them alive. Humanity may still be destroyed by them.

51.

AS WE STILL ARE.—"Let us be forgiving toward the great one-eyed people!" said Stuart Mill. He meant the great thinkers who see only one side of things. He said it as if we needed to ask for patience with them, when in fact we are ready to believe in them and almost worship them. I say: Let us be forgiving toward the two-eyed people, both great and small, the ones who see more than one side. For, as we are now, we will never get further than merely putting up with them!

52.

WHERE ARE THE NEW DOCTORS OF THE SOUL?—It is the ways of comforting people that have marked life with the deep sadness we now believe is part of it. The worst disease of humanity came from fighting against diseases. Cures that only seemed to work have, over time, made things worse than the problems they were meant to fix. In their ignorance, people used to believe that the numbing, intoxicating remedies that seemed to work right away, the so-called "comforts," were the real healing powers. They did not even notice that they often had to pay for this quick relief with a deep, general decline in health. The sick had to suffer first from the after-effects of the rush of excitement, then from the lack of it, and later from restlessness, depression, nervous jumpiness, and poor health. And people whose illness had gone past a certain point never got better. Those doctors of the soul, whom everyone believed in and worshipped, made sure of that.

It has been rightly said of Schopenhauer that he was someone who once again took human suffering seriously. But where is the person who will finally take the cures for this suffering seriously? Where is

the one who will publicly shame the outrageous fake medicine that people, right up to our own time, have used to treat the illnesses of their souls, while giving it the grandest and loftiest names?

53.

HOW THE CONSCIENTIOUS WERE MISTREATED.—It is the careful, conscientious people, not the ones without scruples, who have suffered so much from being urged to repent and from the fear of hell, especially if they had strong imaginations. In other words, darkness was thrown over the lives of exactly those who most needed cheerfulness and pleasant pictures in their minds. They needed these not only for their own comfort and to recover from themselves, but also so that humanity could enjoy them and take in a little of their beauty. Oh, how much needless cruelty and torment have been caused by the religions that invented sin! And by the people who used such religions to enjoy their power to the fullest!

54.

THOUGHTS ABOUT ILLNESS.—Calming the patient's imagination, so that at least he stops thinking about his illness all the time, and so stops suffering more from those thoughts than from the illness itself, as has happened until now—that, it seems to me, would be something! And it is far from a small thing! So now, do you understand our task?

55.

THE "WAYS."—So-called "shortcuts" have always led humanity into great danger. Whenever people heard the "good news" that a "shortcut" had been found, they always left the straight road—and lost their way.

56.

THE FREE THINKER WHO TURNS BACK.—Is there anyone who truly dislikes religious people who stick firmly to their faith? Don't we, on the contrary, look at them with quiet respect and pleasure, while at the same time deeply regretting that these fine people do not share our own feelings? But where does it come from, that sudden, deep, and unreasonable dislike we feel for a man who once had a free mind but in the end becomes a "believer"? When we think of him, we can't help feeling as if we had seen something disgusting that we must quickly wipe from our memory. Wouldn't we turn our backs even on the most respected man if we had the slightest suspicion of him on this point? Not for moral reasons, but out of sudden disgust and horror! Where does this sharp feeling come from? Perhaps we will be told that, deep down, we are not quite sure of ourselves? Or that, early in life, we build hedges of the sharpest contempt around ourselves, so that when old age makes us weak and forgetful, we will not be tempted to push our own contempt aside?

Now, to be honest, this suspicion is completely wrong. Whoever holds it knows nothing about what stirs up and drives the free thinker. To him, simply *changing* an opinion does not seem shameful in itself at all! Quite the opposite: he values the *ability* to change an opinion very highly, as a rare and precious mark of distinction, especially if he can keep that ability well into old age! And his pride (not his cowardice) even goes so far that he can enjoy the rewards of "scorning being scorned" and of "scorning himself." He is not bothered by the fear that vain and lazy people feel. Besides that, he is just as sure that no opinion is guilty as he is that no action is guilty. So how could he play judge and executioner toward someone who has abandoned the freedom of the mind! Instead, seeing such a person would disgust him the way a revolting illness disgusts a doctor. The bodily disgust caused by anything soggy, soft, and oozing with pus over-

powers, for a moment, both clear thinking and the wish to help. That is why our goodwill gets overpowered when we picture the huge dishonesty that must have taken control of the person who turned away from free thought. We picture a kind of rot gnawing all through him, eating its way down even to the very frame of his character.

57.

OTHER FEARS, OTHER SAFETIES.—Christianity spread a new and endless *insecurity* over all of life. By doing that, it also created new kinds of safety, new pleasures and new kinds of relief, and new ways of valuing everything. Our own century denies that this insecurity exists, and it does so with a clear conscience. Yet it still holds on to the old habit of Christian certainties, pleasures, kinds of relief, and ways of valuing!—even in its finest art and philosophy. How weak and worn out all of this must seem now! How incomplete and clumsy, how randomly fanatical, and above all how unsure. That is because its terrible opposite has been removed: the constant fear the Christian felt for whether his soul would be saved *forever*!

58.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE EMOTIONS.—We can see Christianity as a huge protest by ordinary people against philosophy. The wise thinkers of ancient times had used reason to pull people away from the control of their emotions. But Christianity wanted to give people their emotions back. With this goal in mind, it says that virtue, as the philosophers understood it—reason winning out over the passions—has no moral value. It condemns every kind of goodness of that sort in general. And it calls on the passions to show themselves in all their power and glory: as *love* of God, *fear* of God, fanatical *belief* in God, and blind *hope* in God.

59.

ERROR AS A PICK-ME-UP.—Whatever people may say, it is still certain that Christianity aimed to free people from the heavy burden of moral duties. It did this by pointing to what it believed was the *shortest road to perfection*. This was just like a few philosophers who thought they could skip the boring, hard work of careful argument and of gathering strictly proven facts, and could show a royal shortcut to the truth. Both were mistakes. But even so, they were like a strong, reviving drink for those who were exhausted and hopeless in the wilderness.

60.

ALL SPIRIT FINALLY BECOMES VISIBLE.—Christianity has soaked up all the spiritual life of countless people who were obedient by nature—all those people, both refined and crude, who were passionate about humbling themselves and showing deep respect. In this way, it has freed itself from its own original rough, peasant crudeness. We are strongly reminded of that crudeness when we look at the oldest image of Saint Peter the Apostle. It has become a very intellectual religion, with thousands of wrinkles, hidden second thoughts, and masks on its face. It has made the people of Europe smarter, and not just sly in matters of religion. Through the spirit it gave Europe—together with the power of giving things up, and very often together with a deep belief in and loyalty to that giving up—it has perhaps carved and shaped the most finely developed personalities that have ever existed in human society. These are the personalities of the higher ranks of the Catholic clergy. This is especially true when these priests came from noble families and brought to their work, right from the start, a natural grace in how they moved, a commanding look in their eyes, and beautiful hands and feet. Here the human face takes on a spiritual quality. This comes from the constant back-and-

forth of two kinds of happiness (the sense of power and the feeling of submission), once a carefully planned way of life has tamed the beast in man. Here, a job made up of blessing people, forgiving sins, and standing in for the Almighty keeps alive in the soul, *and even in the body*, the awareness of a supreme mission. Here we find the noble contempt that born soldiers have for the fact that the body, comfort, and happiness do not last. Their *pride* lies in obeying, which is clearly a trait of the upper class. Their excuse and their ideals come from how hugely impossible their task is. The outstanding beauty and refinement of these princes of the Church have always proven to ordinary people that the Church was true. Whenever the clergy became coarse and brutish for a while (as happened in Luther's time), it always pushed people toward believing the opposite. So will anyone claim that this outcome of beauty and human refinement—shown in the harmony of body, mind, and task—would come to an end when religions do? And that nothing higher could ever be reached, or even imagined?

61.

THE SACRIFICE THAT IS NEEDED.—There are serious, capable and fair-minded people with deep feelings who are still Christians at heart. They owe it to themselves to try, just once, to live for a certain length of time without Christianity! They owe it *to their faith* to go and live "in the wilderness" like this for once—if only so that they can honestly judge whether Christianity is really needed. So far, though, they have stayed inside their own small territory and insulted everyone who happened to be outside it. In fact, they even get very angry when someone points out to them that beyond their little territory lies the great wide world, and that Christianity is, after all, only one corner of it! No: what you say on this question will be worth nothing until you have lived year after year without Christianity, while truly

and deeply wanting to go on living without it—until, in fact, you have moved far, far away from it. Your coming home only means something when it is not homesickness pulling you back, but your judgment, based on a strict comparison, that drives you back!—The people of future generations will treat all the ways of valuing from the past in this same way. They will have to choose to *live* through them again, along with their opposites, so that in the end they earn the right to change them.

62.

WHERE RELIGIONS COME FROM.—How can anyone see his own opinion about things as a message from God? This is the puzzle of how religions are formed: there has always been some person in whom this could happen. One thing we can assume is that such a person already believed that God sends messages. Then one day, suddenly, a new idea comes to him, *his own* idea. It is a great personal theory that takes in all of existence and the whole world, and the joy of it strikes his conscience so powerfully that he does not dare to think of himself as the creator of such joy. So he gives his God the credit for this new idea, and also for whatever caused it, and he believes it is God speaking to him. "How could a mere man be the source of such great happiness?" his gloomy doubts ask. But other forces are quietly at work too. A person can make his own opinion stronger if he treats it as a message from God. That way, it no longer seems like a mere guess. It is put beyond criticism, and even beyond doubt: it becomes holy. It is true that by doing this a man makes himself small, playing the part of a mere "mouthpiece." But his thought will win in the end, as a thought from God—and the feeling of finally winning beats the feeling of having lowered himself. There is also another feeling in the background. When a person lifts what he has made above himself, and so seems to take away from his own

worth, there still remains a kind of happiness, a father's love and a father's pride. This makes up for everything—more than makes up for everything.

63.

HATING THE OTHER PERSON.—Suppose we felt about the other person exactly as he feels about himself. Schopenhauer calls this compassion, though it would be more accurate to call it feeling for oneself, a shared feeling. In that case, if the other person, like Pascal, thought he himself was hateful, we would be forced to hate him too. And this was probably how Pascal generally felt about humanity. It was also how early Christianity felt, which, in the time of the emperor Nero, was "found guilty" of *hatred of the human race*, as the historian Tacitus wrote.

64.

THE BROKEN-HEARTED.—Christianity has a hunter's instinct for tracking down everyone who can, by any means at all, be driven to despair—and only a very small number of people can be brought to that kind of despair. Christianity lies in wait for people like that and chases after them. Pascal tried to find out whether it might be possible, with the help of the very sharpest knowledge, to drive everyone into despair. He failed—and that failure became his second despair.

65.

BRAHMINISM AND CHRISTIANITY.—There are certain rules for gaining an awareness of power. Some are for people who already know how to control themselves, and who are therefore already very used to the sense of power. Others are for people who cannot control

themselves. Brahminism, the old Hindu priestly religion, looked after the first kind of person; Christianity looked after the second.

66.

THE GIFT OF VISIONS.—All through the Middle Ages, people believed that the true mark of a superior person was the ability to have visions—which really means having a serious mental illness. And in fact, the rules for living followed by all the higher types of the Middle Ages (the religious orders) were written with the goal of making people able to have visions! So it is no surprise that the inflated respect for these half-mad fanatics, the so-called geniuses, has carried on right up to our own time. "They have seen things that other people do not see"—no doubt they have! And that very fact should make us careful about them, not make us believe them!

67.

WHAT BELIEVERS COST.—Anyone who cares so much about being believed in has to promise heaven as the reward for that belief. And everyone like that, even a thief on the cross, must have suffered from a terrible doubt and gone through every kind of crucifixion. Otherwise he would not pay such a high price to buy his followers.

68.

The first Christian. The whole world still believes that the "Holy Spirit" wrote books, or is still shaped by what this belief has done. When we open our Bibles, we do it to "build ourselves up," to find a few words of comfort for our troubles, whether they are big or small. In short, we read ourselves into the book and then read ourselves back out of it. But who, apart from a few scholars, knows that the Bible also tells the story of one of the most ambitious and pushy souls

that ever lived, a mind full of superstition and cunning? This is the story of the Apostle Paul. And yet without this strange story, without the struggles and passions of such a mind and such a soul, there would never have been a Christian kingdom. We would hardly even have heard of a small Jewish group whose founder died on the Cross. It is true that if this story had been understood in time, if people had read, really read, the letters of Saint Paul, not as messages from the "Holy Spirit" but with honest and independent minds, forgetting all their own personal troubles, then Christianity would have been finished long ago. But for fifteen hundred years there were no such readers. These letters by the Jewish Pascal expose the beginnings of Christianity so deeply, just as the French Pascal showed us where Christianity is heading and how it will finally die. Think of Christianity as a ship. It threw overboard a good part of its Jewish weight, and so it was able to sail out into the waters of the non-Jewish peoples, and it really did. That this happened is owed to the story of one single man: this apostle, who was so deeply troubled in his mind and who deserves so much pity, but who was also very unpleasant, both to himself and to others.

This man suffered from one fixed idea, or rather one fixed question, a question that was always there and always burning inside him: what was the meaning of the Jewish Law? And above all, what did it mean to fulfil this Law? When he was young, he had tried his hardest to live up to it. He was hungry for the highest honour the Jews could imagine. The Jews were a people who had pushed the idea of moral greatness higher than any other people, and they alone had managed to join together the idea of a holy God with the idea of sin as an insult against that holiness. Saint Paul quickly became the fanatical defender and personal guard of this God and His Law. He fought without rest against everyone who broke this Law or dared to doubt it, and he lay in wait to catch them. He was merciless and cruel toward all wrong-

doers, and he would have loved to punish them in the harshest way possible.

But now he discovered, in his own self, that a man like him, violent, driven by bodily desire, gloomy, and spiteful in his hatred, could not fulfil the Law. And what seemed strangest of all to him, he saw that his endless hunger for power was always being stirred up to break the Law, and that he could not stop himself from giving in to this urge. Was it really "the flesh," his body and its desires, that made him a sinner again and again? Or was it rather, as he later came to think, the Law itself, which kept proving that it was impossible to fulfil, and which tempted people into breaking it with a charm they could not resist? But back then, he had not yet thought of this way out. As he hints here and there, he had many things weighing on his conscience: hatred, murder, witchcraft, worship of false gods, wild living, drunkenness, and frenzied partying. And no matter how hard he tried to calm his conscience, and even more his desire for power, through his extreme, fanatical worship and defence of the Law, there were moments when the thought hit him: "It is all useless! The agony of the Law that cannot be fulfilled can never be overcome." Luther must have felt something similar when, in his monastery, he tried to become the perfect man he imagined. And just as Luther one day began to hate the Church's ideal, and the Pope, and the saints, and all the priests, with a hatred that was all the more deadly because he could not admit it even to himself, a similar feeling took hold of Saint Paul. The Law was the Cross on which he felt himself being crucified. How he hated it! How bitter he felt toward it! How he started looking in every direction for a way to destroy it completely, so that he would no longer have to fulfil it himself! And at last a freeing thought came to him in a flash, together with a vision, which was only to be expected in an epileptic like him. To him, the strict defender of the Law, who deep in his heart was sick to death of it, there appeared on the lonely

road that Christ, with God's glowing light shining on His face, and Paul heard the words: "Why are you persecuting Me?"

So what really happened was this. His mind suddenly lit up, and he said to himself: "It makes no sense to hunt down this Jesus Christ! Here is my way out. Here is my total revenge. Here, and nowhere else, I hold in my hands the one who destroys the Law!" This man, who had been suffering from tortured pride, felt healed all at once. His moral despair vanished into thin air, because morality itself was blown away and wiped out. In other words, it was fulfilled, there on the Cross! Until then, that shameful death had seemed to him the main argument against the claim, made by the followers of the new teaching, that Jesus was the Messiah. But what if that death was exactly what was needed to get rid of the Law? The huge results of this thought, this answer to the riddle, danced before his eyes, and right away he became the happiest of men. The fate of the Jews, and even of all humankind, seemed to him tied up with this sudden flash of light. He held the thought above all thoughts, the key above all keys, the light above all lights. From now on, history would turn around him! Because from that moment on, he would be the messenger of the destruction of the Law! To be dead to sin meant to be dead to the Law as well. To be in the flesh meant to be under the Law! To be one with Christ meant to have become, like Him, the destroyer of the Law. To be dead with Him meant, in the same way, to be dead to the Law. Even if it were still possible to sin, at least it would no longer be possible to sin against the Law. "I am above the Law," Paul thinks. And he adds: "If I were to accept the Law again now and obey it, I would make Christ a partner in the sin." For the Law existed in order to produce sin and push it into view, the way a medicine that makes you throw up produces sickness. God could not have chosen the death of Christ if the Law could have been fulfilled without it. From now on, not only are all sins paid for, but sin itself is done away with.

From now on the Law is dead. From now on "the flesh," where the Law lived, is dead too, or at least dying, slowly wasting away. To go on living a little while longer in the middle of this decay: that is the Christian's fate, until the time comes when, having become one with Christ, he rises with Him, shares Christ's divine glory, and becomes, like Christ, a "Son of God." At this point Paul's excitement reached its peak, and so did the pushiness of his soul. The thought of being united with Christ made him drop all shame, all humility, all restraint. His wild, uncontrollable ambition showed itself, delighting in the hope of divine glories.

That was the first Christian, the inventor of Christianity! Before him there were only a few small Jewish splinter groups.

69.

IMPOSSIBLE TO COPY.—There is a huge tension and a huge distance between envy and friendship, and between looking down on yourself and pride. The Greek lived in the first pair, the Christian in the second.

70.

WHAT A CRUDE MIND IS GOOD FOR.—The Christian Church is like a giant collection of primitive religions and beliefs that came from all sorts of different places. Because of this, it is very well suited to spreading its faith. In the past it could go wherever it wanted, and it still can. Wherever it went, it always found something that looked like itself, which it could blend into, and then slowly replace with its own spirit. We have to credit the growth of this worldwide religion not to the Christian parts of its customs, but to the parts that are pagan everywhere. Its ideas, which come from both the Jewish and the Greek ways of thinking, were able from the very start to rise above

the narrowness and fine distinctions of races and nations, treating them as mere prejudices. We may admire the power that can make even the hardest things fit together. Still, we must not ignore the low qualities of this power: the amazing crudeness and narrowness of the Church's mind while it was still taking shape. This crudeness let it adjust to any kind of food, and swallow contradictions the way some animals swallow pebbles.

71.

THE CHRISTIAN REVENGE ON ROME.—Maybe nothing is more exhausting than watching someone who never stops winning. For more than two hundred years the world had watched Rome conquer one nation after another. The circle was complete. It seemed as if the future had come to an end. Everything was done so that it would last forever. Indeed, when the Empire built something, it was meant to be "more lasting than bronze." We, who only know the sad feeling that ruins give us, can hardly understand that completely different sadness: the sadness of buildings that last forever. People tried to escape it as best they could, for example with the cheerful imagination of a poet like Horace. Others looked for different comforts against this weariness, which was very close to despair. They looked for comfort against the numbing knowledge that from now on any progress of the mind or the heart would be hopeless, that the huge spider sat everywhere and kept drinking, without mercy, all the blood it could reach, wherever that blood might spring up. This silent hatred, centuries old, that the worn-out onlookers felt toward Rome, wherever Rome ruled, finally burst out in Christianity. Christianity joined Rome, "the world," and "sin" into one single idea. The Christians took their revenge on Rome in several ways. They announced that the world would soon be suddenly destroyed. They brought back a future, because Rome had managed to turn everything into the story of its own

past and present, and this was a future in which Rome was no longer the most important thing. And they dreamed of the Last Judgment. Meanwhile the crucified Jew, as the sign of salvation, was the greatest mockery of the proud Roman governors in the provinces. For now those governors looked like nothing but signs of ruin, and of a "world" about to perish.

72.

"LIFE AFTER DEATH." Christianity found the idea of punishment in hell already present all over the Roman Empire. The many secret religious groups had hatched this idea with special pleasure, because it was like the most fertile egg of their power: it gave them more control than anything else. Epicurus believed the best thing he could do for his followers was to pull this belief out by the roots. His victory was echoed most beautifully by one of his students, the Roman poet Lucretius, a man with a gloomy mood who later became clear-minded and calm. But sadly, his victory had come too early. Christianity took this belief in horrors under the earth under its special protection, at a time when the belief was already starting to fade from people's minds. And that was a clever move. Because without this bold jump into the most complete paganism, how could Christianity have beaten the popular gods Mithras and Isis? This way it managed to win over fearful people, and fearful people are the most eager followers of a new faith! The Jews had not developed the idea of hell very much. Like the Greeks, and even more than the Greeks, they were a people who loved life, and they still do. For them, the idea of final death as the punishment of the sinner, death with no coming back to life, was threat enough. That was enough to impress these unusual people, who did not want to be rid of their bodies, but hoped, with their refined Egyptian-like way of thinking, to keep them forever. (In the Second Book of the Maccabees we can read about a Jewish martyr who re-

fused to give up his own guts after they had been torn out. He wanted to have them back when the dead rise again. That is very Jewish!)

The early Christians did not think about being punished forever. They believed they had been set free from death. They expected to be changed into something new any day, but they did not expect to die. (What a strange effect the first death among them must have had on these waiting people! So many feelings must have been mixed together: shock, joy, doubt, shame, and strong emotion! Truly, a subject worthy of a great artist!) St. Paul could find no better way to praise his Saviour than to say that he had opened the gates of living forever to everyone. Paul did not believe that people who had not been saved would rise from the dead. More than that: because he taught that nobody could fully keep the Law, and that death comes as a result of sin, he even suspected that until then nobody had become immortal at all. Or at most only a very few, and only through special favour from God, not because they had earned it. In his view, it was only in his own time that the gates of living forever had started to open. And in the end only a few of the chosen would get in, as the pride of the chosen just can't help saying.

In other places, the drive to live was not as strong as it was among the Jews and the Jewish Christians. There, the hope of living forever did not seem much better than the idea of simply dying for good. In those places, hell, which was a pagan idea but not completely foreign to Jewish thought, became a very useful tool for the missionaries. That was when a new teaching appeared: that even sinners and people who were not saved live forever. This was the teaching of being punished forever. It was more powerful than the idea of a final death, which from then on began to fade. Only science was able to defeat this idea, and at the same time it swept away all the other ideas about death and a life after it. We are poorer in one way: “life after death” no longer interests us! But this is a blessing too great to describe. It is

still too new for the whole world to see it as a blessing. And Epicurus wins once again.

73.

FOR THE "TRUTH"! Some people say: "The truth of Christianity was proved by the good lives of the Christians, by how strong they stayed while suffering, by their unshakable faith, and most of all by how the faith spread and grew in spite of every disaster." That is how you still talk today. Which is a real shame. So learn this: none of that proves anything, either for the truth or against it. Truth has to be shown in a different way than sincerity. Being sincere and faithful is in no way at all an argument that something is true.

74.

A CHRISTIAN HIDDEN THOUGHT. Might this not have been a common secret thought among Christians of the first century? "It is better to talk ourselves into believing we are guilty than to believe we are innocent. We cannot know the mind of such a powerful judge, but we fear he is looking only for people who know they are guilty. Considering how powerful he is, it is more likely that he will forgive a guilty person than that he will accept that anyone is innocent before him." This was how poor people in the provinces felt when they stood before the Roman governor: "He is too proud for us to dare to be innocent." And could this very feeling have had an effect when the Christians tried to imagine what the Supreme Judge was like?

75.

NEITHER EUROPEAN NOR NOBLE. There is something Eastern and feminine in Christianity. You can see it in the saying, "The Lord punishes those he loves." For women in the East think of being pun-

ished and being kept strictly shut away from the world as signs that their husbands love them. And they complain if these signs of love stop.

76.

IF YOU THINK IT IS EVIL, YOU MAKE IT EVIL. The passions become evil and harmful when people look at them with evil and harmful eyes. This is how Christianity managed to change Eros and Aphrodite, the gods of love and desire, which are noble powers that can be raised to an ideal, into spirits from hell and ghostly goblins. It did this through the stabs of guilt that every sexual urge was made to cause in the conscience of believers. Isn't it a terrible thing to turn natural and normal feelings into a source of inner misery? And in this way, by choice and for no good reason, to make inner misery natural and normal for every single person! What is more, this misery stays secret, and so it sinks its roots even deeper. Because not everyone has the courage that Shakespeare shows in his sonnets, to make his Christian gloom about this matter public.

So must a feeling always be called evil just because we have to fight against it, hold it back within certain limits, or in some cases push it out of our minds completely? Isn't it the habit of common, small-minded people to always call an enemy evil? And must we call Eros an enemy? Sexual feelings, like feelings of pity and of loving admiration, have one special quality: in their case, one person gives pleasure to another through the very pleasure he himself enjoys. We rarely find such a kind arrangement in nature. And yet we slander it and spoil it all with our guilty conscience! We link the making of human life with a guilty conscience!

But in the end, turning Eros, the god of love, into a devil has led to nothing but a joke. The "demon" Eros has become more interesting to

people than all the angels and saints put together. This is thanks to the Church, which treats everything to do with love and sex with a strange, mysterious hocus-pocus. Because of the Church, love stories, even in our own time, have become the one shared interest that grabs people of every class. This is blown up to a degree that the ancient world would not have understood at all, and that people in future generations will surely roar with laughter at. All our poetry and all our thinking, from the highest to the lowest, carry this mark, and more than just a mark: they treat the love story as if it were the most important thing in our lives. Because of this, people in the future may decide that everything they have inherited from Christian culture is stained with narrow-mindedness and madness.

77.

THE TORTURES OF THE SOUL.—Today the whole world cries out in horror if one person dares to torture another person's body. People's anger against someone like that bursts out almost on its own. In fact, we shudder even at the idea of a person or an animal being tortured, and we feel terrible pain when we hear that such a thing has actually been done. But we feel the same thing much less, and much less widely, when it comes to tortures of the soul and how dreadful it is to inflict them. Christianity brought in tortures like these on a scale never seen before, and it still preaches this kind of suffering for the faith. It even complains, quite innocently, about people slipping back and not caring, when it finds a soul that is free from such agonies. Because of all this, people today still face spiritual racks, tortures of the mind and tools of punishment with the same fearful patience and the same failure to act that they once showed when bodies of people or animals were treated cruelly. Hell has certainly not stayed just an empty word. And a new kind of pity has been invented to match the newly created fears of hell. It is a horrible, heavy compassion that

nobody knew before. It is felt for people who are "condemned to hell with no way back," like the doom the stone statue made clear to Don Juan. During the Christian age, this should often have made even the stones cry.

Plutarch gives us a gloomy picture of how a superstitious man felt in pagan times. But that picture looks faint next to the picture of a Christian in the Middle Ages, who *believes* that nothing can save him from "torments that last forever." Terrible signs appear to him. Maybe he sees a stork holding a snake in its beak and holding back from swallowing it. Or all of nature suddenly turns pale. Or bright, fiery colours spread across the ground. Or the ghosts of his dead relatives come toward him, their faces showing marks of dreadful suffering. Or the dark walls of the room where he is sleeping suddenly light up, and there, in a yellow flame, he sees tools of torture and a mixed crowd of snakes and devils. Christianity has surely turned our world into a frightening place to live, by putting up the crucifix everywhere and in this way announcing that the earth is a place "where the good man is tortured to death!" And sometimes the passion of a great preacher showed the public the hidden sufferings of single people, the agonies of lonely souls. For example, Whitefield preached "like a dying man to the dying." At one moment he cried bitterly, at the next he stamped his feet hard. He spoke with passion, in sharp and cutting bursts. He was not afraid to aim the full force of his attack at one single person in the crowd, and he shut that person out from the gathering with great harshness. At such times it really seemed as if the earth were being turned into a "field of evil." The huge crowds then acted as if a sudden madness had struck them. Many were gripped by fits of terror. Others lay unconscious and still. Others shook, or filled the air with piercing screams. Everywhere there was loud breathing, like half-choked people gasping for the breath that keeps them alive. "Truly," an

eyewitness once said, "nearly all the noises seemed to come from people who were dying in the most bitter agony."

Let us never forget that it was Christianity that first turned the deathbed into a bed of agony. Through the scenes that happened there, and the terrifying sounds that were heard there for the first time, it has poisoned the senses and the blood of countless people who watched, and of their children too. Imagine an ordinary person who can never wipe from his memory words like these: "Oh, eternity! I wish I had no soul! I wish I had never been born! My soul is damned, damned, lost forever! Six days ago you could have helped me. But now it is all over. I belong to the devil, and I will go down to hell with him. Break, break, you poor hearts of stone! You will not break? What more can be done for hearts of stone? I am damned so that you can be saved! There he is! Yes, there he is! Come, good devil! Come!"

78.

PUNISHING JUSTICE.—Bad luck and guilt: Christianity put these two things on the same scale. So when the bad luck that follows a mistake is serious, the mistake is always judged to be a terribly wicked one too. But the ancient world did not value things this way. That is why Greek tragedy, which talks a great deal about bad luck and punishment, but in a different sense, belongs among the great freers of the mind, to a degree that even the ancients themselves could not see. They stayed simple and open enough not to set up a "fair match" between guilt and bad luck. The guilt of their tragic heroes is really just the little pebble that makes them trip, and because of it they sometimes happen to break an arm or lose an eye. The ancient attitude to this was simply: "Well, he should have walked more carefully and with less pride." It was left to Christianity to say: "Here is a great misfortune, and behind this great misfortune there

must be a great fault, an equally *serious fault*, even if we cannot clearly see it! If you, miserable man, do not feel it, it is because your heart has gone hard, and something even worse will happen to you!"

On top of this, the ancient world could point to examples of real misfortunes, misfortunes that were pure and innocent. Only when Christianity came did every punishment become a deserved punishment. Besides that, Christianity makes the sufferer's imagination suffer even more, so that the victim, in the middle of his trouble, is struck by the feeling that he has been morally blamed and thrown away. Poor humanity! The Greeks had a special word for the feeling of outrage people felt at someone else's undeserved misfortune. Among Christian peoples this feeling was forbidden and not allowed to grow. That is why they have no name for this *more manly* brother of pity.

79.

A SUGGESTION.—Pascal and Christianity argue that our self is always hateful. If that is true, how can we allow other people, whether God or human beings, to love it, or even imagine that they do? It would go against every good principle to let ourselves be loved when we know very well that we deserve nothing but hatred, not to mention other disgusting feelings. "But this is exactly what the Kingdom of Grace is." So you see your love for others as a gift of grace? And your pity as a gift of grace too? Well then, if you can manage all that, there is no reason not to go one step further: love yourselves through grace. Then you will no longer need your God, and the whole drama of mankind's Fall and Redemption will play out its final act inside you!

80.

THE CHRISTIAN WHO FEELS COMPASSION.—When a Christian feels compassion at the suffering of the other person, there is another side to it. That is, he deeply distrusts all of the other person's joy: the joy that person takes in everything he wants to do and is able to do.

81.

THE SAINT'S HUMAN SIDE.—A saint found himself among a group of believers, and he could no longer stand the way they kept talking about how much they hated sin. Finally he said to them: "God created everything except sin. So it's no surprise that He doesn't like it. But man created sin. So why should man disown this only child of his, just because God, its grandfather, doesn't look at it kindly? Is that human? Give honour to whoever deserves it. But above all, your heart and your duty should speak up for the child, and only after that for the honour of the grandfather!"

82.

THE ATTACK OF THE THEOLOGIANS.—"You must settle this with yourself, because your life depends on it!" It is Luther who suddenly leaps at us with these words, and he imagines that we feel a knife at our throats. But we push him away using the words of someone wiser and more thoughtful than he was: "We don't need to form an opinion about this or that matter, and in that way we spare our souls a lot of trouble. For things themselves, by their very nature, cannot force us to give an opinion."

83.

POOR HUMANITY!—Just one drop of blood too much or too little in the brain can make our life terribly miserable and hard. We may suffer

more from that one drop of blood than Prometheus suffered from the vulture that tore at him. But the worst part is when we don't know that this drop is causing our suffering, and we think it is "the devil!" Or "sin!"

84.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ART OF CAREFUL READING.—You can tell how little Christianity encourages a sense of honesty by looking at the way its learned men write. They present their guesses as boldly as if they were fixed beliefs of the faith, and they are rarely stuck for an answer when it comes to explaining the Bible. Their constant cry is: "I am right, because it is written." Then comes an explanation so shameless and so random that a person trained in the art of careful reading, hearing it, must freeze on the spot, caught between anger and laughter. He keeps asking himself: Is this possible? Is this honest? Is this even decent?

Only people who never go to church, or who always go, fail to see how much dishonesty is still used on this subject from Protestant pulpits. They don't notice how clumsily the preacher takes advantage of the fact that no one can interrupt him. They don't see how the Bible is pinched and squeezed to fit, or how the congregation is taught every kind of trick of twisting texts.

But in the end, what can you expect from the effects of a religion that, during the centuries when it was establishing itself firmly, staged that huge reading farce about the Old Testament? I mean the attempt to snatch the Old Testament out of the hands of the Jews. The excuse was that it contained only Christian teachings and belonged to the Christians, as the true people of Israel, while the Jews had simply claimed it for themselves without any right. After this came a craze of so-called interpretation and falsification, which could never, under

any circumstances, have gone together with a clear conscience. No matter how strongly Jewish scholars protested, it was busily claimed everywhere that the Old Testament pointed, on every page, to Christ and nothing but Christ, and especially to His Cross. So whenever the text mentioned wood, a rod, a ladder, a twig, a tree, a willow, or a staff, it had to be a prophecy about the wood of the Cross. Even the setting up of the Unicorn and the Bronze Serpent, even Moses stretching out his hands in prayer, yes, even the spits on which the Easter lambs were roasted: all of these were said to point to the Cross, like warm-ups leading up to it! Did anyone who kept saying these things ever actually believe them? And let's not forget that the Church did not hesitate to slip extra words into the text of the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament (for example, Psalm 96, verse 10), so that later it could use these added passages as Christian prophecies. They were in the middle of a fight, and they thought about their enemies rather than about honesty.

85.

CLEVERNESS IN POVERTY.—Be careful not to laugh at the myths of the Greeks just because they look so little like your own deep philosophy about what lies beyond the world! You should admire a people who held back their quick minds at this point, and who for a long time afterward had enough good sense to avoid the danger of dry academic arguing and hair-splitting superstition.

86.

THE CHRISTIANS WHO EXPLAIN THE BODY.—Whatever comes from the stomach, the bowels, the heartbeat, the nerves, the bile, the seed—all those upsets, weaknesses, irritations, all the chance happenings of that machine we understand so little—a Christian like Pascal treats all of it as a moral and religious event. He asks himself whether

God or the devil, good or evil, being saved or being damned, is the cause. Pity the poor interpreter! How he must twist and torment his system of ideas! How he must twist and torment himself to prove his point!

87.

THE SUDDEN MORAL CONVERSION.—When it comes to morality, Christianity knows of nothing except the miracle. By this it means a sudden change in every way of valuing, a sudden giving up of all old habits, and a sudden, unstoppable liking for new things and new people. Christianity sees this event as the work of God. It calls it being "born again," and so gives it a value that is one of a kind and beyond comparison. As a result, everything else that people call morality, anything that has nothing to do with this miracle, stops mattering to the Christian. In fact, as far as such ordinary morality makes a person feel good about himself and proud, the Christian is actually afraid of it. The New Testament sets up a rule, a standard of virtue and of perfectly keeping the Law. But it sets it up in such a way that it is a standard of *virtue nobody can reach*. People who still try to become morally perfect are meant to realize, when they face this standard, that they are getting further and further *away* from their goal. They are meant to *give up hope* of ever being good, and in the end to throw themselves at the feet of the Merciful One, that is, God.

Only when a Christian's moral efforts end in a conclusion like this can they still be seen as worth anything. So it is absolutely necessary that these efforts always stay fruitless, painful, and gloomy. In this way, those efforts could still help bring about that moment of ecstasy, when a person feels the "overflow of grace" and the sudden moral conversion happens. But this struggle to be moral is not actually *necessary*. It is quite common for this miracle to happen to a sinner at the very moment when he is, so to speak, rolling around in the swamp of sin.

In fact, jumping from the deepest, most shameless sinfulness straight into its opposite seems easier. And because it is such clear proof of a miracle, it even seems more desirable.

Apart from all this, what might such a sudden, unreasonable, and unstoppable turnaround really mean, this change from the depths of misery to the heights of happiness? (Could it be a kind of hidden epilepsy?) In any case, this is something doctors of the mind should look into. They often get the chance to observe similar "miracles," for example, a sudden mad urge to kill someone or to kill oneself. The fact that, in the Christian's case, the results are somewhat "more pleasant" makes no real difference.

88.

LUTHER, THE GREAT HELPER OF MANKIND.—The most important thing Luther achieved was the suspicion he stirred up against the saints and against the whole Christian idea of the thinking life. Only since his time has it again become possible in Europe to live a thinking life that is not Christian. Only since then have people stopped looking down on ordinary people and on everyday work in the world. Luther stayed an honest miner's son even after he was shut up in a monastery. There, since he had no other deep places to dig and no other "tunnels" to bore, he went down into himself. He bored frightening, dark tunnels through his own depths. In the end he came to see that a quiet, inward-looking, saintly life was impossible for him, and that the natural "drive to act" in his body and soul would end up destroying him. For a long time, far too long, he tried to find the road to holiness by punishing his own body. But at last he made up his mind and said to himself: "There is no real thinking life! We have been fooled. The saints were no better than the rest of us." This was really a farmer's way of winning an argument. But for the Germans of that time it was the only right way. How uplifted they felt when they

could read in their Lutheran catechism: "Apart from the Ten Commandments, there is no deed that could please God. These much-praised spiritual works of the saints are pure fantasy!"

89.

DOUBT AS A SIN.—Christianity has done everything it possibly could to draw a protective circle around itself. It has even gone so far as to declare that doubt itself is a sin. We are supposed to be thrown into faith by a miracle, without any help from reason. After that, we are supposed to float in faith as if it were the clearest and most certain of elements, like water. And then even a quick glance toward solid ground, even the thought that we might exist for some purpose other than floating, even the slightest movement of our nature, which belongs to both land and water: all of this is a sin! Notice that, because of this ruling, any proofs and arguments for the faith, and any thinking about where it came from, are forbidden as sinful. What Christianity wants is blindness and wild frenzy, and an endless swan-song sung above the waves where reason has been drowned!

90.

SELFISHNESS AGAINST SELFISHNESS.—How many people still reach this conclusion: "Life would be unbearable if there were no God!" Or, as people say in idealistic circles: "Life would be unbearable if it had no moral meaning." And so, they say, there must be a God, or there must be a moral meaning to existence! But really the situation is this: someone who is used to ideas like these does not want a life without them. So these ideas are necessary for him and for keeping himself going. But how arrogant it is to claim that everything I need to keep myself going must *really* exist! As if keeping me going were truly necessary! And what if other people thought the opposite? What if they did not want to live under the terms of these two beliefs, and

did not think life was worth living if those beliefs came true?—And that is exactly how things stand today.

91.

THE HONESTY OF GOD.—Picture a God who knows everything and can do everything, yet does not even make sure that the beings he created understand what he wants. Could such a God be a good God? Picture a God who, for thousands of years, has let countless doubts and worries go on unchecked, as if they did not matter at all for the saving of mankind, and who, even so, threatens the most horrible punishments for anyone who gets his truth wrong. If he himself has the truth, and can calmly watch mankind in miserable torment, wearing itself out over what the truth is, would he not be a cruel God?

But perhaps he really is a good God, and simply could not express himself more clearly? Perhaps he was not clever enough to do it? Or not good enough with words? So much the worse! Because in that case he might have been fooled himself about what he calls his "truth," and might be not far from being just another "poor, fooled devil!" Then must he not suffer all the torments of hell himself, seeing the beings he made suffer so much down here, and suffer even more for all eternity, while he can neither advise them nor help them? He would be like a deaf and mute person who makes all kinds of unclear signs when his child or his dog is in terrible danger. A troubled believer who reasons this way could be forgiven if he felt more pity for the suffering God than for the "other people" around him. After all, they would no longer be the ones closest to him, if that most lonely and most ancient of all beings is also the one who suffers most and most needs comfort.

Every religion shows some signs that it was born at a time when human thinking was still too young and not yet grown up. All religions

take the need to tell the truth lightly. They still know nothing about God having a duty, the *duty of God*: the duty to be clear and honest when He speaks to people. No one spoke more powerfully than Pascal about the "hidden God" and about the reasons why God had to keep Himself hidden. All of this shows clearly enough that Pascal himself could never feel at peace about this question. Yet he speaks so confidently that you might think someone had let him in on the secret at some point. He seemed to sense that the hidden God showed a few small traces of something immoral. And he was too ashamed and too afraid to admit this, even to himself. So, like a frightened man, he talked as loudly as he could.

92.

AT THE DEATHBED OF CHRISTIANITY.—All truly active people today get along without any inner Christianity. And the most moderate and thoughtful people of the educated middle class have only a kind of watered-down Christianity, a strangely simplified version of it. A God who, out of love, arranges everything so that it turns out best for us. A God who gives us our goodness and our happiness and then takes them away again, so that in the end everything runs smoothly and we have no reason left to resent life or complain about it. In short, giving in and being humble have been raised up and treated as gods. That is the best and most living piece of Christianity still left to us. But we must remember that, in this way, Christianity has turned into a soft *moralism*, a gentle set of moral feelings. Instead of "God, freedom, and life after death," we now have a sort of kindness and decent feelings, plus the belief that in the whole universe, kindness and decent feelings will win in the end. This is Christianity's gentle, painless death.

93.

WHAT IS TRUTH?—Who could fail to enjoy the conclusions that believers love so much to reach? "Science cannot be true, because it denies God. So it does not come from God. And so it cannot be true—because God is truth." The mistake is not in the reasoning but in the starting point. What if God were not exactly truth, and this were proved? What if, instead, God were the vanity, the hunger for power, the ambition, the fear, and the thrilled and terrified foolishness of human beings?

94.

A CURE FOR THE DISCONTENTED.—Even Paul already believed that some sacrifice was needed to remove the deep displeasure God felt about sin. And ever since then, Christians have never stopped taking out their bad mood with themselves on some victim or other. Whether it was "the world," or "history," or "reason," or joy, or the peace of mind of other people, something good, it didn't matter what, had to die for *their* sins (even if only as a symbol, like burning a figure of someone instead of the person)!

95.

THE HISTORICAL DISPROOF IS THE ONE THAT SETTLES IT.—In the past, people tried to prove that there was no God. Now we show how the belief in a God could have *started*, and how this belief gained authority and importance. Done this way, any counter-proof that there is no God becomes unnecessary and pointless. In earlier times, when the "proofs that God exists" were knocked down, a doubt still remained: maybe better proofs could be found than the ones just knocked down. Back then, atheists did not understand the art of wiping the slate completely clean.

96.

"IN THIS SIGN YOU WILL CONQUER."—However far Europe may have advanced in other ways, when it comes to religion it has not yet reached the open-minded simplicity of the ancient Brahmins, the priests of old India. This shows that in India, four thousand years ago, people thought more deeply than we do today, and passed on to their children more pleasure in deep thinking. For those Brahmins believed, first, that the priests were more powerful than the gods, and second, that the priests' power came from the rituals they performed. Because of this, their poets never got tired of praising those rituals (prayers, ceremonies, sacrifices, chants, made-up tunes) as the true givers of every good thing. Even though some superstition and poetry were mixed into all this, the basic ideas were *true*! One step further, and the gods were thrown aside—which Europe will also have to do before long! One more step, and priests and go-betweens could be done away with too—and then Buddha appeared, the teacher of a religion in which people save themselves. How far Europe still is from this level of culture! When, at last, all the customs and rituals on which the power of gods, priests, and saviours rests have been destroyed, and when, as a result, morality in the old sense is dead, then there will come... yes, what will come then? But let's not guess. Let us rather make sure that Europe catches up on what was done thousands of years ago in India, among that people of thinkers, as a command of thought!

Spread out among the different nations of Europe, there are now between ten and twenty million people who no longer "believe in God." Is it asking too much that they give each other some sign or password? As soon as they recognise each other this way, they will also make themselves known to one another. And right away they will become a power in Europe, and, luckily, a power *among* the nations! Among the social classes! Between rich and poor! Between those who

give orders and those who obey! Between the most restless people and the calmest, most calming people!

Book Two

97.

PEOPLE BECOME MORAL—but not because they are moral! A person may give in to morals out of a slave-like habit of obeying, or out of vanity. They may do it out of selfishness or because they have given up. They may do it out of gloomy fanaticism, or simply because they never stopped to think. Again, it may be an act of despair, like giving in to the power of a ruler. But there is nothing moral about it in itself.

98.

CHANGES IN MORALS.—Morals keep changing and turning into something new, and what causes these changes is crimes that succeeded. (For example, every new idea about what is right and wrong belongs to this group.)

99.

WHERE ALL OF US ARE IRRATIONAL.—We still go on drawing conclusions from judgments we think are false, or from teachings we no longer believe in. We do this through our feelings.

100.

WAKING UP FROM A DREAM.—Long ago, noble and wise men believed in "the music of the spheres," the idea that the planets made

heavenly music as they moved. Today there are still noble and wise men who believe in "the moral meaning of life." But a day will come when they, too, will no longer be able to hear this music of the spheres. They will wake up and realise that their ears had only been dreaming.

101.

OPEN TO DOUBT.—If you accept a belief just because it is the usual thing to believe, that shows you are dishonest, cowardly, and lazy. So must dishonesty, cowardice, and laziness be the basic conditions of morality?

102.

THE OLDEST MORAL JUDGMENTS.—How do we look at the actions of another person? First of all, we think about how those actions might help or hurt us. That is the only way we see them. We take this effect on us to be what the other person intended. And in the end we come to see these intentions as lasting qualities in that person, and we call him, for example, "a dangerous man." That is three mistakes in one! A triple mistake, and a very old one! Perhaps we inherited it from animals and the way they judge things! Shouldn't we look for the origin of all morality in these hateful, narrow-minded conclusions? "Whatever hurts me is evil, something harmful in itself. Whatever helps me is good, something helpful and useful in itself. Whatever hurts me once or a few times is an enemy by its very nature. Whatever helps me once or a few times is a friend by its very nature." Oh, what a shameful origin! Isn't this the same as taking the petty, occasional, and often purely accidental ways another person has dealt with us, and treating them as his deepest and most basic qualities? Isn't it the same as claiming that, towards himself and everyone else, he can only do the kinds of things we have seen him do to us

once or a few times? And isn't all this foolishness built on the most arrogant of all hidden assumptions: that we ourselves must be the measure of what is good, because we are the ones who decide what is good and evil?

103.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE WHO DENY MORALITY.—To deny morality can mean, first, to deny the moral reasons that people claim have driven them to act. That would be the same as saying that morality is only words and outward show. It would be part of the crude and clever deceiving, especially self-deceiving, that is typical of human beings, and perhaps most of all of people who are famous for their virtues. Second, it can mean denying that moral judgments are based on truths. In that case, we admit that these judgments really are the reasons people act. But we say that what really drives people to their moral actions is errors, since errors lie at the base of all moral judgments. This second view is my own. But I would never deny that in very many cases a sharp suspicion of the first kind—the kind La Rochefoucauld, the French writer who exposed hidden selfish motives, was known for—is also fair, and in any case very useful in general. So I deny morality in the same way I deny alchemy, the old false science of turning metals into gold. That is, I deny its basic assumptions. But I do not deny that there were alchemists who believed in those assumptions and acted on them. I also deny immorality. I don't deny that countless people feel immoral. I deny that there is any true reason why they should feel that way. Of course, unless I were a fool, I would not deny that many actions called immoral should be avoided and fought against. In the same way, I would not deny that many actions called moral should be done and encouraged. But I believe that in both cases these actions should be done for different reasons than the ones that have ruled until now. We have to

learn all over again, so that in the end, perhaps very late, we may be able to do something more: to feel all over again.

104.

OUR WAYS OF VALUING.—Every action can be traced back to a way of valuing. And every way of valuing is either our own or one we have taken over from others, and the second kind is by far the more common. Why do we take them over? Out of fear. That is, we think it wiser to pretend they are our own. And we get so used to pretending that in the end it becomes second nature. A way of valuing that is truly our own—judging a thing by the pleasure or displeasure it gives us and nobody else—is very rare indeed! But what about the way we value other people? We usually take over their way of valuing, and our reason for doing so is how we see them. So shouldn't that come from ourselves and from our own decision? Of course. But we make these decisions when we are children, and we rarely change them. Often, our whole life long, we stay fooled by our childish, habitual judgments in the way we judge our fellow human beings—their minds, their rank, their morals, their character, and how much they deserve blame. And so we feel we have to go along with their ways of valuing.

105.

FAKE SELFISHNESS.—Most people, whatever they think or say about their "selfishness," do nothing for their real self their whole life long. Instead, they work only for a ghostly copy of that self, a picture their friends have formed of them and then handed back to them. Because of this, they all live in a fog of opinions that belong to nobody, or only half belong to anybody, and of random, almost made-up, poetic ways of valuing. One person always lives in someone else's head, and that head lives in yet another person's head. It is a strange world of ghosts that still manages to look reasonable! This fog of opinions

and habits keeps spreading, and it lives almost on its own, apart from the people it surrounds. It is this fog that gives general statements about "man" their huge power. All these people who do not know themselves believe in a lifeless, bloodless idea they call "man"—that is, in something made up. And whenever powerful individuals, such as princes and philosophers, change this idea with their judgments, it has an enormous and irrational effect on the great majority. The simple reason is this: not one single person in this fog has a real self of his own—a self he can reach and has explored to its depths—that he could set against this pale, made-up idea everyone shares, and so destroy it.

106.

Against definitions of moral goals.

Everywhere we turn these days, we hear people say that the goal of morals is to keep humanity going and to move it forward. But this is just a sign that people want a neat formula, and nothing more. Keep it going in what way? Move it forward to where? These are the questions we have to ask right away. Isn't the most important part, the answer to "in what way?" and "to where?", missing from the formula? What does it tell us about our own actions and duties that we didn't already understand, quietly and by instinct? Can this formula tell us clearly whether we should make the human race last as long as possible, or whether we should make humans as little like animals as possible? The means, that is, the everyday morals we practise, would have to be completely different in those two cases! Suppose humans were made as reasonable and rational as they could possibly be. That would certainly not promise that they would last as long as possible! Or suppose someone says the answer to these questions is humanity's "greatest happiness." Do we mean the highest

level of happiness that a few individuals might reach? Or do we mean an average level of happiness for everyone, one that can't be measured but that might be reached in the end? And why should morality be the road that leads there? Looking at morality as a whole, hasn't it opened up so many sources of unhappiness that we might think this: up to now, every time morality has become more refined, people have grown more and more unhappy with themselves, with the other person next to them, and with their own fate? And up to now, hasn't the most moral person believed that, when measured against morals, the only right state for humanity is the deepest misery?

107.

Our right to our own foolishness.

How should we act? Why should we act? When it comes to a person's basic, everyday needs, these questions are easy to answer. But the further we go into the more important and more delicate areas of action, the less certain the problem becomes, and the more any answer seems to be chosen at random. Yet a random choice is exactly what must not be allowed here. That is what the authority of morals commands. A vague unease and a sense of awe must guide people, without mercy, in exactly those actions whose purpose and means they cannot see right away. This authority of morals weakens our ability to think about the very things where thinking wrongly might be dangerous. At least, that is how morality usually defends itself against those who accuse it. Here, "wrong" means "dangerous." But dangerous to whom? Usually, the people who support authority-based morals are not thinking of the danger to the person doing the action. They are thinking of the danger to themselves. They fear losing power and influence if everyone were given the right to act according to their own reason, whether that reason is great or small, and however

stubborn or foolish their choices might be. For their part, these people use their own right to random choices and foolishness without any hesitation. They even give orders in cases where it is almost impossible, or at least very hard, to answer the questions "How should they act? Why should they act?" Human reason has grown so incredibly slowly that people have often been able to deny that it has grown at all during the whole history of humanity. And what is more to blame for this than the solemn presence of moral commands, which are in fact present everywhere, and which won't even let a single person ask how and why? Haven't we been brought up in exactly a way that makes us emotional and dramatic, and so clouds our sight at the very moments when our reason should see as clearly and calmly as possible, that is, in all the higher and more important situations?

108.

A few claims.

When a person wants their own happiness, we should not give them any rules or advice about the road that leads to it. Each person's happiness comes from special laws of its own that nobody knows, and outside advice will only get in the way and block that person. The rules we call "moral" are actually aimed against individuals, and they do not in any way help those individuals to be happy. These rules have just as little to do with "the happiness and well-being of humanity." That is because it is completely impossible to give those words a clear meaning, and even less can they be used like guiding stars on the dark sea of moral hopes and efforts. It is a prejudice to think that morality helps reason to develop better than immorality does. It is a mistake to believe that every conscious being, whether animal, human, or humanity as a whole, is secretly aiming at its own

"greatest happiness" as it develops. On the contrary, at every stage of our development there is a special happiness to be reached, one that can't be compared to any other. It is neither higher nor lower, but a happiness belonging only to that individual. Evolution does not have happiness as its goal. It aims only at evolving, and nothing else. Only if humanity had a goal that everyone agreed on could we say "do this" or "do that." For now, there is no such goal. So the claims of morality should not be tied to humanity as a whole. That would be childish and unreasonable. Suggesting a goal to humanity is something quite different. That goal would then depend on our own will and what we choose. If humanity in general agreed to take on such a goal, it could then give itself a moral law, a law that, at least, it had chosen of its own free will. Up to now, however, the moral law has always had to be placed above our own free will. Strictly speaking, people did not want to give this law to themselves. They wanted to get it from somewhere else, to discover it, or to let themselves be ordered around by it from somewhere outside themselves.

109.

SELF-CONTROL AND MODERATION, AND THE REAL REASON BEHIND THEM.—I can find no more than six truly different ways of fighting against a strong urge. First, we can stay away from chances to satisfy the urge. We weaken it and starve it by not giving in to it for long periods, and then for longer and longer ones. Second, we can set ourselves a strict, regular schedule for when we satisfy our cravings. By controlling the urge this way, and keeping its rise and fall to fixed times, we can win stretches of time when it stops bothering us. And starting like this, we may then be able to move on to the first method. Third, we can choose on purpose to give in to the urge completely, with no limits at all, so that we get sick of it. Then, through that very feeling of disgust, we gain control over the urge. But this only works

as long as we don't act like the rider who rides his horse until it drops dead and breaks his own neck in the fall. Sadly, that is usually how this third method ends.

Fourth, there is a mental trick. It works by linking the idea of giving in to the urge so tightly with some painful thought that, after a bit of practice, just thinking about giving in feels very painful right away. (For example, a Christian may train himself to picture the devil being there and mocking him while he enjoys pleasures of the body. Or he may picture being punished in hell forever if he takes revenge by murder. Or he may simply picture how the people he respects most would look down on him if he stole some money. Or think of a man who has often held back a strong wish to kill himself by thinking of how much his family and friends would grieve and blame themselves. In this way he has managed to keep his balance on the edge of life. After some practice, these ideas follow each other in his mind like cause and effect.) Lord Byron and Napoleon are examples of this kind. In them, human pride rebelled and was insulted that one single passion should have more power than the whole calm order of their reason. From this came the habit, and the pleasure, of bullying the craving and making it, so to speak, grind its teeth in anger. "I will not be a slave of any appetite," Byron wrote in his diary. Fifth, we can shift our energy somewhere else. We do this by giving ourselves a very hard and tiring task, or by letting ourselves fall on purpose for some new attraction or pleasure, so that our thoughts and our bodily energy flow in other directions. It comes to the same thing if, for a while, we favor a different urge by giving it lots of chances to be satisfied. That way, this other urge spends up the energy that the bullying urge would otherwise have grabbed for itself. A few people may be able to hold back the one passion that is trying to take over by giving their other known passions some encouragement and freedom for a while.

Then those other passions eat up the food that the tyrant wants to keep all to himself.

Sixth and last, there is the man who can bear it and thinks it makes sense to weaken and tame his whole body and mind. Of course, he also reaches the goal of weakening one single violent instinct. Think, for example, of people like the ascetics, who starve their bodily desires and their strength along with them, and often wreck their reason too in the process.—So these are the six methods: avoiding the chances, putting the urge on a schedule, giving in until you are fed up and disgusted with it, linking it to a painful idea (such as shame, disgust, or hurt pride), then shifting your energy somewhere else, and finally weakening and wearing yourself out completely. But the will to fight a strong craving is not in our control. Neither is the method we choose, nor how well it works. In this whole process, our mind is really just the blind tool of some other craving that is competing with the first one. That other craving might be the urge for rest, or the fear of shame and other bad results, or love. So while "we" imagine that we are complaining about how strong an urge is, deep down it is really just one urge complaining about another. In other words, the fact that we feel the violent suffering it causes us means that there must be another urge, just as strong or stronger. It means that a fight is about to happen, and our mind will have to take part in it.

110.

WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY.—We can watch the following process happen inside ourselves, and I would like people to watch for it often and confirm it. We catch a hint of some kind of pleasure we have never known before, and so a new craving starts. Now the question is: what stands in the way of this craving? Suppose what stands in its way is ordinary things and ordinary concerns, or people we don't think very highly of. Then the goal of the new craving starts to look

like a "noble, good, praiseworthy feeling, one worth making sacrifices for." All the moral habits we have inherited will take it on and add it to the list of goals we think of as moral. And now we imagine we are no longer chasing a pleasure, but chasing something moral. This makes us feel much more sure about what we are striving for.

111.

TO THOSE WHO ADMIRE BEING OBJECTIVE.—Imagine someone who, as a child, saw strong and varied feelings in his parents and in the people he grew up around, but saw little careful judgment and little wish to be fair in their thinking. Because of this, he spent his best energy and his most precious time copying those feelings. When he grows up and becomes sensible, he will notice that every new thing or person he meets stirs up in him either liking or dislike, envy or contempt. He cannot get free of this experience, and it rules him. So he admires calm, neutral feeling, or "objectivity," as something amazing, as something connected with genius or with a very rare kind of goodness. He cannot believe that even this neutral calm is just the result of upbringing and habit.

112.

WHERE DUTY AND RIGHTS COME FROM.—Our duties are the claims that other people have on us. How did they get these claims? They got them because they treated us as people who could make agreements and keep them. They assumed we were like them and equal to them. Because of that, they trusted us with things: they raised us, taught us, and supported us. When we do our duty, we are proving that their idea of our strength was right, since it was for the sake of that idea that they did all these things for us. We pay them back in the same measure as they gave to us. So it is really our pride that tells us to do our duty. We want to win back our independence.

We do this by setting something we do for them against what they have done for us. Otherwise, by doing things for us, they would be pushing into our own area of power, and they would always have a hand in it. So we strike back by means of "duty," and in that way we push into their area of power in return. The rights of other people can only concern what lies within our power. It would make no sense for them to demand something from us that is not ours to give. To put it more exactly, their rights can only concern what they think is in our power, as long as we ourselves also think it is in our power. The same mistake can easily happen on either side. The feeling of duty depends on us and other people believing the same thing about how far our power goes. That means believing that we can promise certain things and freely commit ourselves to doing them (what people call "free will").

My rights are the part of my power that other people have not only allowed me to have, but also want to protect for me. Why do they do this? On the one hand, they are driven by good sense, fear and caution. Maybe they expect the same from us, namely that we will protect their rights. Maybe they think a fight with us would be dangerous or badly timed. Or maybe they see that any loss of our power would hurt them, because then we would be less useful as allies against some third power that is their enemy. On the other hand, rights are also handed out as gifts and given away. In this second case, the other people have not just enough power but more than enough. So they can give up a part of it and promise to protect it for the person they give it to. In doing this, they assume that the person who receives the gift has only a limited sense of power. This is how rights come about: they are amounts of power that have been recognized and promised protection. When the balance of power between people changes a great deal, old rights vanish and new ones are formed. You can see this in the way the rights of nations keep going back and forth, like a

tide coming in and going out. When our power shrinks a lot, the feelings of those who used to protect it start to change. They ask themselves whether they should give us back what we had before. If they don't see a way to do that, from then on they deny that we have any "rights." In the same way, if our power grows a lot, the feelings of those who used to recognize it also change, since we no longer need their recognition. They will then try to cut our power back down to its old size. They will try to meddle in our affairs, and they will defend their meddling by saying it is their "duty." But this is just pointless playing with words. Wherever rights are respected, a certain state and amount of power is kept in place, and every attempt to make it bigger or smaller is resisted. Respecting the rights of others means that our sense of power gives way to the sense of power in those others. Whenever our power turns out to be completely smashed and broken, our rights come to an end. On the other hand, when we have grown much stronger, the rights of others stop being, in our minds, what we used to accept them as. So a person who wants to be fair must keep a constant eye on the needle of the scales, watching how it moves. That way he can judge correctly how much power and how many rights each side has. Because human things usually don't last, these amounts stay in balance for only a short time, and most of the time they keep going up and down. As a result, it is very hard to be "fair." It takes a lot of experience, good intentions, and an unusually large amount of good sense.

113.

WANTING TO STAND OUT.—When we try to stand out from others, we have to keep watching the other person all the time and try to figure out what they are feeling. But the understanding and insight we need to satisfy this wish do not come from gentleness, compassion, or kindness. Quite the opposite. We want to see, or find out, how the

other person suffers because of us, whether inside or outside. We want to see how they lose control of themselves and give in to the effect that our hand, or even just the sight of us, has on them. Even when the person who wants to stand out makes, or wants to make, a happy, uplifting, or cheerful impression, that is not what he really enjoys. He does not enjoy the fact that he makes the other person happy, lifts them up, or cheers them. He enjoys the fact that he leaves his mark on the other person's soul, reshaping it and ruling over it as he likes. The wish to stand out is the wish to bring the other person under your control, even if only indirectly, in a way that is only felt, or even only dreamed about. This secret wish to dominate goes through a long series of stages. A really complete record of those stages might almost be a fine history of human culture, running from the early twisted forms of savagery all the way to the ridiculous forms of today's over-refined manners and sickly idealism.

This wish to stand out brings the following things upon the other person, to name just a few steps on a long ladder. First comes torture, then beatings, then terror, nervous surprise, wonder, envy, admiration, being lifted up, pleasure, joy, laughter, ridicule, mockery, sneering, whipping, and finally torture of oneself. At the very top of the ladder stands the person who denies himself everything for religion, the hermit and the martyr. He feels the greatest satisfaction of all. Why? Because, driven by his wish to stand out, he does to himself the same pain that his opposite, the savage on the bottom step, does to other people, the people he wants to stand out over and in front of. Think of how this self-denying person wins a victory over himself. Think of how he looks inward and sees a man split in two: one part who suffers and one part who watches. From then on he only looks at the outside world to collect, so to speak, wood for his own funeral fire. This is the final tragedy of the wish to stand out. It shows us just one person who, in a way, is burned up from the inside. And that is

an ending that matches its beginning. In both cases there is an indescribable happiness at the sight of torture. In fact, happiness, understood as a sense of power pushed as far as it can go, has perhaps never reached a higher level anywhere on earth than in the souls of superstitious self-torturing holy men. The Brahmins, the priests of India, show this in the story of King Visvamitra. He gained so much strength through thousands of years of punishing himself that he set out to build a new heaven. I believe that when it comes to inner experiences, the people of our time are just beginners and clumsy guessers who "take a shot at it." Four thousand years ago people knew far more about these horrible, refined ways of enjoying oneself. Perhaps back then some Hindu dreamer imagined that the creation of the world was an act of self-punishment that a god took on himself! Perhaps this god wanted to tie himself to a moving, living nature as a tool for torturing himself, so that he could feel his happiness and power doubled! And even if we suppose he was a god of love: what a delight it would have been for him to create a suffering humankind, so that he himself could suffer in a godlike, more-than-human way from watching his creatures being tortured without end, and in this way act as a tyrant over himself! And again, if we suppose he was not only a god of love but also a god of holiness, we can hardly imagine the wild joy of this divine self-torturer as he created sins and sinners and eternal punishment, and a huge place of endless torture beneath his throne, where there is constant weeping and wailing and grinding of teeth!

It is not at all impossible that the soul of someone like Saint Paul, Dante, or Calvin, and people like them, may once have reached into the frightening secrets of this kind of intense pleasure in power. Looking at such souls, we may well ask whether the circle of this wish to stand out really ends with the self-torturing holy man. Could this circle perhaps be travelled a second time, by combining the basic idea

of the self-torturer with the idea of a God full of compassion? In other words, a person would cause pain to others so that he could cause pain to himself. In this way he could win a victory over himself and over his own pity, and enjoy the most extreme pleasure of power.—Please forgive me for wandering off like this. These thoughts come to me when I think about all the possibilities in the huge field of mental excesses that the desire for power can lead a person into!

114.

WHAT THE SUFFERER KNOWS.—Think of sick people who have suffered long and terribly from the torture their illness has put them through, but whose minds have still not been damaged in any way. Their condition has a certain value for us in our search for knowledge. This is true even apart from the mental benefits that come from any deep period of being alone, and from any sudden and deserved release from duties and habits. A person who is suffering badly looks out from his pain at the world around him with a terrible calm. All those small, lying charms that usually surround things when a healthy person looks at them have disappeared for the sufferer. Even his own life lies there in front of him, stripped of all its freshness and color. If he happens to have been living until then in some kind of dangerous fantasy, this extreme loss of illusions through pain is the way, and maybe the only way, to pull him out of it. (Perhaps this is what happened to the founder of Christianity when he was hanging on the Cross. The bitterest words ever spoken were "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" If these words are understood in their deepest sense, as they should be, they show that he had completely lost his illusions and seen clearly through the lies of life. In that moment of the greatest suffering, Christ gained a clear view of himself, just as the poor dying Don Quixote did in the writer's story.)

The mind strains with enormous effort to hold its ground against pain. This effort makes everything the sufferer looks at appear in a new light. The strange, wordless appeal of this new light is often strong enough to resist every temptation of suicide, and it can make going on living seem very much worth it to the person who suffers. His mind turns with scorn toward the warm, cozy dream-world in which the healthy person wanders around without thinking. He looks down on the noblest and most treasured illusions he used to enjoy. He takes pleasure in calling up this scorn as if he were dragging it up from the depths of hell, and so he causes his own soul the bitterest pain. This is how he balances out his bodily suffering: one pain weighs against the other, and he feels that this balance is now necessary! In one terrible moment of seeing clearly, he says to himself: "For once, be your own accuser and your own executioner. For once, see your suffering as a punishment you have placed on yourself! Enjoy being the judge who stands above it. Better still, enjoy your own will and your own pleasure, your power to decide anything you like, like a tyrant! Lift yourself above your life just as you lift yourself above your suffering, and look down into the depths of reason and of unreason!"

Our pride rises up in revolt as never before. It finds a pleasure like no other in defending life against a tyrant like suffering, and against all the sly hints of this tyrant, who would love to push us into speaking out against life. We take life's side in the face of this tyrant. In this state of mind we stand bitterly against all pessimism, so that pessimism will not look like a result of our condition and so shame us as people who have been defeated. The pleasure of being fair in our judgments was also never greater than now. That is because now this fairness is a victory over ourselves, and over a mood so irritated that unfair judgments could easily be forgiven. But we refuse to be forgiven. Now, more than ever, we want to show that we need no excuse. We go through real wild parties of pride.

And now the first ray of relief and recovery appears. One of its first effects is that we turn against how much pride has taken over us. We call ourselves foolish and vain, as if we had gone through some one-of-a-kind experience. Ungratefully, we put down this all-powerful pride, even though it was what helped us bear the pain we suffered. We loudly demand some cure for this pride. We want to become strangers to ourselves and to be set free from our own person, after pain has forced us to focus on ourselves for far too long. "Away with this pride!" we shout. "It was just another illness, another fit!" Once again we look with longing at people and at nature. With a sad smile, we remember that now, since the veil has fallen from our eyes, we see many things about them in a new and different way. But we feel refreshed to see the gentler lights of life once more. We step out of that frighteningly cold and emotionless daylight in which we, as sufferers, saw things and saw right through them. We do not get angry when we see the charms of health start to play again. We watch the sight as if we ourselves have been changed, gently, and still tired. In this state we cannot listen to music without crying.

115.

THE SO-CALLED "SELF." Language, and the prejudices that language is built on, very often block our way when we start to explore what goes on inside us, our inner events and urges. One example is the fact that we only have words for the most extreme levels of these inner events and urges. Now, when words fail us, we usually stop observing carefully, because in such cases it is hard to think precisely. Even in earlier times, people automatically assumed that where the reach of words ended, the reach of existence ended too. Anger, hatred, love, pity, desire, recognition, joy, pain: all these are names for extreme states. The milder and middle levels, and even more the lower levels that are always at work, slip past our attention. And yet it is these

smaller levels that weave the threads, the whole fabric, of our character and our fate. It often happens that these extreme outbursts tear that fabric. In fact, even the smallest pleasure or displeasure we actually notice, whether while eating or while hearing a sound, may really be an extreme outburst if we judge it properly. These outbursts are then violent exceptions, usually caused by some kind of blockage or build-up. And as such, how easily they can mislead the person observing them! Just as they mislead the person acting! None of us is what we seem to be according to the states for which alone we have awareness and words, and therefore praise and blame. After these crude outbursts, which only we ourselves know about, we fail to recognize ourselves. We draw conclusions from evidence in which the exceptions turn out stronger than the rules. We misread ourselves when we read the statements of our own self, which seemed so clear. But our opinion of ourselves, this so-called self that we have reached by this wrong method, from then on helps to shape our character and our fate.

116.

THE UNKNOWN WORLD OF THE "SUBJECT," THE ONE WHO ACTS. What people have found so hard to understand, from the most ancient times right up to today, is how little they know about themselves. This is true not only about good and evil, but about something even more basic. The oldest of illusions is still alive: the belief that we know, and know exactly in each case, how a human action comes about. Not only "God, who looks into the heart," and not only the person who acts and then thinks about what he did, but everyone, without any doubt, believes he understands how actions come about in every other person. Each person says: "I know what I want and what I have done. I am free and responsible for what I do, and I hold others responsible for what they do. I can name every moral possibil-

ity and every inner movement that comes before an action. You can all act however you like, I understand myself and I understand all of you!" That is what everyone once thought, and almost everyone still thinks so even now. Socrates and Plato were great doubters in this area and admirable inventors of new ideas. Even so, they were deeply gullible about that deadly prejudice, that deep mistake, which says: "The right knowledge must always be followed by the right action." By holding this belief they were still inheriting the common foolishness and arrogance of thinking that we can actually know what lies at the heart of an action.

“It would truly be terrible if understanding what a right action really is were not followed by that right action itself.” This was the only way these great men thought they needed to prove this idea. The opposite seemed to them unthinkable and crazy. And yet that opposite matches the bare reality, which has been shown every day and every hour since the beginning of time. Isn't it a “terrible” truth that everything we know about an act is never enough to make us do it? Isn't it terrible that the bridge between knowing about an act and doing the act has never yet been built? Acts are never what they seem to us to be. We have worked very hard to learn that things outside us are not as they appear to us. Well, it is the same with things inside us. All moral acts are really “something different.” We cannot say anything more about them, and all acts are, at bottom, unknown to us. But what people in general have believed, and still believe, is just the opposite. The oldest kind of realism is against us. Up to now, humanity has thought: “An action is what it appears to be.” (As I read these words again, a very telling passage from Schopenhauer comes to mind. I will quote it as proof that he too, without the slightest doubt, kept holding on to this moral realism. He wrote: “Each one of us is really a skilled and perfect moral judge. We know exactly what is good and what is evil. We are made holy by loving good and hating evil. That is what every one of

us is like, as long as we are looking at the acts of other people and not our own, and as long as we only have to approve or disapprove, while someone else carries the burden of actually doing the acts. So everyone has the right to take God's place as the one who hears confessions.")

117.

IN PRISON. My eye, whether it is sharp or weak, can only see so far. It is inside this space that I live and move. This horizon is my nearest fate, whether bigger or smaller, and I cannot escape from it. So a circle is drawn around every living being, with that being at its center, and it belongs to that being alone. In the same way, our ears shut us into a small space, and so does our sense of touch. We measure the world by these horizons, where our senses lock each of us inside prison walls. We say this thing is near and that one is far away, this is big and that is small, one thing is hard and another is soft. We call this way of judging things "sensation." But it is all a mistake in itself! We measure our lives by how many events and feelings we can, on average, experience in a certain amount of time. We call our lives short or long, rich or poor, full or empty. And we judge the lives of other beings by the average human life. All of this, too, is a mistake in itself!

If our eyes were a hundred times sharper when looking at the things around us, people would seem enormously tall to us. We can even imagine sense organs through which people would seem endlessly huge. On the other hand, some organs could be made so that we could see whole solar systems shrunk down and packed close together, like a single cell. And for beings built the opposite way, a single cell of the human body could look, in its structure, movement, and balance, like a whole solar system. The habits of our senses have wrapped us in a cloth woven of false sensations. These false sensa-

tions, in turn, lie underneath all our judgments and all our "knowledge." There is no way out, no escape to the real world! We are like spiders in our own webs. Whatever we catch in them, it can only be something our web is able to catch.

118.

WHAT IS THE OTHER PERSON? What do we really grasp of the other person except his edges? I mean the marks he leaves on us, as if he were carving and stamping himself into us. We can understand nothing about him except the changes that happen in ourselves because of him. What we know of him is like a hollow mold, an empty shape. We give him the feelings that his actions stir up in us, and so we give him a false, backwards kind of reality. We shape him, based on what we know of ourselves, into a moon circling around our own system. And when he shines on us or goes dark, even though we ourselves are in every case the real cause of it, we still believe the opposite! Oh, what a world of ghosts we live in! Oh, what a twisted, upside-down, empty world, and yet we dream that it is full and standing straight!

119.

EXPERIENCE AND INVENTION. No matter how well a person comes to know himself, nothing is more incomplete than his picture of the instincts that make him who he is. He can barely name the most common instincts. Their number and strength, how they rise and fall, how they push and push back against each other, and above all, the rules of how they are fed, stay completely unknown to him. So how they get fed becomes a matter of chance. The daily experiences of our lives toss their prey first to this instinct, then to that one, and the instincts slowly grab it. But the coming and going of these experiences has no sensible connection to what all the instincts together need to be fed. So two things must always happen: some cravings will

be ignored and starve to death, while others will be overfed. Every moment in a person's life makes some of the reaching arms of his being grow, like the arms of a polyp, and makes others shrivel away, depending on whether that moment brings food with it or not. As I have already said, all our experiences are, in this sense, a kind of food. But that food is scattered carelessly, with no difference made between the hungry and the overfed. Because each part is fed by accident like this, the fully grown polyp will be just as much a matter of chance as its growth was.

To put this more clearly, let us imagine that an instinct or a craving has reached the point where it demands to be satisfied. Maybe it wants to use its power, or to let that power out, or to fill up an empty space (all of this is just a way of speaking in pictures). Then it will look at every event that happens during the day, to see how it can use it to reach its goal. Whether the person runs or rests, gets angry, reads, talks, fights, or is happy, the hungry instinct keeps watch, so to speak, over every state the person goes into. As a rule, if it finds nothing for itself, it has to wait, still unsatisfied. After a little while it grows weak. And after a few days or a few months, if it still has not been satisfied, it will wither away like a plant that has not been watered. This cruelty of chance might be easier to notice if all our cravings were as fierce in their demands as hunger, which will not be satisfied by imaginary food. But most of our instincts, especially the ones we call moral, are easily satisfied in just this way, if we may suppose that our dreams partly make up for the "food" that by chance was missing during the day. Why was last night's dream full of tenderness and tears? Why was the one the night before funny and cheerful? And why was the one before that full of adventure, busy with some endless, unclear search? How does it happen that in one dream I enjoy music more beautiful than words can say, and in another I soar upward with the joy of an eagle to the farthest heights?

In these made-up scenes, our instincts for tenderness, fun, or adventure, or our longing for music and mountains, can play freely and have room to move. Everyone can remember striking examples. These scenes are explanations of the signals our nerves get while we sleep. They are very free, very random explanations of the movements of our blood and our stomach, of the pressure of our arm and the bedcovers, or of the sound of a church bell, the weathervanes, the moths, and so on. This "text" of bodily signals is mostly the same from one night to the next. So why is it explained so differently? Why does our inventive mind imagine such different causes for the nerve signals of one day compared with another? It can be explained like this: the one whispering to the mind was different today from yesterday. Another instinct or craving wanted to be satisfied, to show itself, to get some exercise, to be refreshed and let out. One particular craving was at its peak today, and another was at its peak last night. Real life does not have the freedom to explain things that dream life has. It is less poetic and less wild. But do I really need to show that when we are awake, our instincts also just explain our nerve signals and decide their "causes" according to what they need? That there is no truly basic difference between being awake and dreaming? That even when we compare different levels of culture, the freedom with which one culture consciously explains things is in no way smaller than the freedom another has in dreams? That our moral judgments and our ways of valuing are only pictures and fantasies about processes in our bodies that we do not know about, a kind of habitual language for describing certain nerve signals? That all our so-called consciousness is a more or less fanciful commentary on an unknown text, a text that perhaps can never be known, but that we can still feel?

Think about some small, unimportant event. Let us suppose that one day, as we walk down a public street, we see someone laughing at us. Whatever craving inside us has reached its peak at that moment will

decide what this event means to us. And it will be a very different event depending on what kind of person we are. One person will take it like a drop of rain. Another will brush it off like a fly. A third will try to start a fight over it. A fourth will check his clothes to see if there is anything about them that might make people laugh. A fifth will start thinking about what makes something funny in itself. A sixth will be pleased that, without meaning to, he has added a ray of sunshine and laughter to the world. In all these cases some craving gets satisfied, whether it is anger, the urge to fight, the urge to think things over, or kindness. This instinct, whatever it is, has grabbed that event as its prey. Why that event in particular? Because, hungry and thirsty, it was lying in wait, ready to pounce.

Not long ago, at eleven o'clock in the morning, a man suddenly collapsed and fell down in front of me, as if he had been struck by lightning. All the women nearby immediately cried out in horror, while I helped the man back onto his feet and waited until he could speak again. During all this, not a muscle in my face moved, and I felt no fear and no pity. I simply did what was most urgent and sensible, and then I calmly went on my way. Now suppose someone had told me the evening before that at eleven o'clock the next day a man would fall down in front of me like this. I would have gone through all kinds of torment in the meantime. I would have lain awake all night. And at the crucial moment I might even have fallen down myself, like the man, instead of helping him. That is because, in the meantime, every craving inside me that you could imagine would have had time to dream up ideas about this event and comment on it. So what are our experiences, then? They are much more what we put into them than what they really are. Or should we perhaps say that there is nothing in them at all? That experiences in themselves are just products of our imagination?

120.

TO CALM THE DOUBTER.—"I have no idea what I am doing. I don't have the slightest idea what I should do!"—You are right, but be sure of this: at every moment, something is being done to you! People have always confused doing with being done to. It is humanity's never-ending grammar mistake.

121.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.—Think of our mind as a mirror. On this mirror something happens that shows a regular pattern: one particular thing is always followed by another particular thing. When we notice this and want to give it a name, we call it cause and effect. What fools we are! As if by doing this we had understood anything, or ever could! Because, of course, all we have seen are pictures of causes and effects. And it is exactly because we only see pictures that we cannot see any deeper connection than one thing simply coming after another!

122.

THE PURPOSES IN NATURE.—Take any fair-minded researcher who studies the history of the eye and its shape in simpler animals, and who sees how the organ of sight slowly developed. He cannot help seeing that sight was not the first purpose of the eye. Sight probably only showed up once pure chance had helped put the equipment together. Just one example like this, and the idea of "final purposes" falls away from our eyes like scales, and we see clearly.

123.

REASON.—How did reason come into the world? In an unreasonable way, as is only fitting: by accident. We will have to try to work out this accident like a riddle.

124.

WHAT IS WILLING?—We laugh at a man who steps out of his room at the exact moment the sun is rising and says, "It is my *will* that the sun should rise." We laugh at someone who cannot stop a wheel and says, "I *want* it to roll." And we laugh at someone who is thrown down in a wrestling match and says, "Here I lie, but here I *want* to lie." But, joking aside, aren't we acting just like one of these three people whenever we say "I want"?

125.

ON THE AREA OF FREEDOM.—We can *think* of far more things than we can actually do or live through. In other words, our ability to think is shallow. It is happy with what lies on the surface, and it does not even really see that surface. Suppose our mind had grown exactly in step with our power and with how we use that power. Then the first rule of our thinking would be that we can only understand what we are able to do—if there is any understanding at all. A thirsty man has no water, but his imagination keeps showing him pictures of water, as if nothing could be easier to get. The mind, being shallow and easily satisfied, cannot understand real need, and so it feels it is above it. It is proud that it can do more, run faster, and reach the goal almost in the blink of an eye. And so, compared with the area of doing, willing, and living through things, the area of thought seems to be the area of freedom. But, as I have already said, it is really nothing but the area of shallowness and smug self-satisfaction.

126.

FORGETTING.—No one has ever proved that there is such a thing as forgetting. All we know is that we have no control over remembering. Meanwhile, we have filled this gap in our power with the word "for-

getting," just as if it were one more ability added to our list. But, when it comes down to it, what is actually in our power? If that word fills a gap in our power, couldn't our other words turn out to fill gaps in what we know about our power?

127.

FOR A CLEAR PURPOSE.—Of all human actions, the ones we probably understand least are the ones done for a clear purpose. That is because our minds have always treated them as the easiest to understand and the most ordinary. The great problems can be found lying around on every main road and side street.

128.

DREAMS AND RESPONSIBILITY.—You want to be responsible for everything except your dreams! What pitiful weakness, what lack of courage to follow your own logic! Nothing is more your own work than your dreams! Nothing belongs to you as much! The material, the shape, how long they last, the actor, the audience—in these little plays you play every part yourself, as your whole self! And yet this is exactly where you are afraid and ashamed of yourselves. Even Oedipus, the wise Oedipus, took comfort in the thought that we cannot be blamed for what we dream. From this I have to conclude that most people must have some terrible dreams to blame themselves for. If it were not so, how much would these night-time stories have been used to feed human pride! Do I need to add that the wise Oedipus was right? That we are really no more responsible for our dreams than for our waking hours? And that the belief in free will has two parents: human pride and the sense of power? Maybe I say this too often. But that does not prove it is not true.

129.

THE SO-CALLED BATTLE OF MOTIVES.—People talk about a "battle of motives," but what they mean by it is not a battle of motives at all. Here is what I mean. When we think things over, the results of the different actions we believe we could take come into our minds one at a time, one after another, and we compare these results in our heads. We believe we have made a decision about an action once we have convinced ourselves that its results will be good. But before we reach that point, we often worry a great deal. It is very hard to guess what the results are likely to be, and to see them in their full importance, every single one of them. And after all that, we still have to count in any chance events that might come up. Then comes the biggest difficulty: all the results we have worked out one by one, with so much effort, must be weighed against each other on some kind of scale. And all too often it turns out that, because all these possible results are so different in kind, we have neither a scale nor weights for this careful calculation of what is best for us.

But let's suppose that in this case we do manage to get past that difficulty. Let's say that pure luck has put results on our scales that can actually be weighed against each other. Even then, all we have, in our picture of what an action will lead to, is one reason for doing that action. Just one reason! And when we finally decide to act, we are quite often moved by a different kind of reason altogether, not by this "picture of the consequences." What makes this happen might be the usual running of the machinery inside us. Or it might be a small push from someone we fear, or respect, or love. Or it might be our love of comfort, which prefers to do whatever is closest at hand. Or it might be our imagination getting stirred up at the deciding moment by some small, unimportant event. Or it might be some bodily influence that shows up completely out of nowhere. A simple whim can make it happen. Or a burst of passion that, just by chance, happens to be

ready to explode. In short, reasons are at work that we don't understand very well, or don't understand at all, and that we can never weigh against each other ahead of time.

Most likely there is a struggle going on among these reasons as well. They push back and forth, some parts rising and others sinking. And this would be the real "struggle of motives": something completely invisible and unknown to us. I have worked out the consequences and the likely successes. By doing that, I have sent one very necessary reason into battle alongside all the other reasons. But I can no more line up the troops in this battle than I can see it. The battle itself is hidden from me. So is the victory, as a victory. I do find out what I end up doing, of course. But I cannot know which reason actually won in the end. Even so, we are clearly not in the habit of counting all these hidden, unconscious happenings. Usually we think about the steps leading up to an action only as far as we are aware of them. So we mistake the battle between our motives for a comparison of what different actions might lead to. And this mistake has very important results, results that do the most damage to the growth of morals.

130.

AIMS? WILL? We have gotten used to believing in two separate kingdoms. One is the area of purposes and wanting. The other is the area of chance. In the area of chance, everything happens without sense. Things keep moving here and there, and nobody can say why or what for. We are in awe of this mighty kingdom of the universe's great stupidity. That's because, most of the time, we come to know it only when it crashes down on the other world, the world of aims and intentions. It falls like a roof tile from a roof, and it always smashes some beautiful plan of ours.

This belief in two kingdoms comes from old romantic stories and legends. In these stories, we are clever dwarfs with all our will and our goals. And we get interfered with, knocked over, and very often crushed to death by those hugely stupid giants called accidents. But even so, we would not want to lose the frightening poetry of having them nearby. These monsters often show up just when life in the spider's web of fixed goals has become too boring or too stressful for us. And sometimes they bring a heavenly break from it all, when their hands, for once, tear the whole web to pieces. Not that these mindless beings ever mean to do what they do, or even notice it. But their rough, bony hands rip through our web as if it were made of thin air.

The Greeks called this kingdom of the unpredictable, this kingdom of grand and endless limits, "Moira," meaning fate. They placed it around their gods like a horizon, a line beyond which the gods could neither see nor act. In doing this, they showed a secret defiance of the gods, the kind you find among many different peoples. The gods are worshipped, but people keep one last trump card ready to play against them. For example, think of the peoples of India and Persia. They imagined all their gods as depending on the sacrifices that humans offered them, so that if things got really bad, the humans could at least let the gods starve to death. Or think of the gods of the stubborn and gloomy Scandinavians. These people enjoyed a quiet revenge in the idea that a "twilight of the gods," an end of the gods, would one day come. This was a kind of payback for the constant fear their evil gods made them feel. Christianity was very different, because its basic feelings were not those of the Indians, Persians, Greeks, or Scandinavians. Christianity told its followers to bow down in the dust before the spirit of power, and even to kiss the dust. It taught the world that this all-powerful "kingdom of stupidity" was not as stupid as it looked. Instead, it said, we were the stupid ones, because we couldn't see that God Himself stood behind this kingdom. This God,

it said, liked dark, twisting and mysterious paths, but in the end He brought everything to a "glorious end." Before, people had mistaken this God for a race of giants, or for Moira. Now He Himself was the one spinning and weaving webs and plans, plans even finer than those of our own minds. They were so fine, in fact, that they seemed impossible to understand, and even unreasonable. This new story about God was such a bold change and such a daring contradiction that the overly sophisticated ancient world could not resist it, no matter how wild and self-contradicting it seemed. And, just between us, there really was a contradiction in it. If our minds cannot figure out God's mind and God's aims, then how did our minds figure out this fact about themselves, and this fact about God's mind?

It is true that in more modern times, people have grown more doubtful about whether the roof tile that falls on someone's head is really thrown down by "God's love." And so people are turning back again to the old fairy tale of giants and dwarfs. So let us learn this, because it is about time we did: even in the area we think belongs only to us, the area of goals and reason, the giants rule there too. And our goals and our reason are not dwarfs; they are giants. And the webs we spin ourselves get torn by our own hands just as often and just as clumsily as they get torn by a falling tile. And not everything that is called a purpose really is a purpose, and even less is everything that is called will really will. And if you come to the conclusion, "So there is only one area, the area of stupidity and chance?", then we must add this: maybe there is only one area. Maybe there is no will and no goal at all, and we have only imagined these things. The iron hands of necessity keep shaking the cup of dice called chance, and they go on playing forever. Because of this, some throws are bound to look exactly like every level of fitness and good sense. It may be that our own free choices and purposes are nothing more than throws like these. And it may be that we are too limited and too vain to see how very limited

we are! It may be that we ourselves are shaking the dice cup with iron hands, and that even in our most carefully planned actions we are doing nothing but playing the game of necessity. Possibly! To get past this "possibly," we would really have to have been guests in the Underworld, the land of the dead, playing dice and placing bets with Proserpine, the queen of that world, at her own table.

131.

MORAL FASHIONS.—How much our moral judgments as a whole have changed! The greatest wonders of morality in the ancient world, such as the philosopher Epictetus, knew nothing about the praise, so common today, of the spirit of sacrifice and of living for others. By the standards of the moral fashion that rules today, we would actually have to call them immoral. That is because they fought with all their strength for their own self, and against all sympathy for others, especially sympathy for other people's suffering and other people's moral weaknesses. Maybe they would answer us like this: "If you feel that you are such dull and ugly people, then go ahead and think about others more than about yourselves. You will be quite right to do so!"

132.

THE LAST ECHOES OF CHRISTIANITY IN MORALS.—"We are only good through pity, so there must be some pity in all our feelings"—this, said in French, is what morality says these days. And how did this come about? Today, the person who does social, sympathetic, unselfish and kind actions is seen as the moral person. This is perhaps the widest effect and the most complete change that Christianity has brought about in Europe. Perhaps it happened in spite of Christianity itself, and not at all because it was part of its central teaching. Rather, it was what was left over from Christian feelings at a certain time. At that time, the opposite belief was slowly fading away. That was the

thoroughly selfish belief in the "one thing that matters": the total importance of each person's own eternal salvation, together with the church teachings that this belief had rested on. And at that same time, the supporting beliefs in "love" and "love for others," which fit well with the Church's huge practice of charity, were moving into the spotlight. The more people slowly drifted away from the church teachings, the more they looked for some way to justify this drifting, and they found it in a kind of worship of the love of humanity. Not to fall behind the Christian ideal in this, but to beat it if possible: that was the secret drive of all the French free-thinkers, from Voltaire to Auguste Comte. And Comte, with his famous moral rule "live for others," really did out-Christian Christianity itself!

In Germany it was Schopenhauer, and in England it was John Stuart Mill, who pushed into the brightest spotlight this teaching that feelings of sympathy, and pity, or being useful to others, should be the rule for how we act. But these men themselves were only echoes. From about the time of the French Revolution, these teachings have shown up in many places with huge force. Since then they have appeared in their crudest forms as well as in their most refined forms, and almost all Socialist ideas have, nearly without meaning to, planted themselves on the shared ground of this teaching. Today there is perhaps no prejudice more widespread than the belief that we know what morality really and truly is. Everyone now seems pleased to hear that society is starting to shape the individual to fit the needs of everyone, and that it is both each person's happiness and each person's sacrifice to see himself as a useful part and tool of the whole. But people still have doubts about what form this whole should take. Should it be a state that already exists, or one that still has to be built? Should it be a nation, or a brotherhood of all nations, or new small economic communities? On this question there is still a lot of thinking, doubt, struggle, excitement and passion. But it is pleasant

and amazing to see how everyone agrees in demanding that the self practice self-denial, until, by fitting itself into the whole, it once more wins back its own fixed area of rights and duties, until, in fact, it has turned into something completely new and different. Whether people admit it or not, nothing else is being attempted here than the complete reshaping of the individual, and even the weakening and crushing of the individual. The supporters of the majority never get tired of listing and condemning everything bad, hostile, wasteful, costly and luxurious in the kind of individual life that has existed until now. They hope society can be run in a cheaper, less dangerous, more uniform and more peaceful way once nothing is left except large organizations and their members. Anything that in any way matches this wish to group people into one particular society, and the smaller cravings that always come along with this wish, is seen as good. This is the main moral current of our time, and sympathy and social feelings are working closely together in it. (Kant still stands outside this movement. He openly teaches that we should feel nothing about the suffering of others if our kindness is to have any moral worth. Schopenhauer, very angrily, as you can easily imagine, called this teaching the Kantian nonsense.)

133.

"NO LONGER THINKING OF YOURSELF."—Let us think seriously about why we would jump into the water to save someone who has just fallen in right in front of us, even if we don't especially like him. We do it out of pity; at that moment we think of nothing but the other person,—that is what careless thinking says. Why do we feel sad and uneasy when we see someone cough up blood, even if we actually dislike him and wish him no good? Out of pity; we have stopped thinking about ourselves,—that is what careless thinking says again. The truth is this. In our pity—and by that I mean what we

wrongly call "pity"—we no longer think about ourselves on purpose, but we still do it without noticing. It is just like when we slip: without thinking, we make the best possible movements to catch our balance, and in doing so we clearly use all our cleverness. When something bad happens to another person, it hurts us. If we could do nothing to help him, it would make our weakness, or maybe our cowardice, stand out very clearly. Or the accident itself would lower our honour, both in the eyes of others and in our own eyes. Or again, accidents that happen to others work like road signs pointing to the danger we ourselves are in. And even just as reminders of how fragile and at risk human beings are, they can hurt us. We shake off this kind of pain and hurt, and we balance it out with an act of pity. Behind that act there may be hidden a clever kind of self-defence, or even revenge. You can easily guess that deep down we are thinking hard about ourselves. Just look at what we decide in all the cases where we could avoid seeing people who are suffering, starving or crying out. We choose not to avoid such people when we can come to them as strong and helpful people, when we can safely count on being praised, or when we want to feel how happy we are compared to them, or again when we hope to escape our own boredom. It is misleading to call the suffering we feel at such a sight "sympathy," since that suffering can be of a very different kind. For in every case, it is a suffering that the suffering person in front of us does not feel: it is our own suffering, just as his suffering is his own. So it is only this private feeling of misery of our own that we get rid of through acts of compassion. Still, we never act this way for one single reason. It is certain that we want to free ourselves from suffering by doing this. But it is just as certain that, with the same action, we give in to an urge for pleasure. We feel pleasure when we see how different the other person's situation is from our own. We feel pleasure knowing that we could help if we only wanted to. We feel pleasure thinking of the praise and thanks we would get if we did help. We feel pleasure in the act of helping itself,

as long as it might succeed (because something that slowly turns out to be a success gives pleasure to the person doing it). But most of all, we feel pleasure in the feeling that our stepping in puts an end to some terrible unfairness,—even letting out our anger gives us fresh energy.

All of this, and even things more delicate still, make up what we call "pity." How clumsily language handles such a complicated living thing, with so many voices in it, by using just this one word! Some people claim, on the other hand, that pity is the very same thing as the suffering whose sight causes it, or that pity understands that suffering in an especially delicate and deep way. This goes against experience. Whoever praised pity on these two grounds did not have enough experience in the field of morals. That is why I start to have some doubts when I read about the unbelievable things Schopenhauer said pity could do. Clearly he wanted to make us believe in the big new idea he was offering: namely, that pity—the pity he looked at so carelessly and described so poorly—was the source of every moral action, past and future. And he claimed all this exactly because of the powers he had given it in the first place.

So in the end, what makes people without pity different from people who are truly compassionate? To give only a rough idea: above all, people without pity do not have a sharp sense of fear, the delicate ability to sense danger. Nor is their pride so easily hurt when something happens that they might have been able to stop. The caution of their pride tells them not to get involved in other people's business for no good reason. They even live by the belief that everyone should help himself and play his own cards. Also, in most cases they are more used to putting up with pain than compassionate people are. It does not seem unfair to them at all that others should suffer, since they have suffered too. Finally, being soft-hearted is just as painful to them as being cold and unmoved is to compassionate people. They

have only scornful words for sensitive hearts, because they think such feelings are a threat to their own manliness and calm courage. They hide their tears from others and wipe them away, angry with themselves. They are a different type of self-centred people from the compassionate ones. But to call them clearly evil and to call the compassionate ones good is just a moral fashion that has had its turn. The opposite fashion also had its turn, and a long turn at that.

134.

HOW FAR WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT PITY.—Pity, to the extent that it actually causes suffering—and that is the only angle we are looking at here—is a weakness, just like giving in to any other harmful emotion. It adds to the suffering in the world. Now and then, pity may happen to lessen some suffering, or even remove it completely. But we must not point to these occasional results, which on the whole are minor, to defend pity itself, which, as we have already said, does harm. Imagine that pity took over, even for just one day: it would bring humanity to complete ruin. In itself, pity is no better than any other craving. It is only when people ask for it and praise it that a clear conscience gets attached to it. This happens when people do not see what is harmful in it, but instead find a kind of joy in it. Only then do we give in to it gladly and are not ashamed to admit it. In other settings, where people understand that it is dangerous, it is seen as a weakness. Or, as the Greeks saw it, it is an unhealthy emotion that comes back from time to time, whose danger can be removed by letting it out on purpose for a short while. Suppose a man tried an experiment. Suppose he deliberately paid attention to all the chances that everyday life gives him to feel pity, and kept picturing in his mind, again and again, all the misery he might come across around him. He would certainly become gloomy and sick. And if he wanted, in any sense, to serve humanity as a doctor, he would have to

be very careful with this feeling. Otherwise it would freeze him at every critical moment, weaken the ground his knowledge stands on, and make his helpful, delicate hand shaky.

135.

MAKING OTHERS FEEL PITY.—Among primitive peoples, men shudder in a moral way at the thought of becoming someone others pity, because they think such a person has lost all worth and courage. To pity someone is the same as to look down on him: they do not want to watch a worthless creature suffer, because that would give them no pleasure. On the other hand, they love to watch one of their enemies suffer—someone they see as their equal in pride, someone whom even torture cannot force to give up his pride. More generally, they love to see someone suffer who refuses to lower himself by begging for pity, which in their eyes would be the deepest and most shameful humiliation. That is the greatest joy of all. A sight like this fills the primitive man's soul with the deepest admiration. In the end, when he can, he kills this brave man, and afterwards gives the unbending one an honourable funeral. But suppose the man had groaned. Suppose his face had lost its look of calm scorn. Suppose he had shown himself to be worthless. Well, in that case, he might have been allowed to live on, like a dog. He would no longer have stirred the pride of the one watching him, and pity would have replaced admiration.

136.

HAPPINESS IN PITY.—Suppose, as among the Hindus, we decide that the goal and purpose of all thinking is to understand human misery. And suppose this terrible decision is firmly kept, generation after generation. Then, for such people, who are born into pessimism, pity takes on a new value: it becomes something that keeps life going,

something that makes existence bearable—even though it may seem like something to reject with horror and disgust. Pity becomes a cure against suicide. It is a feeling that brings pleasure with it and lets us enjoy a little taste of being superior, in small doses. It distracts our minds, fills our hearts, drives away fear and dullness, and pushes us to speak, to complain, or to act. It is a kind of happiness, at least compared with the misery of that knowledge which hems a person in on every side, confuses him, and leaves him breathless. And happiness, whatever kind it is, gives us air, light, and room to move freely.

137.

WHY DOUBLE THE "SELF"?—To look at our own experiences the way we usually look at other people's experiences is very comforting, and it is good medicine. But to look at other people's experiences and take them on as if they were our own—which is what the philosophy of pity asks of us—would destroy us very quickly. Let us just try it, instead of only imagining it any longer! Besides, the first rule is certainly more reasonable and kinder to reason. That is because we judge the value and meaning of an event more fairly when it happens to someone else—for example, the value of a death, a loss of money, or someone spreading lies about us. But pity takes as its rule the command, "Suffer another person's misfortune as much as he does himself." Following that rule, the viewpoint of the self, with all its exaggerations and distortions, would become the viewpoint of the other person too, the one who sympathises. So we would have to suffer at the same time from our own self and from the other person's self. In this way we would choose to load ourselves down with a double dose of unreason, instead of making the weight of our own as light as we can.

138.

BECOMING MORE TENDER.—Sometimes we love someone, and respect and admire him, and then we come to see that he is suffering. This always surprises us greatly, because we can't help feeling that the happiness he gives us must come from an overflowing supply of happiness of his own. When we see his suffering, our feelings of love, respect and admiration change deeply. They become more tender. In other words, the gap between us seems to be bridged, and we seem to come closer to being equals. Now it seems possible to give him something back, while before we had pictured him as being far above any thanks we could give. Being able to repay him for what we have received from him fills us with great joy and pleasure. We try to find out what would best ease our friend's sorrow, and we give it to him. If he wants kind words, kind looks, attention, help or gifts, we give them. But above all, if he would like to see us suffering at the sight of his suffering, we pretend to suffer. All this lets us enjoy the pleasure of showing our gratitude in action, which is, in a way, the same as a good-natured kind of revenge. But if he wants none of these things and refuses to accept them from us, we leave him feeling cold and sad, almost hurt. It seems to us as if our gratitude had been turned down, and on this point of pride even the best of people are still a bit touchy. What follows from all this is that even in the best case there is something humiliating about suffering, and something uplifting and superior about sympathy. This fact will keep the two feelings apart forever and ever.

139.

HIGHER IN NAME ONLY.—You say that a morality based on pity is higher than the morality of the Stoics, who taught people to bear pain calmly? Prove it! But be careful not to measure the "higher" and "lower" levels of morality with moral measuring sticks yet again,

because there are no absolute morals. So get your measuring stick from somewhere else, and watch out!

140.

PRAISE AND BLAME.—When a war ends in failure, we look for the man who is to blame for the war. When it ends in success, we praise the man who is responsible for it. Whenever something fails, people try to blame somebody. This is because failure makes people feel low and gloomy, and against this feeling they reach, without thinking, for the only cure there is: a fresh boost to their sense of power. And they find this boost by condemning the "guilty" one. This guilty person is perhaps not a scapegoat who takes the blame for other people's mistakes. He is simply the victim of weak, humiliated and depressed people who want to prove, by using someone, that they have not yet lost all their power. Even blaming yourself after a defeat can be a way of getting back your sense of power.

On the other hand, praising the person who brought about a success is often just as blind. It comes from another instinct that also demands a victim, and in this case the sacrifice even seems sweet and attractive to the victim. This happens when a nation or a society has had its sense of power so fully fed by a huge and dazzling success that people grow tired of winning, and their pride wants to let itself out. A feeling of self-sacrifice wakes up and looks for something to give itself to. So, as a rule, whether we are blamed or praised, we are just giving other people a chance to satisfy themselves. All too often we are grabbed and swept away so that other people can unload on us all the praise or blame they have stored up. In both cases we do them a favour, but we deserve no credit for it, and they owe us no thanks.

141.

MORE BEAUTIFUL BUT LESS VALUABLE.—There is a showy, picture-like kind of morality. It belongs to passions marked by sudden outbursts and abrupt changes, and by dramatic, striking, frightening and solemn poses and gestures. This is the half-savage stage of morality. We should never be tempted to rank it higher just because it is beautiful to look at.

142.

SYMPATHY.—To understand the other person, meaning to recreate his feelings inside ourselves, we no doubt often dig down to the cause of his feelings. For example, we ask ourselves, "Why is he sad?" so that we can become sad ourselves for the same reason. But much more often we don't do this. Instead, we create these feelings in ourselves based on the *effects* they show in the person we are watching. We copy in our own body the look in his eyes, his voice, the way he walks, the way he holds himself (or at least the copies of these things in words, pictures and music). Or at the very least we try to imitate the movements of his muscles and nerves. Then a similar feeling will rise up in us, because of an old link between movements and feelings that has been trained to run in both directions. We have developed this knack of sensing other people's feelings to a very high level, and whenever we are with someone else we use this ability almost without meaning to. Anyone who wants to check this should watch the liveliness of a woman's face, and notice how it trembles and quivers with life, because it is constantly copying and reflecting everything that is happening around her.

But it is music, more than anything else, that shows us what experts we are at quickly and finely guessing feelings and sharing them. Music may only be an imitation of an imitation of feelings. Even so, al-

though it is distant and vague, it often lets us take part in those feelings. So we become sad without any reason to be sad, like the fools we are, just because we hear certain sounds and rhythms that somehow remind us of the tone of voice and the movements, or maybe just the behaviour, of sad people. There is a story about a certain Danish king who was stirred up into such a fierce mood for war by a minstrel's song that he jumped to his feet and killed five people of his gathered court. There was no war and no enemy; in fact, there was exactly the opposite. Yet in this king the urge to reason backwards, from a feeling to its cause, was strong enough to overpower both what he could see and his common sense. This is almost always what music does to us (as long as it really moves us), and we don't need such extreme examples to see it. The mood music carries us into almost always clashes with how things actually look around us, and with our power of reasoning, which understands our real situation and its causes.

If we ask how this copying of other people's feelings became so common, the answer is clear. Humans are the most timid, easily frightened of all creatures, because their nature is so fine and delicate. Through this timidity, they learned to feel along with others and to understand quickly what others were feeling, even animals. For century after century, people saw danger in everything that was strange to them, in anything that happened to be alive. Whenever they saw such things and creatures, they copied their faces and the way they held themselves. At the same time, they drew their own conclusions about what evil plans those creatures might be hiding. People even read every movement and every facial feature as a sign of intentions when looking at lifeless things. They were pushed to do this by the false belief that nothing was really lifeless. I believe this is where everything we now call a feeling for nature comes from: that joy people feel when they look at the sky, the fields, the rocks, the forests,

the storms, the stars, the landscapes, and spring. Without our old habits of fear, which made us suspect that behind everything there was a second, hidden meaning, we would not enjoy nature at all now. In the same way, people and animals would not make us happy if we had not first been made wary by fear, which is the source of all understanding. For joy, pleasant surprise, and finally the sense of the funny, are the younger children of sympathy, and the much younger brothers and sisters of fear. The ability to understand others quickly rests on the ability to pretend quickly. This ability gets weaker in proud, all-powerful people and nations, because they are less afraid. On the other hand, timid peoples know every kind of understanding and pretending very well. Among them you find the true home of the arts of imitation and of higher intelligence.

I start from the theory of sympathy that I have just described. Then I turn to another theory, one that is now very popular and treated as almost sacred: the idea of a mystical process in which pity melts two beings into one, and so lets them understand each other instantly. When I remember that even a mind as clear as Schopenhauer's enjoyed this kind of fantastic nonsense, and that he then passed this enjoyment on to other clear and half-clear minds, I feel endless amazement and compassion. How great the pleasure must be that we get from this senseless foolery! How close even a sane person must be to madness as soon as he listens to his own secret wishes about what to believe! Why did Schopenhauer really feel so grateful, so deeply in debt, to Kant? Once he gave a clear answer to this question. Someone had talked about how the "hidden qualities" in Kant's Categorical Imperative, his idea of an absolute moral command, might be removed, so that the theory could be made understandable. At this, Schopenhauer burst out: "An understandable Categorical Imperative! What a ridiculous idea! Pitch-black darkness, like the underworld! God forbid it should ever become understandable! The fact that there really is

something that cannot be understood, that our poor understanding and its ideas are limited, conditional, final, and deceptive, this is without doubt Kant's great gift." Let anyone ask himself whether a person can truly want to understand moral matters if he feels comforted from the very start by the belief that these matters cannot be understood! Such a person still honestly believes in light sent down from above, in magic, in ghosts, and in the idea that the ugliness of the toad has some deep, beyond-the-physical meaning!

143.

HOW AWFUL IT WOULD BE IF THIS URGE RAN WILD!—Imagine that the urge to give ourselves to others and care for them, what is called "feelings of sympathy," were twice as strong as it is now. Life on earth could not be endured. Just think how many foolish things each of us does every day and every hour, simply out of worry and care for ourselves, and how unbearable each of us seems while doing it. So what would it be like if we became, for other people, the target of all the stupid and pushy things they have so far only bothered themselves with? Would we not run away as fast as we could as soon as another person came near us? And would we not have to heap on these feelings of sympathy all the insults that we now save for selfishness?

144.

SHUTTING OUR EARS TO OTHER PEOPLE'S COMPLAINTS.—When we let our sky get cloudy because of the complaints and suffering of other people, who has to pay for that gloom? The other people, of course, on top of all their other burdens! If we just become echoes of their complaints, we cannot give them any help or comfort. Nor can we do so if we keep our ears open to them all the time. The only exception is if we have learned the skill of the Greek gods on Mount

Olympus. Instead of making themselves unhappy, they tried to feel uplifted by the misfortunes of humans. But this is too godlike for us, even though, in the way we enjoy tragedy on stage, we have already taken a step toward this ideal of gods feeding on human suffering.

145.

"UNSELFISH."—This man is empty and wants to be filled. That one is too full and wants to be emptied. Both feel pushed to look for someone who can help them. And in both cases, when we describe it in a lofty way, this same thing goes by the same name: "love." Well? Could this love really be something unselfish?

146.

LOOKING PAST THE OTHER PERSON.—What? Should true morality, for us, mean keeping our eyes fixed on the most direct and immediate effects our actions have on other people, and then deciding what to do based on that? That is only a narrow, small-minded, middle-class morality, even if it is a morality. To me, it seems nobler and more open-minded to look past these immediate effects on the other person, in order to support goals that lie further away, even if this means making others suffer. For example, we might encourage the search for knowledge, even though we know for certain that our free thinking will right away throw others into doubt, sadness, and even worse troubles. Do we not at least have the right to treat the other person the way we treat ourselves? When it comes to ourselves, we do not think in such a narrow, small-minded way about immediate effects and suffering. So why should we be forced to act that way toward the other person? Suppose we felt ready to sacrifice ourselves. What stops us from sacrificing the other person along with ourselves? After all, states and rulers have always sacrificed one citizen for the sake of the others, "for the good of everyone," as they put it.

But we too have interests that concern everyone, maybe even more than theirs do. So why shouldn't we be allowed to sacrifice a few people of our own time for the good of the generations still to come? Then their suffering, worry, despair, mistakes, and misery could be seen as necessary, because a new plough has to break up the ground and make it rich for everyone. And in the end, we pass on to the other person the kind of attitude that lets him see himself as a willing sacrifice: we convince him to carry out the job we are using him for. Does that mean we have no pity at all? But if we want to win a victory over ourselves, one that goes beyond our pity, isn't that a higher and more generous attitude than the one where we only feel safe after checking whether an action helps or hurts the other person? In fact, it is through this kind of sacrifice, which includes sacrificing ourselves as well as other people, that we should make stronger and raise up the shared sense of human power, even if that is all we manage to achieve. But even that alone would be a real increase in happiness. And then, if even this... but not another word! You have understood me at once.

147.

THE CAUSE OF "ALTRUISM." People have usually talked about love with so much force and worship because, so far, they have always had so little of it. They have never yet had their fill of this food, and so it became for them a kind of food of the gods, something heavenly and rare. Imagine a poet who wanted to show a perfect world where everyone loves everyone. He would surely have to describe a painful and silly situation, something never seen on earth. Everyone would be surrounded, pestered, and longed for, not by one lover as happens now, but by thousands, in fact by everybody. This would happen because of an urge no one could resist. And then that urge would be insulted and cursed just as fiercely as people in past ages cursed

selfishness. The poets of this new world, if they had enough free time to write, would dream of nothing but the happy past without love. They would dream of the godlike selfishness of the old days, and of the wonderful chances people once had to be left alone, not to be chased by their friends, and even to be hated and looked down on. Or they would use whatever other nasty words the lovely animal world we live in decides to invent.

148.

LOOKING FAR AHEAD. Suppose we follow today's definition, which says that only actions done for the sake of others, and only for their sake, are moral. Then there are no moral actions at all! Suppose instead we follow another definition, which says that only actions coming from our own free will are moral. Then there are no moral actions in this case either! So what is this thing we give that name to, which certainly exists and therefore needs to be explained? It is the result of a few mistakes in thinking. And if we were able to free ourselves from these mistakes, what would happen to "moral actions"? Because of these mistakes, we have so far given certain actions a higher value than they really had. We set them apart from "selfish" actions and from actions that are "not free." Now, when we put them back into those groups, as we have to, we will certainly lower their value, meaning the value people give them, even below a fair level. That is because "selfish" and "not free" actions have always been valued too low, because of that supposed deep and basic difference between the two kinds.

So in the future, will these same actions be done less often, since people will think less highly of them? Of course! Or at least for quite a long time, as long as our way of valuing things is still shaped by the effects of old mistakes! But we give something back in return. We give people back their courage to do the actions that are now called selfish,

and so we restore the value of those actions. We take away people's guilty conscience! And since selfish actions have so far been by far the most common, and always will be, forever, we free the whole idea of these actions, and of life itself, from looking evil! This is a very high and important result. When people no longer believe they are evil, they stop being evil.

BOOK III.

149.

SMALL ACTS OF GOING AGAINST CUSTOM ARE NEEDED!—Sometimes we follow custom even when we know better. We give in with our actions while keeping our minds free. We behave like everybody else, and in this way we show ourselves pleasant and thoughtful toward everyone, as if to make up to them, at least a little, for our unusual opinions. Among many fairly open-minded people, all this is seen not only as allowed but even as "honourable," "humane," "tolerant," and "not fussy," or whatever nice words are used to put our honesty of mind to sleep. So, for example, one man may be an atheist, yet he has his baby baptized in the usual Christian way. Another man does his time in the army, even though he may strongly condemn all hatred between nations. And a third man hurries into a church with a girl because she comes from a religious family, and he makes his vows in front of a priest without feeling ashamed of it. "It doesn't matter if one of us does what everyone else does and has always done"—that is what ignorant prejudice says! What a deep mistake! Because nothing matters more than this: when a powerful, old, and unreasonable custom is confirmed once again by the action of someone known to be reasonable. That way, people think the custom has been approved by reason itself! All respect to your opinions! But small acts of going against custom are worth even more.

150.

THE GAMBLE OF MARRIAGE.—If I were a god, and a kind god, nothing would annoy me more than the marriages people make. A single person can make huge progress in the seventy years of his life —yes, even in thirty years. It can be such great progress that it surprises even the gods! But then we see him take everything he has inherited and won through his struggles and victories, the crown of honour he earned as a human being, and hang it on the first handy hook, where any woman can pull it to pieces for him. We notice how good he is at gaining things and how bad he is at keeping what he has gained. We see that he doesn't even dream that by having children he could prepare an even more victorious life. Then we really do lose patience and say: "In the end nothing will come of humanity. Individual people are wasted, because the gamble of marriage makes any sensible, great step forward for humanity impossible. Let's stop being the hard-working spectators and fools of this pointless play!" It was in this mood, long ago, that the gods of Epicurus pulled back into their divine privacy and happiness. They were tired of people and their love affairs.

151.

HERE ARE NEW IDEALS TO INVENT.—When a man is in love, he should not be allowed to make a decision about his life, or to settle once and for all, on a whim, who he will live with. We ought to announce publicly that the promises of lovers do not count, and refuse them permission to marry. The reason is that we should take marriage itself far more seriously, so that in the cases where people marry now, it would usually not be allowed in the future! Aren't most marriages the kind we wouldn't want anyone else to watch? And yet there is almost always someone watching—the child. And the child is more

than a witness. He is the one who gets punished for others and takes the blame.

152.

WORDING FOR AN OATH.—"If I am lying now, I am no longer an honourable man, and anyone may say so to my face." I suggest using these words instead of the oath now taken in court, with its usual calling on God. These words are stronger. There is no reason why even religious people should object to it. As soon as the usual oath no longer works, all the religious people will have to turn to their book of religious teaching, which says, "You shall not use the name of the Lord your God carelessly."

153.

THE UNHAPPY ONE.—He is one of the brave old fighters. He is angry with civilisation because he believes its goal is to make all good things—honour, rewards, and beautiful women—available even to cowards.

154.

COMFORT IN THE MIDST OF DANGER.—The Greeks lived lives that were always surrounded by great dangers and disasters. So they tried to find, in deep thought and knowledge, a kind of feeling of safety, a last place of refuge. We live in a much safer situation, so we have brought danger into deep thought and knowledge instead. And it is in life itself that we try to find rest, a shelter from danger.

155.

DOUBT THAT HAS DIED OUT.—Risky adventures are rarer in modern times than they were in ancient times and in the Middle Ages.

This is probably because people today no longer believe in signs, oracles, stars, and fortune-tellers. In other words, we can no longer believe in a future that is set aside for us, the way the ancient peoples did. Unlike us, they doubted much less about what is going to be than about what already is.

156.

HARM FROM TOO MUCH.—"Oh, if only we don't feel too happy!"—that was the secret fear of the Greeks in their best period. *That* is why they kept telling themselves to be moderate. And what about us?

157.

THE WORSHIP OF NATURAL SOUNDS.—What does it mean that our culture not only puts up with signs of grief, like tears, complaints, blaming, and showing anger or humbleness, but even approves of them and counts them among the most noble and important things? The spirit of ancient philosophy, on the other hand, looked down on them with scorn and did not accept that they were needed in any way. Let's remember how Plato—who was certainly not one of the most heartless philosophers—talks about Philoctetes, the suffering hero of the tragic plays. Could it be that our modern culture is missing "philosophy"? Or, judged by the ways of valuing of those old philosophers, are we perhaps all part of the "mob"?

158.

THE RIGHT CLIMATE FOR FLATTERY.—These days we should no longer look for flatterers at the courts of kings, because kings have all come to love military life, and military life cannot stand flattery. But this flower still often grows thickly around bankers and artists.

159.

THE PEOPLE WHO BRING THINGS BACK.—Vain people value a piece of the past more highly from the moment they are able to bring it back to life in their imagination, especially if that is hard to do. If they could, they would even like to raise it from the dead. But since there are always a great many vain people, the danger of studying history is far from small when a whole age turns its attention to it. Too much energy is then wasted on all kinds of imagined comebacks of the past. The whole movement of Romanticism is perhaps best understood from this point of view.

160.

VAIN, GREEDY, AND NOT VERY WISE.—You want more than you understand, and your vanity is even bigger than your wants. For people like you, I can strongly recommend a lot of Christian practice and a little bit of Schopenhauer's theory.

161.

BEAUTY THAT FITS ITS TIME.—If our sculptors, painters, and musicians want to capture what our age is really about, they should show beauty as swollen, huge, and jittery. That is exactly how the Greeks did it in their own way: guided by their morality of moderation, they saw beauty in the calm, balanced statue called the Apollo Belvedere, and that is how they showed it. We, honestly, should call him ugly! But the fussy "classicists," with their worship of the ancients, have robbed us of all our honesty!

162.

THE IRONY OF OUR TIME.—These days, Europeans have the habit of treating every really important matter with irony, as if it were a

joke. The reason is that we are so busy working for these matters that we have no time left to take them seriously.

163.

AGAINST ROUSSEAU.—Suppose it is true that there is something contemptible about our civilisation. Then we have two choices. We can agree with Rousseau and say, "This despicable civilisation is to blame for our bad morals." Or we can go against Rousseau's view and say, "Our good morals are to blame for this contemptible civilisation. Our society's ideas of good and evil are weak and soft. They have had a huge influence over both body and soul, and so they have weakened every body and every soul. They have crushed all the free-minded, independent, self-reliant men, who were the real pillars holding up a strong civilisation. Wherever we still find so-called evil morals today, we are looking at the last crumbling ruins of those pillars." So let one strange-sounding claim be set against another! The truth cannot possibly be on both sides. And can we even say that it is on either side? Decide for yourself.

164.

PERHAPS TOO EARLY.—It seems that right now, people who do not feel bound to morals and to the established laws are taking their very first steps toward organising themselves, and in that way winning rights for themselves. They do this under many different and misleading names, and often in a very unclear way. Until now, these people have been called criminals, free-thinkers, immoral men, and scoundrels. They have lived outside the protection of the law, cursed as outlaws and weighed down by a guilty conscience, ruined themselves and ruining others. On the whole, we should see this new development as right and proper, even though it may make the coming century unsafe and force everyone to carry weapons.—Because of it, there

is a counterforce that keeps reminding us of something important: there is no single morality that alone makes people moral. A morality that pushes itself forward and shuts out every other kind of morality destroys too much healthy strength, and mankind pays too high a price for it. The unconventional people, the ones who go their own way, are often creative and inventive, and they must no longer be sacrificed. It must never again be thought a disgrace to stray from morality, whether in what you do or in what you think. Many new experiments must be tried with life and with society, and the world must be freed from a huge weight of guilty conscience. All honest people who are searching for the truth must recognise these general goals and support them.

165.

A MORALITY THAT DOES NOT BORE YOU.—The main moral rules that a nation lets its teachers repeat over and over are linked to that nation's biggest faults. That is why the nation never gets tired of hearing them. The Greeks very often failed to show moderation, calmness, fairness, and good sense in general. So they gladly listened to the four virtues taught by Socrates. They needed those virtues so badly, and yet they had so little talent for them!

166.

AT THE FORK IN THE ROAD.—Shame on you! You want to be part of a system where you must be a wheel in a machine, completely and totally, or else risk being crushed by the other wheels! A system where everyone accepts that each person will become whatever his bosses make of him! Where hunting for "connections" is treated as one of your normal duties! Where nobody feels insulted when someone points out another person and says, "He might be useful to you some day." Where people are not ashamed to pay someone a visit

just to ask him to put in a good word for them. And where they do not even suspect that, by freely bowing to these customs, they have marked themselves once and for all as nature's cheap everyday pots. Others can use such pots or smash them whenever they like, without feeling responsible in any way. It is just as if such a person were saying, "There will always be plenty of people like me, so do whatever you want with me! Don't bother being polite about it!"

167.

BLIND, TOTAL ADMIRATION.—When I think of the most widely read German philosopher, the most popular German musician, and the most famous German statesman, I have to admit something. Life has now become unusually hard for the Germans, a nation that likes its feelings to be all-or-nothing. And what makes it hard is their own great men. Three magnificent sights are spread out in front of us. Each time, it is like a river rushing along in a bed it has carved out for itself, and so wild that you sometimes think it means to flow uphill. And yet, however much we might admire Schopenhauer, who, when all is said and done, would not rather have opinions different from his? Who would now share Richard Wagner's opinions on every matter, large and small? Even though someone may have been right when they said that wherever Wagner gave offence or took offence, some problem lay hidden—a problem, however, that he never dug up for us. And finally, how many people would be happy and eager to agree with Bismarck, if only he could always agree with himself, or even showed some sign of starting to do so in the future! It is true that it is not at all surprising to find statesmen who have no principles but who are driven by strong instincts. A flexible mind, pushed along by these strong and violent instincts, and so without principles—people think these qualities are sensible and natural in a statesman. But sadly, until now this has been so un-German. It is as un-German as all the fuss

made about music, and the quarrels and bad moods stirred up around the musician himself. And it is as un-German as the new and strange position Schopenhauer took. He did not feel himself to be above things, nor down on his knees before them—either of those might still have counted as German—but instead he took a stand against things! How unbelievable and how unpleasant! To place yourself among things and still be their enemy, and in the end your own enemy too—what is the person who admires without limits supposed to do with an example like that? And what, again, is he supposed to do with three such examples, who cannot even keep the peace with one another! Here we see Schopenhauer as the opponent of Wagner's music, Wagner attacking Bismarck's politics, and Bismarck attacking the followers of both Wagner and Schopenhauer. What is left for us to do? Where can we run with our thirst for worshipping heroes completely and without question? Could we not pick out from the musician's music a few hundred bars of good music that speak to the heart —music we would like to take to heart because it comes from the heart? Could we not step aside with this small piece of loot and forget the rest? And could we not make a similar deal with the philosopher and the statesman—pick out what is good, take it to heart, and above all forget the rest?

Yes—if only forgetting were not so hard! There was once a very proud man who would never, for any reason, accept anything from others, good or bad. In fact, he would accept nothing from anyone except himself. But when he wanted to forget, he could not give himself that gift, and three times he had to call up the spirits. They came, listened to what he wanted, and finally said: "This is the one thing we do not have the power to give!" Could the Germans not learn a lesson from this experience of Manfred? So why call up the spirits at all? It is pointless. We never forget the things we try to forget. And think how huge the "leftover amount" would be that we would have to forget, if

from now on we wanted to keep admiring these three great men completely and without question! So it would be much wiser to make use of the excellent chance we are being given to try something new. That is, to move forward in a spirit of honesty toward ourselves. Instead of being a nation that believes and repeats whatever it hears, and that hates bitterly and blindly, we could become a people who agree only up to a point and who disagree in a kindly way. But first of all, we must learn that total, unconditional admiration of people is rather silly. We must learn that changing our minds on this point would not shame even Germans. And we must learn that there is a deep and memorable saying: "What matters is not the persons, but the things." This saying is like the man who said it—great, honest, simple, and quiet—just like Carnot, the soldier and Republican. But may I, today, speak this way to Germans about a Frenchman, and a Republican on top of that? Perhaps not. Perhaps I must not even remind them of what Niebuhr dared to say to the Germans in his day: that no one had ever given him such a strong impression of true greatness as Carnot.

168.

A MODEL TO FOLLOW.—What do I like about Thucydides, and why do I value him more highly than Plato? He shows the broadest and most natural pleasure in everything typical in people and events, and he finds that each type of person has a certain amount of good sense in it. It is this good sense that he tries to find. He also shows more real, practical fairness than Plato. He never insults or belittles people he dislikes, or people who have hurt him in some way during his life. Quite the opposite: because he sees only types, he adds something noble and extra to all things and all people. After all, what could future generations, for whom he wrote his work, do with things that are not typical? So in him, the poet-thinker, a whole culture reaches a final, wonderful flowering. This is the culture of knowing the world

without self-interest. It is the culture that has Sophocles as its poet, Pericles as its statesman, Hippocrates as its doctor, and Democritus as its scientist of nature. It is a culture that deserves to be named after its teachers, the Sophists. And sadly, from the very moment it gets that name, it begins to fade and become hard for us to understand. Because from then on we suspect that this culture, which Plato and all the schools that followed Socrates fought against, must have been very immoral! The truth about this is so complicated and tangled that we do not feel like untangling it. So let the old mistake ("an error is simpler than the truth") go on running its old course.

169.

THE GREEK GENIUS IS FOREIGN TO US.—Whether it is Eastern or modern, Asian or European, everything else, when set beside the ancient Greeks, is marked by huge size. It delights in great heaps and masses as its way of showing what is grand and lofty. But in Paestum, Pompeii and Athens, when we look at Greek buildings, we are amazed to see how small the masses were that the Greeks used to show grandeur, and how much they loved to show it that way. In the same way, how simple the Greeks were in the picture they made of themselves! How far ahead of them we are in our knowledge of human beings! And then again, how full of mazes our souls, and our ideas about our souls, would look next to theirs! If we had to dare to build in the style of our own souls—(we are too cowardly for that!)—we would have to take a maze as our model. The music that belongs to us, and that truly expresses who we are, shows this clearly! (Because in music people let themselves go. They think nobody can see them hiding behind their music.)

170.

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.—How we chatter on about the Greeks! What do we really understand of their art, when the soul of that art was a passion for the beauty of the naked male body? Only by starting from there did they come to value female beauty. So they looked at female beauty from a completely different angle than we do. It was the same with their love for women: they worshipped women in a different way, and they also looked down on them in a different way.

171.

WHAT MODERN MAN EATS.—He has learned to digest many things—in fact, almost everything. That is his ambition. But he would actually be of a higher kind if he were not so good at this. "Homo pamphagus," the human being who eats everything, is not the finest kind of human. We live between a past that had a wilder and more twisted taste than ours, and a future that may have a more choosy taste. We live too much in the middle.

172.

TRAGEDY AND MUSIC.—People who are warlike by nature, like the ancient Greeks in the time of Aeschylus, are hard to stir up. But once pity wins out over their toughness, they are gripped by something like dizziness, or a "demonic power." They feel overwhelmed and shaken by a holy terror. Afterwards, they start to doubt the state they were in. But while they are in it, they enjoy the magic of being outside themselves, so to speak, and the delight of something wondrous mixed with the bitterest poison of suffering. This is just the right drink for fighting men: something rare, dangerous and bitter-sweet, which does not come your way very often.

Tragedy speaks to souls who feel pity in this way—to fierce, warlike souls that are hard to defeat, whether by fear or by pity, but that lose nothing by being softened now and then. But what good is tragedy to people who catch "feelings of sympathy" as easily as a ship's sails catch the wind? By Plato's time the Athenians had become softer and more sensitive. And yet, oh, how far they still were from the gushing emotions of the people in our modern towns and villages! Even so, the philosophers back then were already starting to complain that tragedy did harm. A dangerous age, like the one that is now beginning, in which bravery and manliness are becoming worth more, may perhaps toughen souls so much that they will once again need tragic poets. But for now, such poets are rather unnecessary, to put it gently. A better age may be coming for music too (it will certainly be a more evil age!). Then artists will have to make their music speak to strongly individual people—people who have grown hard and who are ruled by the dark seriousness of their own passion. But what good is music to the little souls of today's age, which is quickly passing away? These souls are too unsteady, too poorly formed, only half people, nosy, and greedy for everything.

173.

THE PEOPLE WHO FLATTER WORK.—When people glorify "work" and talk endlessly about the "blessing of labour," I see the same hidden motive behind it as I see when people praise actions that are impersonal and serve everyone in general. That motive is fear of everything individual. When we see work—meaning hard toil from morning to night—we feel that it is the best kind of police. It keeps everyone under control, and it does a good job of stopping the growth of reason, of greed, and of the wish to be independent. Work uses up a huge share of a person's nervous energy and takes it away from thinking, quiet reflection, dreaming, worrying, loving and hating. It

holds small, unimportant goals in front of the worker's eyes and gives him easy, regular satisfaction. So a society where people are always working will be safer. And safety is what people now worship as their highest god.—And now, the most horrible thing of all! It is the "worker" himself who has become dangerous. The whole world is swarming with "dangerous individuals," and behind them comes the greatest danger of all—the individual himself!

174.

THE MORAL FASHION OF A BUSINESS SOCIETY.—Today's moral fashion rests on this rule: "Moral actions are actions done out of sympathy for others." Behind that rule I see the social instinct of fear, which is putting on a clever, thoughtful-looking disguise. This instinct sets up as its highest, most important, and most urgent rule that life must be freed from all the dangers it used to have in earlier times, and that everyone must help with all their strength to reach this goal. That is why only those actions that look after the general safety of society, and society's sense of being safe, are called "good." How little joy people must take in themselves these days, when such a tyranny of fear sets their highest moral law! They don't even protest when they are ordered to take their eyes off themselves and look away from themselves! And yet, at the same time, they have eyes as sharp as a lynx's for every bit of trouble and suffering anywhere else! With this huge plan of ours to smooth away every sharp edge and corner in life, aren't we using the best possible method for turning human beings into sand? Small, soft, round, endless sand! Is that your ideal, you messengers of the "feelings of sympathy"? Meanwhile, one question still hasn't been answered. Are we more useful to the other person by rushing to help them right away and all the time? For the most part, that kind of help can only be very shallow, because otherwise it would turn into bossy meddling that tries to change them. Or are we more

useful by turning ourselves into something the other person can enjoy looking at? For example, something like a beautiful, quiet, private garden, protected by high walls from storms and the dust of the roads, but also with a welcoming gate.

175.

WHAT A CULTURE OF TRADERS RESTS ON.—Right now we have a chance to watch a whole culture grow in many directions, a culture of a society whose soul is buying and selling. In the same way, personal rivalry was the soul of culture among the ancient Greeks, and war, conquest, and law were its soul among the ancient Romans. The trader is able to put a value on everything without making any of it himself. And he values it by what the buyer wants, not by what he himself needs. His most important question of all is: "How many people will buy this, and what kind of people are they?" So he uses this way of valuing by instinct and without stopping, and he applies it to everything. He applies it to works of art and science, and to thinkers, scholars, artists, politicians, nations, political parties, and even whole periods of history. With everything that is made or created, he looks into supply and demand, so that he can work out for himself what a thing is worth. Imagine this made into the main rule of a whole culture, worked out down to its smallest and finest details, and forced onto every kind of wanting and knowing. That is what you people of the coming century will be proud of—if the prophets of the business classes are right when they say that century will belong to you! But I don't believe these prophets much. As the Roman poet Horace put it, "Let the gullible believe it"—in Latin, "Credat Judaeus Apella."

176.

CRITICIZING OUR ANCESTORS.—Why are we now willing to hear the truth, even about the very recent past? Because these days there is always a new generation that feels it stands against the past. In criticizing the past, it enjoys the first taste of its own sense of power. In earlier times it was the other way around: the new generation wanted to build on the old one. It started to feel its own power not just by accepting the opinions of its ancestors, but by taking them even more seriously, if it could. In earlier times, criticizing the authority of your ancestors was seen as a vice. But today our idealists make it the very place they start from.

177.

LEARNING TO BE ALONE.—Oh, you poor fellows in the big centres of world politics! You young, talented men, pushed on by ambition, who think it is your duty to give your opinion on every event of the day—and something is always happening. By making all this noise and stirring up a cloud of dust, you mistake yourselves for the rolling chariot of history itself. Because you are always listening, always waiting for the moment when you can squeeze in a word or two, you lose all real power to create anything. However much you may want to do great things, the deep silence of carrying something new inside you never comes to you! The news of the day blows you along like straws in the wind, while you fool yourselves into thinking that you are the ones chasing the news—you poor fellows! If a man wants to play the hero on the stage, he must not think about being part of the chorus. He should not even know how the chorus is put together.

178.

WORN DOWN DAY BY DAY.—These young men do not lack character, or talent, or eagerness. But they have never had enough time to choose their own way. Instead, from a very young age, they have gotten used to having their way pointed out to them. At the age when they were mature enough to be sent out into the "wilderness"—that is, to be alone and find themselves—something else was done with them. They were put to use, made strangers to themselves, and raised in such a way that they got used to being worn out by their daily work. This was pushed on them as a duty, and now they cannot live without it. They would not even want things to be any different. The only thing these poor work animals cannot be denied is their "holidays." That is the name they give to this dream of free time in a century that works far too hard. "Holidays" are when, for once, they can be lazy, silly, and childish as much as they like.

179.

AS LITTLE STATE AS POSSIBLE!—Political and economic matters are simply not important enough to be handled by the most gifted minds. Wasting brainpower like that is, deep down, worse than any kind of hardship. These matters are, and always will be, the job of smaller minds, and no one but the smaller minds should be put to work in this workshop. It would be better to let the machinery fall apart again on its own! But look at how things are now. Not only does everyone believe they must know all about these matters day by day, they also want to be busy with them all the time, and in doing so they neglect their own work. That is a huge and ridiculous mistake. The price we pay for "public safety" is far too high. And the craziest part is that we end up getting the very opposite of "public safety." Our own dear century has set out to prove this, as if it had never been proven before! Protecting society from thieves and fire, making it fully suited

for every kind of trade and business, and turning the State into a kind of all-caring guardian angel, in both the good and the bad sense—these goals are low and ordinary, and not at all necessary. We should not try to reach them by using the highest tools and talents we have. Those tools we should save precisely for our highest and rarest goals! Our age talks endlessly about saving and economy, but it is really a big spender: it wastes brainpower, the most precious thing of all.

180.

WARS.—The great wars of our own time come out of the study of history.

181.

GOVERNING.—Some people govern because they love governing. Others govern so that they will not be governed by someone else—they choose it as the smaller of two evils.

182.

SIMPLE, OBVIOUS CONSISTENCY.—People say of a man, with great respect, "He has real character." They say this when he shows a simple, obvious consistency, one that even the dullest person can see. But when a finer and deeper mind steps forward and shows consistency in a higher, less obvious way, the people watching say he has no character at all. That is why clever politicians usually play their part while hiding behind a kind of simple, obvious consistency, like actors in a costume.

183.

THE OLD AND THE YOUNG.—Many people still think, "There is something immoral about Parliaments, because in them people are al-

lowed to say things even against the Government." Another saying goes: "We should always take whatever view of a matter our gracious Lord orders us to take." In many an honest old head, especially in Northern Germany, this is like an eleventh commandment. We laugh at it now as an out-of-date fashion, but in earlier times it was the moral law itself. Perhaps some day we will laugh again at what is now thought moral by a generation raised under a parliament. That is, the habit of putting your party ahead of your own good sense, and of answering every question about the public good in whatever way will fill the party's sails with a helpful gust of wind, so that the party moves forward. The rule would be: "We must take whatever view of a matter our party's position requires." And in the service of morals like these, we can now see every kind of sacrifice, even suffering like a martyr and overcoming one's own self.

184.

THE STATE AS SOMETHING MADE BY ANARCHISTS.—In countries where people are easy to manage, there are always a few who slip back and refuse to be managed. For now, these stubborn people have joined the Socialists more than any other party. If these people should ever get the power to make the laws, you can count on them to put iron chains on themselves and to live under a terrible discipline. They know themselves! And they will put up with these harsh laws, knowing that they made the laws themselves. The sense of power, and of this particular power, will be too new to them and too tempting for them not to suffer anything at all for its sake.

185.

BEGGARS.—Beggars should be done away with, because we get annoyed both when we help them and when we don't.

186.

BUSINESS PEOPLE.—Your business is your biggest prejudice. It ties you to your town, your social circle, and your tastes. You work hard at your business but are lazy in your thinking. You are content with how small your life is, and you hide that contentment under the cover of "duty." That is how you live, and that is how you want your children to be.

187.

A POSSIBLE FUTURE.—Can't we picture a society where a criminal openly reports himself and decides his own punishment? He would do it with a proud feeling, knowing that this way he is honoring the law that he himself made. He would feel that by punishing himself he is using his power, the power of a lawmaker. He may break the law once, but by choosing his own punishment he rises above what he did. He not only makes up for it by being open, generous, and calm, but he also adds something good for the public. That would be the criminal of a possible future. Of course, such a criminal would need future laws built on this basic idea: "In big things and in small things alike, I give way only to the law that I myself have made." How many experiments still have to be tried! How many futures have yet to dawn for humankind!

188.

STIMULANTS AND FOOD.—Nations are fooled so often because they are always looking for someone to fool them. In other words, they want an exciting wine for their senses. As long as they can have this wine, they are happy to put up with even poor-quality bread. To them, a rush of excitement matters more than real nourishment. This is the bait they always let themselves be caught with! To them, what

are leaders chosen from among their own people—even if those leaders are the most skilled experts—compared with dazzling conquerors, or with grand old royal families? To win their faith, a crowd-stirring politician must at least show them the hope of conquest and glory. People will always obey, and even do more than obey, as long as they can get swept up in a rush of excitement while doing it. We can't even offer them peace and pleasure unless it comes with this crown of victory and the wild effect it has on them.

This crude taste, which cares more about a rush of excitement than about real nourishment, did not start among the lower classes at all. On the contrary, it was moved there, like a plant, and in that backward soil it grows very thickly. Its true origin has to be looked for among the greatest minds, where it flourished for thousands of years. The common people are the last untouched soil where this flashy weed can still grow. So then, should we really hand politics over to the people, just so they can get their daily rush of excitement from it?

189.

HIGH POLITICS.—Whatever part is played in high politics by the pursuit of usefulness, and by the vanity of individuals and nations, the sharpest spur that drives them forward is their need for the sense of power. This need does not only rise up in the souls of princes and rulers. It also bursts out from time to time from endless springs among the people. Again and again a time comes when the masses are ready to risk their lives and their wealth, their consciences and their virtue, so that they can win that highest of all pleasures: to rule over other nations as a victorious, cruel, and unchecked nation (or at least to believe that they do).

At times like these, feelings of reckless generosity, sacrifice, hope, confidence, unusual boldness, and enthusiasm pour out so richly that

an ambitious or far-seeing ruler can grab the chance to start a war. He can count on his people's clear conscience to cover up his injustice. Great conquerors have always spoken the moving language of virtue. They have always been surrounded by crowds who felt lifted up, as if in a kind of high, and who would listen only to the most lofty speeches. How strange and crazy moral judgments are! When a person feels power, he feels good and calls himself good. And at exactly the same time, the others who have to suffer under his power call him evil!—The Greek poet Hesiod, in his story of the ages of mankind, described the same age twice in a row: the age of Homer's heroes. In this way he made two ages out of one. To those who lived under the terrible iron boot of those daring tyrants, or who had heard their ancestors talk about them, that age seemed evil. But the descendants of those knightly families honored it as the "good old days," as an almost perfectly happy time. So the poet could not help doing what he did. His audience probably included descendants of both groups.

190.

GERMAN CULTURE AS IT USED TO BE.—The Germans first caught the interest of the other nations of Europe not very long ago. At that time it was because of a certain culture they had. They no longer have that culture today. In fact, they have thrown it off with blind eagerness, as if it had been a disease. And yet they have not managed to put anything better in its place than political and national madness. In this way they have actually become even more interesting to other nations than they used to be through their culture. Well, may that make them happy! Still, there is no denying that this German culture fooled the Europeans. It did not deserve the interest people took in it. It deserved even less the way other nations copied it and competed with each other to match it.

Let us look back for a moment at Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Schelling. Let us read their letters to one another, and spend some time among the large circle of their followers. What do they have in common? What traits do they share that make us, as we are today, feel partly sick to our stomachs and partly moved, in a sad and touching way? First and most of all, they had a burning need to look morally lofty, whatever the cost. Next, they wanted to say clever-sounding things that were weak and led nowhere. On top of that, they were set on seeing everything as beautiful—people, passions, eras, customs. But sadly, "beautiful" here followed a poor and fuzzy taste, even though that taste claimed to come from the ancient Greeks. In these people we see a weak, kind-hearted, shiny kind of idealism. Above all, it wanted to strike noble poses and speak in noble tones. It was both full of itself and harmless. It had a warm dislike of "cold" or "dry" reality. It also disliked anatomy, passions felt all the way through, and every kind of philosophical self-control and doubt. Most of all, it disliked knowledge of nature, at least whenever that knowledge could not be used as a religious symbol.

Goethe, in his own typical way, watched these trends in German culture from a distance. He kept himself out of their reach. He gently disagreed, stayed quiet, and grew more and more sure of his own, better path. A little later, Schopenhauer also watched these trends. Much of the world, and of the devilish side of the world, had once more been shown to him. He spoke about it both harshly and with great excitement, because there is a certain beauty in this devilishness! So what was it that really charmed the foreigners? What stopped them from seeing this movement the way Goethe and Schopenhauer saw it, or, better still, from ignoring it completely? It was a faint glow, a kind of starlight that no one could explain, which formed a mysterious halo around this culture. The foreigners said to

themselves: "All of this is very, very far from us. Here our eyes, our ears, our understanding, our enjoyment, and our ability to judge what things are worth are all lost. But even so, there may be some stars in it! There may be something to it! Could it be that the Germans have quietly found some corner of heaven and made their home there? We must try to get closer to these Germans." So they did start to get closer to the Germans. And not very long after that, the Germans went to some trouble to get rid of this starlight halo. They knew all too well that they had never been in heaven—only in a cloud!

191.

BETTER PEOPLE.—People tell me that our art is made for the people of today. These are greedy, never-satisfied, undisciplined, fed-up, and worn-out souls. They say our art shows these people a picture of happiness, uplift, and something beyond this world, next to the picture of their own brutal lives. That way, for once, they can forget and breathe freely. Maybe they will even find, in that forgetting, some encouragement to escape and change their lives. Poor artists, to have an audience like that! Half of their thoughts need a priest, and the other half need a doctor for the mentally ill! How much luckier Corneille was! "Our great Corneille!" as Madame de Sévigné cried out, in the voice of a woman standing before a real, complete man. How much better his audience was! He could please them with pictures of knightly virtues, strict duty, generous devotion, and heroic self-sacrifice. How differently he and they loved life! They did not see life as coming from some blind and confused "will," which we curse because we cannot destroy it. Instead, they loved life as a place, so to speak, where greatness and humanity could go together. It was a place where even the strictest rules of form—such as having to bow to the whims of priests and princes—could not crush people's pride, their knightly feeling, their grace, or their intelligence. On the contrary, those limits

could be felt as a charm and a spur. They were a welcome contrast to people's inborn love of glorifying and setting themselves apart, and to their inherited strength of will and passion.

192.

THE WISH FOR PERFECT OPPONENTS.—There is no denying that the French have been the most Christian nation in the world. This is not because the masses in France were more devout than people elsewhere. It is because in France, the Christian ideals that are hardest to live out actually took on real flesh and blood, instead of staying as dreams, intentions, or half-finished beginnings. Take Pascal, for example. He was the greatest of all Christians in the way he combined passion, intelligence, and honesty. Think of all the different things that had to come together in him! Take Fénelon. He was the most perfect and appealing example of church culture at its full strength. He was such a lofty, golden balance that a historian might be tempted to prove that someone like him could not exist. In reality, he was simply the perfect form of something extremely hard and unlikely. Take Madame de Guyon among her companions, the French Quietists. Everything the Apostle Paul, with his eloquence and passion, tried to imagine about a Christian's half-divine state—that most lofty, loving, silent, and ecstatic state—can be seen made real in her. And yet she did not have that Jewish pushiness Paul showed toward God. In Madame de Guyon's case this was thanks to the true old French simplicity in words and gestures—a simplicity that was womanly, subtle, and refined all at once. Think, too, of the founder of the Trappists. He was the last person who truly took the Christian ideal of harsh self-denial seriously. This was not because he was an exception among the French, but because he was a true Frenchman. Even to this day, his gloomy order has not been able to take root and do well anywhere except among the French. It has followed them to Alsace and Algeria.

And let us not forget the Huguenots, the French Protestants, either. They mixed a fighting spirit with a hard-working spirit, and polished manners with strict Christian discipline, and that mix has never been shown more beautifully. It was also at Port Royal that great Christian learning saw its last time of flourishing. In France, more than anywhere else, great men know how to flourish. A great Frenchman is never shallow, yet he always seems a little shallow on the surface. You could say he has a natural skin over what he really contains and over his depth. A great German is different. His depth is usually shut up, so to speak, in an ugly, oddly shaped box, like a precious potion. That potion tries to protect itself, with its hard and strange covering, from daylight and from the touch of careless hands. And now let us try to find out why a people like the French, who produced so many perfect examples of Christians, also had to produce the perfect opposite examples: the unchristian free-thinkers. The French free-thinker, deep inside himself, had to fight against truly great men. He was not, like free-thinkers in other countries, just fighting against church teachings and grand but misshapen creations.

193.

WIT AND MORALS. The German has a secret talent: he knows how to be boring even though he has wit, knowledge and feeling. He has also got used to thinking that being boring is the same as being moral. So when he meets French wit, the sharp and lively French way of thinking, he is afraid it will tear out the eyes of morality. But his fear is mixed with fascination, like the fear a little bird feels when it faces a rattlesnake. Of all the famous Germans, none had more wit than Hegel. But he also had that great German fear of wit, and this is what gave him his strange and faulty style of writing. His style is like a nut whose kernel is wrapped up in so many layers of shell that it can hardly peek out. Now and then it glances out, shy and curious, like

"young women peeping through their veils," to use the words of that old woman-hater, Aeschylus. This kernel, though, is a clever and often cheeky joke about ideas. It is a fine and bold way of putting words together, the kind of thing a group of thinkers needs, like a sugar coating on a scientific pill. But because it is wrapped in an almost impossible-to-open cover, it shows itself as the most obscure science, and also as the worst kind of moral boredom. Here the Germans had found a kind of wit they were allowed to enjoy, and they enjoyed it with such endless delight that even Schopenhauer, with his unusually sharp mind, could not understand it. All his life he raged against the sight the Germans put on in front of him, but he could never explain it.

194.

THE VANITY OF MORAL TEACHERS. Teachers of morals have had fairly little success, and the reason may be that they wanted too much at once. In other words, they were too ambitious and too eager to lay down rules for everybody. They were punching the air, and giving speeches to animals in the hope of turning them into human beings. So it is no wonder the animals found this boring! We should instead pick small, limited groups and try to find and encourage the right morals for them. For example, we should give speeches to wolves with the aim of turning them into dogs. But above all, the greatest success will go to the person who does not try to educate everybody, or even certain small groups, but only one single individual, and who cannot be pulled to the right or the left away from that straight goal. The last century was better than ours exactly because it had so many people who had been educated one by one, and just as many teachers who made this their life's work. Because of this work, those teachers were respected, not only in their own eyes but in the eyes of all the rest of "good society."

195.

THE SO-CALLED CLASSICAL EDUCATION. Sadly, we discover that our life is devoted to knowledge. We discover that we would throw our life away, and even that we would have to throw it away, if this devotion did not protect us from ourselves. And we repeat these two lines, with deep feeling:

"Fate, I follow you, though I would rather not; and yet I must, with many sighs and groans!"

And then, when we look back over our lives, we discover that there is one thing that can never be given back to us. It is the wasted time of our youth. In those keen and eager years, our teachers did not use our energy to lead us to real knowledge of things, but only to this so-called "classical education"! Just think of that wasted youth. Back then, an incomplete knowledge of the Greeks and Romans and their languages was pushed into us, clumsily and painfully, like an injection. This went against the highest rule of all education, which says we should give food only to those who are hungry for it! Think of that time in our lives when mathematics and physics were forced down our throats. Instead, we should first have been shown the despair of not knowing. Our small daily lives, our activities, and everything happening in our homes, our workshops, in the sky and in nature, should have been broken up for us into thousands of problems: painful, humbling and annoying problems. That way our curiosity would have learned that we first need knowledge of mathematics and mechanics before we are allowed to enjoy the perfect logic of that knowledge! If only we had been filled with respect for those sciences! If only we had been made to tremble with emotion, even just once, at the struggles, the defeats and the fresh battles of those great men, at the suffering and sacrifice that make up the history of pure science! But instead, we were allowed to grow a kind of scorn for those sci-

ences, and to prefer historical training, "formal education" and "classicism."

And we let ourselves be fooled so easily! "Formal education"! Couldn't we have pointed to the best teachers at our high schools and asked, laughing, "So where do they keep their formal education? And if they don't have it themselves, how can they teach it?" And "classicism"! Did we get any of the teaching that the ancient Greeks and Romans used to give their young people? Did we learn to speak or write the way they did? Did we practise, again and again, that duel fought with words, the art of argument they called dialectic? Did we learn to move as beautifully and proudly as they did? Did we learn to be as good as they were at wrestling, throwing, and boxing? Did we learn anything about the practical self-discipline that all the Greek philosophers lived by? Were we trained in even one ancient virtue, and trained in it the way the ancients were? Wasn't any real thinking about morals missing from our education altogether? And even more missing was the only real way to test a morality: the brave and serious attempt to actually live by this morality or that one! Did our teachers ever awaken in us a feeling that the ancients prized more highly than people do today? Did they, in the spirit of the ancients, show us how to divide up the day and our lives, and show us the goals that guided how the ancients lived? Did we learn the ancient languages the way we now learn modern ones, that is, so that we could speak them smoothly and well? Nowhere can we find any real skill, or any new ability, that came out of all those hard years! All we got was knowledge of what people had learned and were able to do in times long past!

And what knowledge it was! Every year it becomes clearer to me that the whole Greek and ancient way of life is truly very hard to understand, and hardly within our reach at all, however simple and obvious it may look to us. Every year I see more clearly that the easy way we usually chatter about the ancients is either careless, light-headed

silliness or the old inherited vanity of our thoughtlessness. We are fooled by words and ideas that seem to be like our own. But behind them there is always a hidden feeling that must seem strange, impossible to understand, or even painful to our modern way of thinking. And these are the lands where boys are allowed to wander around freely! Enough said: we wandered around in them as children, and there we were gripped by a dislike of everything ancient that we can almost never get rid of. That dislike grew out of a closeness that seemed far too familiar! The vanity of our classics teachers is so great that they almost make it look as if they had the ancients completely under their control. And they pass this vanity on to their students, along with a suspicion: that owning this knowledge is not much use for making people happy, but is fine for honest, foolish old bookworms. "Let them sit and brood over their treasure: it suits them perfectly!" That was the unspoken thought we carried with us when we finished our classical education. It can't be changed now, at least not for us! But let's not think only about ourselves!

196.

THE MOST PERSONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT TRUTH.—What am I really doing, and what do I mean by doing it? That is the question of truth that our present school system does not teach. So people do not ask it, because there is no time for it. On the other hand, we always have the time and the wish to talk nonsense with children instead of telling them the truth. We have time to flatter women who will later become mothers, instead of telling them the truth. And we have time to talk with young men about their future and their fun, instead of about the truth!

But what are seventy years, after all?—Time passes, and they are soon over. It matters as little to us as it does to a wave to know how it is

rolling and where it is going! No, it might even be wise not to know it.

"All right, I agree. But not even asking about it shows a lack of pride. And our culture does not tend to make people proud."

"So much the better!"

"Is it really?"

197.

THE GERMANS' HOSTILITY TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT.—Let us look at what the Germans gave to culture in general through their thinking during the first half of this century. First, let us take the German philosophers. They went back to the first and oldest stage of thinking about the world. Like the thinkers of dreamy ages, they were happy with ideas instead of explanations. In this way they brought back a kind of philosophy from before science. Second, we have the German historians and romantic writers. Overall, they tried to put certain old and primitive feelings back in a place of honour. These included especially Christianity, the "soul of the people," folk tales, folk speech, the Middle Ages, Eastern self-denial, and Hinduism. Third, there are the philosophers of nature, who fought against the spirit of Newton and Voltaire. Like Goethe and Schopenhauer, they tried to bring back the idea of nature as something godlike or devilish, with an absolute moral and symbolic meaning. The main general direction of the Germans was against the Enlightenment, and against those social revolutions that were foolishly taken to be results of the Enlightenment. Their respect for everything that existed now tried to become respect for everything that had ever existed. They did this only so that heart and mind could fill themselves up and pour out again, which left no room for new aims for the future. The worship of feeling took the place of the worship of reason. And the German mu-

sicians, as the best spokesmen for everything invisible, wildly emotional, legendary and passionate, proved more successful at building this new temple than all the other artists of words and ideas.

When we look at these details, we must admit that many good things were said and studied, and that since then many things have been judged more fairly than ever before. Even so, we still have to say this about the whole movement: it was a general danger, and not a small one. The danger was to place knowledge completely below feeling, while pretending to have a full and final understanding of the past. In the words Kant used to describe his own special task, it was "to make room again for belief by setting the limits of knowledge." Let us breathe freely again: the hour of this danger has passed! And yet, strangely enough, the very spirits that these Germans called up with such fine speeches have finally become the most dangerous to the plans of the people who called them up. These spirits are history, the understanding of how things began and developed, sympathy with the past, and the new passion for feeling and knowledge. For a long time they served this dark, high-flown, backward-looking spirit. But now they have changed their nature once again. Now they are flying with wings spread wide above the heads of the people who once called them up. They have become new and stronger guardian spirits of the very Enlightenment they had been brought back to life to fight. It is this Enlightenment that we must now carry forward. We do not care that there has been, and still is, "a great revolution," and then again a great "reaction" against it. These are only playful bits of foam on the waves, compared with the truly great current that we are floating on, and want to float on.

198.

GIVING ONE'S COUNTRY ITS STANDING.—It is the people of culture who decide how high their country ranks. What marks them out

is a countless number of great inner experiences, which they have taken in and digested and can now judge fairly. In France and Italy this job fell to the nobles. In Germany, up to now, the nobles have usually been men without much brainpower to boast about (perhaps this will soon stop being true). So there it was the task of the priests, the school teachers, and their children and grandchildren.

199.

WE ARE NOBLER.—Loyalty, generosity, and care for one's good name: when these three qualities are joined in one feeling, we call it noble, distinguished, aristocratic. And in this we are better than the Greeks. We do not want to give this up at any price, just because the old things these virtues were aimed at have rightly lost respect. Instead, we want to carefully give new aims to these most precious impulses that we have inherited. We still live under the influence of the knightly, feudal nobility. To understand why, in our time, the feelings of even the noblest Greeks must seem lower and hardly respectable, we should remember the comforting words Ulysses spoke in the middle of the most shameful situations: "Put up with it, my dear heart, put up with it! You have put up with many more swinish things(5) than these!" As an example of this story from myth, think also of the tale of that Athenian officer. Another officer threatened him with a stick in front of the whole general staff. He brushed off the insult with the words, "Strike, but listen to me." (This was Themistocles, that clever Ulysses of the classical age. At the moment of disgrace, he was just the man to speak that line of comfort and pain to his "dear heart.")

The Greeks did not do what we tend to do. Because we have inherited a spirit of knightly adventure and self-sacrifice, we are used to risking life and death lightly over an insult. The Greeks were far from that. Nor did they go looking for chances to risk life and death in an hon-

ourable way, as people do in duels. Nor did they value keeping a spotless name, which is what we call honour, more than getting a bad reputation, as long as that bad reputation went along with glory and a sense of power. Nor did they stay loyal to the prejudices and beliefs of their social class when those things might stop them from becoming tyrants. Because here is the shabby secret of the good Greek nobleman: out of pure jealousy, he treats every other member of his class as his equal, but at any moment he is ready to leap like a tiger onto his prey, and that prey is total power over everyone. What do lies, murders, treason, or selling out his own home city matter to him? For people like this, justice was something extremely hard to understand. In fact, justice seemed almost unbelievable to them. "The just man" was to the Greeks what "the saint" was to the Christians: something rare and almost beyond belief. So when Socrates set down the rule, "The most virtuous man is the happiest," they could not believe their ears. They thought they had heard a madman talking. That is because every nobleman pictured the happiest man as the tyrant, with his bold cheek and wicked daring, who sacrifices everything and everyone to his own overflowing energy and pleasure. Among people whose imagination secretly ran wild dreaming of that kind of happiness, worship of the State could never have taken root too deeply, of course. But I think that people whose hunger for power does not rage as blindly as that of the Greek noblemen no longer need this kind of State-worship. In earlier times, that worship of the State was the thing that kept such a passion within proper limits.

200.

PUTTING UP WITH BEING POOR.—Being born into a noble family has one big advantage: it helps us put up with being poor more easily.

201.

THE FUTURE OF THE NOBILITY.—The way upper-class people carry themselves shows that, in every part of their bodies, an awareness of their own power is constantly playing its charming game. That is why people with upper-class habits, whether men or women, never collapse exhausted into a chair. When everyone else gets comfortable, on a train for example, they avoid lounging back at their ease. They do not seem to get tired after standing at the royal Court for hours on end. They do not furnish their homes to be cosy. Instead they furnish them to look grand and impressive, as if the house were meant for greater and taller beings to live in. When someone says something to provoke them, they answer calmly, with dignity and a clear head, not like ordinary people who seem shocked, crushed, ashamed, or out of breath. The noble person manages to keep up the look of having a superior physical strength that never leaves him. In the same way, he wants to show, by always looking calm and polite even in the hardest situations, that his mind and soul can handle any danger or surprise. When it comes to the passions, a noble culture can be like one of two riders. It can be like a horseman who enjoys making his proud, fiery horse prance in the fancy Spanish style—just think of the age of Louis XIV. Or it can be like a rider who feels his horse shoot off with him like a force of nature, so wildly that both horse and rider almost lose their heads, but who, because they are enjoying the thrill so much, actually keep very clear heads. In both cases this noble culture breathes power. And even if, in its customs, very often only the appearance of a sense of power is needed, the real feeling of being superior still keeps growing. It grows because of the impression this display makes on people who are not nobles.

This undeniable happiness of noble culture, which rests on the feeling of being superior, is now starting to climb to higher and higher levels. That is because now, thanks to the free thinkers, it is from here on

allowed, and no longer shameful, for people born and raised in noble circles to enter the world of knowledge. There they can receive deeper blessings of the mind and learn forms of knightly service even higher than those of the past. And there they can look up to the ideal of a wisdom that wins. No age before has been able to set that ideal before itself with as clear a conscience as the age that is now about to dawn. Finally, what will the nobility do with themselves in the future, if it becomes clearer every day that taking part in politics is less and less respectable?

202.

TAKING CARE OF HEALTH.—We have barely started to pay attention to how the bodies of criminals work, and yet we have already come to a conclusion we cannot avoid. There is no truly basic difference between criminals and madmen—if we assume that the current moral fashion of thinking is a healthy way to think. And today no belief is held more firmly than this one. So we should not back away from drawing the unavoidable conclusion: we should treat the criminal like someone who is mentally ill. Above all, we should not do it with a proud, looking-down kind of pity, but with medical skill and kindness. Maybe he needs a change of air, a change of company, or to go away for a while. Maybe he needs being alone and new things to do —fine! Maybe he feels it would help him to live under watch for a short time, so that he is protected from himself and from a troublesome, bullying urge inside him—fine! We should make clear to him that he can be cured and how. That means wiping out these urges, changing them, or turning them into something higher. And in the worst cases, we should also make clear to him that a cure is unlikely. To the criminal who cannot be cured, who has become a useless burden to himself, we should offer the chance to take his own life. While we keep this in reserve as a last way out, we should do everything

possible, above all, to give the criminal back his courage and his freedom of spirit. We should clean his soul of all remorse, as if remorse were something dirty. And we should show him how he can make up for a wrong he may have done to one person by doing good to someone else, perhaps to the whole community, so that he might even do more than make up for what he did before.

All of this has to be done with great care and tact! Above all, the criminal should stay unnamed, or use a made-up name, and move house often, so that his good name and his future life are harmed as little as possible. It is true that today the person who has been hurt wants more than just to have the harm made right, however that might be done. He also wants revenge, and he goes to the courts to get it. That is why our terrible criminal laws are still in place. Justice stands there, so to speak, holding up a shopkeeper's scales and trying to balance the guilt with punishment, as if weighing goods in a shop. But can we not go one step further than this? Would it not be a huge relief to how people feel about life in general if, while we got rid of our belief in guilt, we could also get rid of our old hunger for revenge? We could slowly come to believe that it is a fine and wise thing for happy people to bless their enemies and to do good to those who have wronged them, just as Christian teaching says! Let us free the world from this idea of sin, and let us make sure to throw out the idea of punishment along with it. From now on, may these monstrous ideas live in exile, far away from where people live—if they have to go on living at all, and do not die of disgust with themselves.

But let us also not forget this: the harm that a criminal does to society and to single people is the same kind of harm that sick people do. Sick people spread worry and bad moods. They do not produce anything, they use up what others have earned, and at the same time they need care, doctors, and support. In truth, they live off the time and strength of healthy people. Even so, we would call anyone cruel and

inhuman who wanted to take revenge on the sick for this reason. In earlier times, this really was done. In early, primitive societies, and even today among some tribal peoples, a sick man is treated like a criminal and a danger to everyone. People believe that evil spirits have moved into his body and made their home there because of some wrong he has done. Those times and those peoples believe that the sick are the guilty ones!

And what about us? Are we not yet ready for the opposite idea? Will we not be allowed to say, "The guilty are the sick"? No, the time for that has not come yet. Above all, we still do not have the right kind of doctors: doctors who have learned something from what we have so far called practical morals, and who have turned it into the art and science of healing. We still lack a deep, burning interest in these things, an interest that one day might look rather like the "storm and stress," the wild passion, of the old religious ecstasies. The Churches have not yet been taken over by the people who look after our health. The study of the body and of healthy eating are not yet required subjects in our primary and secondary schools. There are not yet any quiet groups of people who have promised one another to live without the help of the courts, and who give up the punishment and revenge that are now handed out to those who have offended against society. No thinker has yet been bold enough to measure how healthy a society is, and how healthy the people in it are, by how many parasites it can carry and still thrive. And no statesman has yet been found who would use the plough in the spirit of that generous and gentle saying: "If you want to work the land, work it with the plough. Then the bird and the wolf, walking behind your plough, will be glad of you —all creatures will be glad of you."

203.

AGAINST BAD EATING.—Shame on the meals that people eat these days in hotels and everywhere else where the well-off live! Even when famous scientists meet, their tables groan under the weight of the dishes. They follow the bankers' rule: too many dishes and too much to eat. Because of this, dinners are made to look good rather than with any thought for what happens after you eat them. And people need strong drinks to help chase away the heavy feeling in their stomachs and in their heads. Shame on the loose living and the jumpy, overstrained nerves that must come from all this! Shame on the dreams that such meals bring! Shame on the art and the books that must come as the dessert after such meals! No matter how hard these people try, everything they do will taste of pepper and bad temper, or of general tiredness! (The rich in England badly need their Christianity just to be able to put up with their poor digestion and their headaches.) Finally, to mention not only the disgusting side of this but also the more pleasant side: these people are by no means just greedy eaters. Our century, with its busy, active spirit, has more hold over the arms and legs than over the belly. So what is the point of these huge dinners? They are for show—they stand for something! But what on earth do they stand for? Rank? No—money! There is no such thing as rank anymore! We are all "individuals"! But money now stands for power, fame, being above others, dignity, and influence. Today, money makes people judge a man better or worse, in a moral way, depending on how much of it he has. Nobody wants to hide his money away, but nobody can pile it up on the table either. So money needs something that can stand in for it and be put on the table—and there you have it: our banquets!

204.

DANAË AND THE GOD OF GOLD.—Where does it come from, this huge impatience of our time? It turns people into criminals even in situations that should push them the other way. What makes one man cheat with false weights? What makes another set fire to his own house after insuring it for more than it is worth, and a third join in making fake money? Meanwhile, three-quarters of our upper classes take part in fraud that the law allows, and they suffer the stings of conscience that come after gambling on prices and trading on the Stock Exchange. What is behind all this? It is not real need. Their lives are not at risk at all; they may even have enough to eat and drink without any worry. Instead, day and night they are driven by a terrible impatience, because their wealth piles up so slowly. And they are driven by an equally terrible craving and love for these heaps of gold. But in this impatience and this love we see something old coming back again: the same fanatical hunger for power that used to be fired up, in earlier times, by the belief that we owned the truth. That fanaticism had such beautiful names that we dared to be cruel and inhuman with a clear conscience. We burned Jews, heretics and good books, and we wiped out whole cultures that were better than ours, like those of Peru and Mexico. Today the tools of this hunger for power have changed, but the same volcano is still smouldering underneath. Impatience and greedy, unchecked love still demand their victims. What people once did "for the love of God" they now do for the love of money. That is, for the love of the thing that, right now, gives us the strongest sense of power and a clear conscience.

205.

THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.—One of the great events the next century will show us is the decision about what happens to the Jews of Europe. It is quite clear by now that they have made their choice and

there is no going back; they have thrown the dice and crossed their point of no return. Only two paths are left to them: either they become the masters of Europe, or they lose Europe, just as, centuries ago, they lost Egypt, where they faced a similar choice. In Europe, though, they have gone through eighteen centuries of hard schooling, such as no other people has ever gone through. What they learned in this terrible time of testing has helped not only the Jewish community as a whole, but even more the single person. Because of this, modern Jews are extraordinarily resourceful, both in mind and in spirit. Of all the people living in Europe, Jews are the least likely to escape deep suffering by turning to drink or to suicide, as other, less gifted people so often do. Every Jew can find, in the history of his own family and his ancestors, a long list of examples of great calm and stubborn endurance in hard and terrible situations, and of clever cunning in fighting against bad luck and danger. Above all, there is their courage hidden under the cover of miserable obedience. Their heroic scorning being scorned, their refusal to care about the contempt of others, is greater than the virtues of all the saints.

For nearly twenty centuries people tried to make them worthy of contempt by treating them with contempt. They shut them out of every respected position and every honour, and pushed them further down into the lowest kinds of work. And it is true that this treatment did not make them any cleaner. But worthy of contempt? Not for one moment have they stopped believing that they are fit for the very highest tasks. And the virtues that come from suffering have never stopped making them shine. The way they honour their parents and their children, and the good sense of their marriages and marriage customs, set them apart from all other Europeans. On top of this, they have managed to build for themselves a sense of power and a never-ending revenge out of the very trades that were left to them, or that they were dumped into. Even when we try to excuse their money-lending at

high interest, we have to admit this: without the occasional pleasant and useful torment they could inflict on those who scorned them, they would have found it hard to keep their self-respect for so long. For our self-respect depends on being able to pay back what is done to us, both the good and the bad. Still, their revenge never drives them too far. They all have a freedom of mind, and even of spirit, that comes to people who often have to move to new places, new climates, and live among the customs of new neighbours and oppressors. They have by far the most experience of anyone in dealing with all kinds of people, and even in their passions they use the caution that this experience has taught them. They are so sure of their flexible and sharp minds that, even in the worst hardship, they never have to earn their living by working with their hands as ordinary labourers, porters or farm workers. In the way they behave, we can still see that they have never been moved by knightly and noble feelings, and that their bodies have never worn fine weapons. A certain pushiness takes turns with a kind of humble obedience that is often gentle and almost always painful to watch.

Now, however, year after year they cannot help marrying more and more into the noblest families of Europe. So they will soon inherit a good deal of fine manners, both in mind and in body. In another hundred years they will look noble enough that, as masters, they will not seem ridiculous to the people they have brought under their rule. And this matters! That is why it is still too early to settle the question. They themselves know very well that conquering Europe, or using any kind of force, is out of the question. But they also know that one day Europe may fall into their hands like a ripe fruit, as long as they do not grab at it too eagerly. Until then, they need to stand out in every field where Europeans win honour, and to be in the front row, until they have gone so far that they themselves decide what honour and excellence are to mean. Then they will be called the pioneers and

guides of the Europeans, and they will no longer hurt the Europeans' modesty.

And then, where will it all go? Over such a long time a huge wealth of powerful experiences has built up. For every Jewish family it stands for Jewish history itself: a wealth of passions, virtues, decisions, acts of giving up, struggles and victories of every kind. Where can all of this find its way out, if not in great thinkers and great works of the mind! A day will come when the Jews can show us, as their own work, such jewels and golden vessels as no European nation could ever make, since those nations have shorter and shallower experience. On that day Israel will have turned its never-ending revenge into a never-ending blessing for Europe. Then that seventh day will come again, the day when old Jehovah can be glad in Himself, in His creation, and in His chosen people—and all of us, every one of us, will be glad with Him!

206.

THE CLASS THAT CANNOT GO ON.—Being poor, cheerful, and free: you can find these three things together in one person. Being poor, cheerful, and a slave: that combination is also possible. And that is the best thing I can say to the workers who serve as factory slaves, as long as they do not find it completely shameful to be used the way they are used, like the screws in a machine, like the fillers that plug the gaps left by human inventiveness. Shame on the idea that just paying them higher wages could take away the heart of their misery, which is the fact that they are enslaved in a way that wipes out their personhood! Shame on us if we let ourselves be talked into believing that, by making people even more faceless inside the machinery of some new society, the disgrace of slavery could be turned into a virtue! Shame on the idea that there should be a fixed price at which a man stops being a person and becomes a screw instead! Are you

workers partners in the madness of today's nations, which above all want to produce as much as possible and to be as rich as possible? Isn't it your duty to push back against them with a demand of your own, and to show them how much inner value is thrown away in chasing such an outward goal?

But where is your inner value when you no longer know what it means to breathe freely? Where is it when you hardly have any control over yourselves, and you often feel sick of yourselves, the way you feel sick of stale food? Where is it when you eagerly study the newspapers and look with envy at your rich neighbour, made greedy by the quick rise and fall of power, money, and opinions? Where is it when you no longer believe in a philosophy that wears rags, or in the free mind of a man who needs very little? Where is it when choosing to live simply and peacefully in poverty, without a career or marriage, a life that would suit the more thoughtful among you, has become something you laugh at? Meanwhile, the Socialist rat-catchers keep playing their pipes in your ears, like the Pied Piper, trying to fill you with foolish hopes. They tell you to be ready and nothing more, ready from one day to the next. So you wait and wait for something to come to you from outside, while living in every other way just as you lived before. This goes on until the waiting finally turns into hunger and thirst and fever and madness, and the day of the triumphant beast at last rises in all its glory. Instead, each one of you should say to himself: "It would be better to leave this country and try to become a master in new and wild lands. Above all, I should try to become master over myself. I should move somewhere else whenever the smallest sign of slavery threatens me. I should not avoid adventure or war. And if the worst comes, I should be ready to die. Anything is better than staying in this shameful bondage, this bitterness, this spite, and this constant urge to rebel!" That would be the right attitude. The workers of Europe should make it clear that their situation as a class has

become something no human being can live with, and not just, as they now claim, the result of some harsh and pointless way society is arranged. They should start an age of great swarming out of the European beehive, an exodus such as the world has never yet seen. By this huge migration, which they choose for themselves, they would be protesting against machines and capital, and against the choices that now threaten them: either becoming slaves of the State, or slaves of some revolutionary party.

May Europe be freed of a quarter of her people! Both Europe and those who leave will feel relieved. Only far away, in the work of building huge new colonies, will we be able to see how much good sense, fairness, and healthy distrust mother Europe has built into her sons. These are the sons who could no longer stand living in the house of that dull old woman, where they were always in danger of becoming as grumpy, touchy, and pleasure-hungry as she is. The European virtues will travel with these workers far beyond Europe's borders. And the very qualities that, back home, had started to rot into a dangerous discontent and a leaning toward crime will, abroad, be changed into a beautiful, wild naturalness, and people will call it heroism. So in the end, cleaner air would once again blow across this old, crowded, gloomy Europe of ours. What would it matter if there were not enough “hands” left to do the work? Maybe people would then remember that they had gotten used to many needs only because those needs were easy to satisfy. It would be enough to unlearn some of them! Maybe Chinese workers would also be brought in, and they would bring with them their ways of living and thinking, which would turn out to suit hard-working ants very well. They might also help to fill this fretful, restless Europe with some of their Asian calm and thoughtfulness, and, what may be needed most of all, their Asian steadiness.

207.

HOW THE GERMANS RELATE TO MORALITY.—A German is capable of great things, but he is not likely to achieve them, because he obeys whenever he can, as suits a mind that is lazy by nature. Sometimes he is put in the dangerous position of having to stand alone and throw off his laziness, when he finds he can no longer vanish like a zero inside a big number. (In this he is far worse off than a Frenchman or an Englishman.) Then he shows his true strength. He becomes dangerous, wicked, deep, and bold, and he brings out into the daylight the store of hidden energy that he had been carrying inside him all along, which nobody, not even he himself, had ever believed in. When a German, in a case like this, obeys himself, which he very rarely does, he does it with the same heaviness, stubbornness, and endurance with which he obeys his prince and carries out his official duties. So, as I said, he is then capable of great things that have nothing to do with the "weak character" he claims to have.

Usually, though, he is afraid of relying on himself alone, and he is afraid of being the first to act. That is why Germany uses up so many officials and so much ink. Being light-hearted is foreign to the German; he is too timid for it. But when he is in a completely new situation that shakes him out of his sluggishness, he shows an almost silly, careless spirit. Then he enjoys the newness of his position as if it were some strong drink that goes to his head, and, as we know, he is quite an expert when it comes to that kind of rush of excitement. So it happens that today's German is almost always careless and flighty in politics. And this is true even though, here too, he has the advantage, and the reputation, of being thorough and serious. He may make full use of these qualities when he deals with other political powers. Still, deep down, he is glad that for once in his life he can feel excited and act on a whim, show how much he likes new things, and swap people, parties, and hopes as if they were masks. Then there are the learned

German scholars, who until now have been seen as the most German of all Germans. They were, and maybe still are, just as good as German soldiers. That is because they have a deep, almost childlike urge to obey in all outward matters, and because they are often forced to stand alone in their science and to take responsibility for many things. If they can only keep their proud, simple, and patient nature, and stay free of political madness when the wind changes, we can still expect great things from them. Just as they are, or just as they were, they are the early, unformed beginning of something higher.

Up to now, the strengths and weaknesses of the Germans, even of their learned men, have come from this: they were more superstitious and more eager to believe than any other nation. Their vices are, and always have been, heavy drinking and a tendency toward suicide. The second shows how clumsy their minds are, because their minds are easily tempted to let go of the reins. Their danger lies in anything that ties down their power to reason and sets their passions loose, for example too much music and too much alcohol. For German passion works against its own interests, and it destroys itself just like the passions of a drunk. In fact, German enthusiasm is worth less than that of other nations, because nothing grows from it. Whenever a German did something great, he did it in a time of danger, or when his courage was high, with his teeth clenched and his good sense on guard, and quite often in a burst of generosity. It is truly worth spending time with these Germans, because almost every one of them has something to give. We just have to know how to make him find it, or rather find it again, since he is very messy about how he stores away what he knows.

Well then: when people like this busy themselves with morals, what kind of morality will satisfy them? First of all, they will want their morals to show their honest instinct for obedience as an ideal. "A person must have something he can obey without question": this is a

German feeling and a German conclusion. It is the base of all German moral teaching. But how different it feels when we compare this with the whole morality of the ancient world! All those Greek thinkers, however different they may seem to us, look, as moral teachers, like a gym coach cheering on his students: "Come on, follow me! Accept my training! Then maybe you can win the prize over all the other Greeks." Standing out as a person: that was the virtue of the ancient world. Giving in and obeying, whether in public or in private: that is German virtue. Long before Kant laid out his teaching of the Categorical Imperative, the idea of a duty that must be obeyed no matter what, Luther was driven by the same urge. He said there surely had to be a being that people could trust without question. That was his proof that God exists. His wish, rougher and more common than Kant's, was that people should obey a person without question, not an idea. And in the end Kant, too, took his long detour through morals only so that he could win obedience for that person. This truly is what the German worships, all the more now that there is less worship left in his religion.

The Greeks and Romans thought differently about these things, and they would have laughed at this kind of "there must be a being." It was part of the boldness of their Southern nature to stand up against believing without question, and to keep, deep in their hearts, a bit of doubt about everyone and everything, whether a god, a person, or an idea. The ancient thinker went even further and said "nil admirari," which means "be amazed by nothing." He saw all of philosophy summed up in that phrase. A German, Schopenhauer, goes so far the other way that he says "admirari id est philosophari," which means "to be amazed is to do philosophy." But what if, as happens now and then, the German reaches the state of mind that lets him do great things? What if the exceptional hour comes, the hour of disobedience? I do not think Schopenhauer is right when he says that the only

advantage Germans have over other nations is that there are more atheists among them than anywhere else. But I do know this: whenever the German reaches the point where he can do great things, he always rises above morals! And why shouldn't he? Now he has something new to do, namely to give orders, either to himself or to others! But this German morality of his has never taught him how to give orders! Giving orders has been forgotten in it.

Book Four

208.

A QUESTION OF CONSCIENCE.—"So, to sum it all up, tell me: what is this new thing that you want?"—"We no longer want causes to be treated as sinners, and effects to be treated as the executioners who punish them."

209.

WHY THE STRICTEST THEORIES ARE USEFUL.—People go easy on a man's moral weaknesses. They judge him loosely, as if sifting with a sieve full of big holes, as long as he always says he believes in the strictest moral rules. But the lives of moral thinkers who think freely have always been inspected closely, as if under a microscope. People quietly believe that finding a mistake in such a thinker's life would be the best argument against the uncomfortable truths he has discovered.(6)

210.

THE "THING IN ITSELF."—In the past we used to ask: What is the ridiculous? We asked as if there were something out there, beyond us, that had the power in itself to make people laugh. And we wore ourselves out trying to guess what it was. One religious scholar even thought it might be "the innocence of sin." Today we ask a different

question: What is laughter? How does it come about? We have thought this through, and in the end we reached this conclusion: nothing is good, beautiful, grand, or evil in itself. Instead, there are states of mind inside us that lead us to give these qualities to things outside us and in us. We have taken these labels back from things. Or at least we have remembered that we only lent these labels to things in the first place. But let us be careful. We must not let this insight make us lose the ability to lend. We must not become richer and greedier at the same time.

211.

TO THOSE WHO DREAM OF LIVING FOREVER.—So you want this lovely awareness of yourselves to go on and on forever? Isn't that shameful? Have you forgotten all those other things that would then have to put up with you for all eternity? They have put up with you until now with more patience than even a good Christian has. Or do you think you can make them feel pleased with you forever? If there were just one man on earth who could never die, everyone around him would become so sick of him that a widespread wave of murder and suicide would break out. And yet you, tiny creatures of the earth, with your narrow ideas that stretch only over a few thousand little minutes, you would want to be a never-ending burden on this never-ending life of the universe! Could anything be ruder or more arrogant? Still, in the end, let us go easy on a being who lives about seventy years. He has never been able to stretch his imagination far enough to picture how endlessly boring he would become forever. He simply didn't have enough time for that!

212.

HOW WE COME TO KNOW OURSELVES.—As soon as one animal sees another, it compares itself with the other in its mind. People in

uncivilised times did the same thing. As a result, almost all people come to know themselves only in terms of how well they can defend themselves and how well they can attack.

213.

PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN FAILURES.—Some people are made of such stuff that society can do whatever it likes with them. They will do well no matter what, and they will never have to complain that their life has failed. Other people are made of such unusual material. It doesn't have to be especially noble material, just rarer. These people are sure to do badly except in one single case: when they can live according to their own plans. In every other case, society has to pay the price. For everything that the individual feels is a wasted or ruined life, all his weight of discouragement, helplessness, sickness, irritation, and greed, he blames on society. And so, little by little, a heavy, poisoned air builds up around society. Or, in the best cases, a thundercloud.

214.

WHAT KIND OF LENIENCE IS THAT!—You are suffering, and you ask us to go easy on you, even when your suffering makes you unfair to things and to people! But what does our going easy on you matter? You are the one who should be more careful, for your own sake! What a fine way to make up for your suffering: by adding even more damage to your own judgment! When you start insulting something, your revenge bounces back onto you. In this way you cloud your own eyes, not other people's. You get used to seeing things wrongly, as if you were cross-eyed.

215.

THE MORALITY OF VICTIMS.—"Enthusiastic sacrifice," "giving yourself up completely"—these are the slogans of your morality. And I am happy to believe you when you say you "mean it honestly." But I know you better than you know yourselves, if your "honesty" can walk arm in arm with a morality like that. From the heights of this morality, you look down on that other, sober morality, the one that asks for self-control, strictness, and obedience. You even go so far as to call it selfish. And you are being quite open with yourselves when you say you don't like it. You can't help disliking it! For when you sacrifice and give yourselves up with such enthusiasm, you enjoy the rush of excitement of thinking that you are now one with the powerful being, God or man, to whom you are dedicating yourselves. You bask in the sense of his power, which this very sacrifice proves once again.

But in reality you only seem to be sacrificing yourselves. Your imagination turns you into gods, and you enjoy yourselves as gods. Judged by this enjoyment, that other "selfish" morality of obedience, duty, and reason must look so poor and weak to you! You dislike it because here real self-sacrifice and real self-surrender are demanded, without the victim imagining that he is turned into a god, the way you do. In short, you want a rush of excitement and you want to go too far. And this morality that you look down on takes a stand against the rush of excitement and against going too far. No wonder it annoys you!

216.

EVIL PEOPLE AND MUSIC.—Has the full joy of love, which comes from trusting someone completely, ever really been given to anyone except people who are deeply suspicious, wicked, and bitter? Because people like that experience this joy as a huge, unexpected, and unbelievable *exception* in their souls! One day they are gripped by an end-

less, dreamy feeling that is completely different from the rest of their private and public life. It is like a delicious riddle, full of golden brightness, that plain words or comparisons cannot describe. Total trust leaves them speechless. There is even a kind of suffering and heaviness in this happy silence. That is why souls overwhelmed with happiness usually feel more grateful to music than other, better people do. Through music, as if through a coloured mist, they see and hear their love become, in a way, more distant, more touching, and less heavy. Music is the only way such people have of watching their unusual state and noticing that it is there, with a feeling of standing outside it and of relief. Whenever music reaches the ears of anyone in love, he thinks: "It is talking about me, it is talking for me; it knows everything!"

217.

THE ARTIST.—The Germans want the artist to carry them away into a state of dreamy passion. The Italians want the artist's help to rest from their real passions. The French want the artist to give them a chance to show off their judgment and to make speeches. So let us be fair to all of them!

218.

HOW TO HANDLE YOUR WEAKNESSES LIKE AN ARTIST.—If we absolutely must have weaknesses, and in the end come to see them as laws we cannot control, then I wish that everyone had enough artistic skill to use his weaknesses to show off his strengths. I wish he could use his weaknesses to make us want to have his strengths. Great musicians have had this power to a very unusual degree. How often do we notice in Beethoven's music a rough, bossy, and impatient tone. In Mozart, we notice the cheerfulness of an honest fellow whose heart and mind do not have very much to give us. In Richard Wagner, we

notice a sudden, pushy restlessness. And right in the middle of it, just when even the most patient listener is about to lose his temper, the composer gets his strength back, and so do the others. Through their very weaknesses, these musicians have made us burn with desire for their strengths. They have given us a sense of taste that is ten times more sensitive to every note of this musical intelligence, musical beauty, and musical goodness.

219.

FAKENESS IN HUMBLING YOURSELF.—Through your foolishness you have done great harm to another person and ruined his happiness forever. Then, after getting over your pride, you lower yourself before him. You hand your foolishness over for him to look down on. And you imagine that after this hard scene, which is extremely painful for you, everything has been put right. You think that losing your honour of your own free will makes up to the other person for the damage you did to his happiness. With this feeling you leave feeling comforted, believing that you are a good person again.

But the other person suffers just as badly as before. He finds nothing comforting in the fact that you acted without sense and told him so. On the contrary, he remembers how painful you looked when you were putting yourself down in front of him. It is as if he had been given another wound. Still, he does not think about getting revenge. And he cannot imagine how things could ever be made even between you and him. In fact, you were acting out that scene for yourself and in front of yourself. You invited a witness to be there, not for his sake, but for your own. Don't fool yourself!

220.

DIGNITY AND SHYNESS.—Ceremonies, official robes and fancy court clothes, serious faces, solemn looks, walking slowly, complicated ways of speaking—in short, everything we call dignity—are all acts put on by people who are timid deep down. They want to make others fear them, or fear the things they stand for. The fearless—that is, at first, those who naturally fill others with awe—have no need of dignity and ceremonies. They make honesty and plain words and plain behaviour respected—or, even more, they give them a bad name—as signs of their own self-confident power to inspire awe.

221.

THE MORALITY OF SACRIFICE.—A morality that is measured by how much people sacrifice belongs to a society that is only half-civilised. In this case, reason wins a hard-fought and bloody victory inside the soul, because strong instincts pulling the other way have to be defeated. This cannot happen without the kind of cruelty that sacrifices to man-eating gods demand.

222.

WHERE FANATICISM IS A GOOD THING.—Calm, sluggish people can only be made enthusiastic by being turned into fanatics.

223.

THE EYE THEY FEAR.—Artists, poets, and writers fear nothing more than the eye that sees through their little tricks. It is the eye that then notices how often they have stopped at the fork in the road, where one path leads to simple, innocent pleasure in themselves and the other leads to straining to impress. It is the eye that catches them when they try to sell small things for a high price, or when they try to

lift up and decorate things without being lifted up themselves. It is the eye that, in spite of all the clever tricks of their art, sees the thought as it first came to them. Maybe it came as a lovely vision of light. But maybe it was stolen from the whole world, or was just an everyday idea that they had to stretch, squeeze, colour, wrap up, and spice up to make something out of it—instead of the thought making something out of them.—Oh, this eye, which sees in your work all your restlessness, your nosiness, and your greed, your copying and your exaggerating (which is just jealous copying)! This eye knows both your blush of shame and how skilfully you hide it from others and explain it away to yourselves!

224.

THE "UPLIFTING" SIDE OF ANOTHER PERSON'S BAD LUCK.—He is in trouble, and right away the "compassionate" people come to him and describe his misfortune to him. In the end they leave again, satisfied and feeling uplifted. They have enjoyed the unhappy man's misfortune and their own, and they have spent a pleasant Sunday afternoon.

225.

HOW TO BE LOOKED DOWN ON QUICKLY.—A man who talks a lot, and talks fast, very soon drops very low in our opinion, even when what he says makes sense. He drops not only as far as he annoys us personally, but much lower. That is because we guess what a burden he has already been to many other people. So, on top of the discomfort he causes us, we add all the contempt we imagine he has caused in others.

226.

DEALING WITH FAMOUS PEOPLE.—*A.* But why do you avoid this great man?—*B.* I would not want to misunderstand him. Our faults do not go together. I am short-sighted and suspicious, and he wears his fake diamonds as happily as his real ones.

227.

THE PEOPLE IN CHAINS.—Watch out for all minds that are bound in chains! Take clever women, for example, whom fate has shut away in small, dull surroundings, where they grow old. It's true that they lie there in the sun, looking lazy and half-blind. But at every unfamiliar footstep, at anything unexpected, they jump up to bite. They take revenge on everything that has escaped from their kennel, like a chained dog snapping at whatever is free.

228.

REVENGE HIDDEN IN PRAISE.—Here is a written page full of praise, and you call it dull. But once you discover that revenge is hidden inside this praise, you will find it almost too clever. You will take great pleasure in its many delicate and daring touches and comparisons. It is not the man himself who is so clever, rich, and inventive, but his revenge. He himself hardly notices it.

229.

PRIDE.—Ah, not one of you knows how the tortured man feels after the torture is over, when he is being carried back to his cell with his secret still kept! He is still holding on to it with a stubborn, unbreakable grip. What do you know about how wildly happy human pride can be?

230.

"USEFUL."—These days, people's feelings about moral matters wander along such twisting, maze-like paths that we prove morality to one man by pointing out how useful it is, and then disprove it to another man for the very same reason: because it is useful.

231.

ON GERMAN VIRTUE.—How spoiled its taste must have been, how much it must have bowed and scraped before titles, ranks, uniforms, show, and splendour, for a nation to start thinking that being simple meant being bad! In German, the word for a simple man (*schlicht*) turned into the word for a bad man (*schlecht*). Whenever the Germans get puffed up and preachy about morals, we should answer them with this one little word, "bad," and nothing else.

232.

FROM AN ARGUMENT.—*A* says: My friend, you've talked until your voice is gone.—*B* answers: Then I've been proven wrong, so let's drop the subject.

233.

THE "CONSCIENTIOUS" ONES.—Have you noticed which kind of people place the highest value on being extremely careful and strict about their duties? It is those who know they have many mean and petty feelings, who worry anxiously about themselves all the time, who are afraid of other people, and who want to hide their deepest feelings as much as they can. They try to fool even themselves with this strict carefulness and harsh devotion to duty. They also rely on the stern, hard impression that others, especially those beneath them, are bound to get of them.

234.

FEAR OF FAME.—*A* says: Trying to avoid your own fame, deliberately offending the people who praise you, disliking hearing what others think of you, and all of it out of fear of becoming famous—such cases can be found. They really exist, believe it or not!—*B* answers: Of course they can be found! They exist! Just be a little patient, Mister Arrogance!

235.

REFUSING THANKS.—We have every right to turn down a request. But it is never right to turn down someone's thanks, or, which amounts to the same thing, to accept them in a cold, merely polite way. This hurts people deeply. And why is that?

236.

PUNISHMENT.—What a strange thing this punishment of ours is! It does not make the criminal clean again. It is not a way of making up for the wrong. On the contrary, it stains and dirties a person even more than the crime itself.

237.

PARTY COMPLAINTS.—In almost every political party there is a complaint that is ridiculous, but still somewhat dangerous. The ones who suffer from it are those who have for a long time been loyal and respectable defenders of the party's ideas. Then one day they suddenly notice that someone much stronger than they are has won the public's attention. How can they stand being pushed into silence? So they raise their voices, and sometimes they change their tune.

238.

REACHING FOR GENTLENESS.—When a strong character does not lean towards cruelty and is not always busy with itself, it reaches for gentleness without even meaning to. This is its special mark. Weak characters, on the other hand, tend to make harsh judgments. They join up with the heroes of contempt for humanity, the religious or philosophical people who speak badly of life itself. Or they hide behind strict habits and fussy "duties" and "jobs." In this way they try to give themselves a personality and a kind of strength. This, too, happens without their meaning to.

239.

A HINT FOR MORALISTS.—Our musicians have made a great discovery. They have found out that ugliness can be interesting, even in their art. That is why they throw themselves with such eager, wild excitement into this sea of ugliness, and it has never been so easy to make music. Only now do we have a general dark background against which every bright ray of fine music, however faint, seems to shine with a golden-green glow. Only now do we dare to fill our listeners with feelings of wild rushing and anger, taking their breath away, so to speak. We do this so that afterwards, in a quiet, peaceful, harmonious moment, we can fill them with a feeling of bliss, which is supposed to help everyone appreciate music properly.

We have discovered contrast: only now are the strongest effects possible, and cheap ones too. Nobody bothers about good music anymore. But you had better hurry! Once any art has made this discovery, it only has a short time left to live.—Oh, if only our thinkers could look deep into the souls of our musicians while listening to their music! How long we will have to wait before we again get the chance to catch the inner man in the very act of doing evil, and also catch him

being innocent of that act! For our musicians don't have the faintest idea that what they are turning into music is their own story, the story of how the soul gets twisted and spoiled. In earlier times, the demands of his art almost forced a good musician to become a good man. And now!

240.

THE MORALS OF THE THEATRE.—Some people imagine that Shakespeare's plays teach us morals, and that watching Macbeth makes us unable to resist turning away from the evil of ambition. Anyone who thinks this is wrong. And he is wrong again if he believes that Shakespeare himself thought so. A person who is truly gripped by burning ambition enjoys looking at this picture of himself. And when the hero is driven to ruin by his passion, that is the sharpest spice in the hot drink of this enjoyment. Did the poet feel it any differently? Look how royally, and with how little of the cheap crook in him, his ambitious hero runs his course from the moment he commits his great crime! It is only from that moment on that he becomes attractive in a "devilish" way, and that he encourages people like him to copy him.—There is something devilish here: something that rebels against what is useful and against life itself, and sides instead with an idea and an urge. Do you think that Tristan and Isolde are warnings against cheating on your husband or wife, just because the cheating ended in the death of both of them? That would be turning poets upside down. These poets, and Shakespeare most of all, are in love with passions for their own sake. They are just as much in love with the readiness to die that passions bring about: that mood in which the heart clings to life no more than a drop of water clings to a glass. These poets are not interested in guilt and its harmful results. Shakespeare cares about it as little as Sophocles does in his plays Ajax, Philoctetes, and Oedipus. In the cases just mentioned, it would

have been easy to make guilt the thing that drives the play forward. But the poets carefully avoided doing so.

In the same way, the tragic poet does not want his pictures of life to turn us against life. Quite the opposite. He cries out: "This exciting, changing, dangerous life of ours, so often dark and so often bathed in sunshine, is the most charming thing of all! Life is an adventure. Whichever side you take in life, it will always stay that way!"—That is how the poet speaks when he lives in a restless and powerful age. It is an age that is almost drunk and dazed by having too much blood and energy, an age more evil than our own. And that is why we first have to adjust ourselves to the purpose of a Shakespeare play and make it fit us—that is, by misunderstanding it.

241.

FEAR AND INTELLIGENCE.—These days people firmly claim that the dark colour of the skin is not caused by sunlight. If that is true, could this dark colour perhaps be the final result of frequent fits of rage, piling up century after century, along with blood rushing under the skin? And in other, more intelligent races, could frequent shudders of fear, which make people turn pale, have led to white skin?—For how fearful someone is can be used as a measure of how intelligent they are. And when people give themselves over to blind anger, it shows that their animal nature is still close to the surface, eager for a chance to show itself again. So the original colour of human beings was probably a brownish grey—something like the ape and the bear, as is only fitting.

242.

INDEPENDENCE.—Independence (which, in its weakest form, is called "freedom of thought") is the kind of giving-up that the bossy,

domineering man finally settles for. He is the one who searched for a long time for something to rule over, but found nothing except himself.

243.

THE TWO PATHS.—When we try to look at the mirror itself, we find in the end that we can see nothing in it except the things it reflects. When we try to grab the things it reflects, we end up touching nothing but the mirror.—This is the whole story of knowledge.

244.

ENJOYING REALITY.—These days we tend to enjoy reality, and almost every one of us has this tendency. The only way to explain it is that we enjoyed what is unreal for so long that we got tired of it. In its present form, this tendency picks things up without choosing and without any refinement, and that makes it somewhat dangerous. The smallest of its dangers is that it has no taste.

245.

THE SLY WAYS OF THE SENSE OF POWER.—Napoleon was deeply embarrassed that he could not speak well, and he did not fool himself about it. But his hunger for power never passed up even the smallest chance to show itself, and it was even sharper and slyer than his sharp mind. That hunger led him to speak even worse than he could have. In this way he took revenge on his own embarrassment. (He was jealous of all his feelings, because they had power over him.) He did this so he could enjoy the pleasure of being in total control.

He enjoyed this pleasure a second time when it came to the ears and opinions of his listeners, as if being spoken to like this was good enough for them. He even secretly enjoyed the idea of confusing their

judgment and good taste with the thunder and lightning of his supreme authority—the authority that comes from power and genius joined together. All the while, his own judgment and good taste held on proudly and calmly to the truth that he did not speak well.—Napoleon was the complete, fully grown example of a person driven by a single instinct. That makes him belong to the ancient kind of humanity. Its main feature is easy enough to spot: a simple structure, with one motive or just a few motives developed and carried out in a clever way.

246.

ARISTOTLE AND MARRIAGE.—Aristotle says that the children of great geniuses tend to go mad, and the children of the most virtuous people tend to be stupid. Was he trying to encourage exceptional men to get married?

247.

WHERE A BAD TEMPER COMES FROM.—Some people have minds that are unfair and unsteady, and their behaviour is messy and goes too far. This is the final result of all the countless mistakes in logic, the shallow thinking, and the rushed conclusions their ancestors were guilty of. People with a good temper, on the other hand, come from steady, thoughtful families who placed a high value on reason. Whether they used reason for good or for evil does not matter much here.

248.

PRETENDING AS A DUTY.—Kindness grew strongest through a long period of pretending, when people tried hard to look kind. Wherever there was great power, people saw that this kind of pretending was necessary. It makes others feel safe and trusting, and it multiplies the

real amount of physical power we have. So lying may not be the mother of kindness, but it is at least the nurse that raised it. In the same way, honesty became fully grown because people needed to look honest and upright, as in noble families that pass down their rank. If you keep pretending like this for a long time, the pretence finally turns into the real thing. In the end the pretending wipes itself out. Then real organs and instincts grow, like unexpected fruit in this garden of fakery.

249.

SO WHO IS EVER REALLY ALONE?—The cowardly, miserable person does not know what it means to be alone. To him, an enemy is always sneaking along behind him. Oh, if only someone could tell us the story of that delicate feeling we call loneliness!

250.

NIGHT AND MUSIC.—The ear is the organ of fear. It was able to develop so well only at night, and in the half-darkness of dark forests and caves. That matched the way timid people lived, and that timid way of life was the longest age humans have ever gone through. In bright daylight the ear is less needed. That is why music has the character it has: it is an art of night and dusk.

251.

STOIC.—The Stoic feels a kind of cheerfulness when he is weighed down by the strict rituals he has set for himself. At those moments he enjoys himself as a ruler, because he is the one giving the orders.

252.

THINK ABOUT IT.—The person being punished is no longer the same person who did the deed. He is always just the scapegoat.

253.

APPEARANCE.—Oh dear! The thing that most needs to be proved, and proved most firmly, is how things look on the surface. Far too many people have no eyes to notice it. But it is so tiring!

254.

THOSE WHO LIVE THINGS IN ADVANCE.—What marks out poetic people, and also puts them in danger, is their imagination. It wears itself out ahead of time. It pictures what will happen or what might happen. It enjoys things and suffers through them in advance. So when the real moment of the event or the action finally comes, it is already tired. Lord Byron knew this all too well. He wrote in his diary: "If I ever have a son, he will choose a very dull, down-to-earth job—a lawyer or a pirate."

255.

A CONVERSATION ABOUT MUSIC.—

A: What do you think of that music?

B: It has overwhelmed me. I can't say anything about it. Listen! It's starting again.

A: Even better! This time let's do our best to overwhelm it instead. May I add a few words to this music? And may I also show you a drama that maybe you didn't want to notice the first time you heard it?

B: All right. I have two ears, and more if I need them. Come closer to me.

A: We haven't yet heard what the composer wants to tell us. So far he has only promised to say something—something never heard before. That is what he hints at with his gestures, because they really are gestures. Look how he waves us over! Look how he draws himself up tall! Look how he throws his arms about! And now it seems the moment of highest tension has come for him. Two more blasts of trumpets, and he will hand us his grand, splendidly decorated theme, which seems to rattle with jewels.

Is it a beautiful woman? Or a fine horse? Never mind—he looks around as if he were thrilled, because he needs to gather thrilled looks from us. Only now is he fully happy with his theme. Only now does he start to invent and dare to add new, bold touches. Look how he squeezes his theme out! Oh, watch out! He doesn't just know how to decorate it, he also knows how to cover up its flaws! Yes, he knows what the colour of good health looks like, and he knows how to paint it on with makeup. He is more cunning in how aware he is of himself than I thought. And now he is sure he has convinced his listeners. He shows off his made-up-on-the-spot bits as if they were the most important things in the world. He points at his theme with a cocky finger, as if it were too good for this world. Oh, how suspicious he is! He's afraid we'll get bored! That's why he buries his tune in sweet notes. Now he even appeals to our cruder senses, to stir us up and get us back under his control. Listen to him calling up the raw force of stormy, thundering rhythms!

And now he sees that these things have grabbed our attention, are choking us, and are almost overwhelming us. So he dares once more to bring in his theme in the middle of this storm of raw forces. He wants to convince us, confused and shaken as we are, that our confu-

sion and shaking are caused by his amazing theme. And from now on his listeners believe in him. As soon as they hear the theme again, they remember its thrilling raw effects. The theme gains from this memory—now it has become almost devilish in its power! What an expert on the human soul he is! He takes control of us with all the tricks of a crowd-pleasing speaker. But now the music has stopped again.

B: And I'm glad it did, because I couldn't stand listening to your comments any longer! I would ten times rather let myself be fooled than learn the truth even once the way you tell it.

A: That is exactly what I wanted to hear from you. The best people today are just like you: you are perfectly happy to let yourselves be fooled. You come here with crude, greedy ears, and you leave behind your conscience about the art of listening. On your way here you threw away your honesty of mind, and so you spoil both art and artists. Every time you clap and cheer, you are holding the artists' conscience in your hands. And it will be terrible for art if they ever find out that you cannot tell innocent music from guilty music! I don't mean "good" and "bad" music. You find both of those in each of the two kinds I mentioned! What I call innocent music is music that thinks only of itself and believes only in itself, and that, because of this, has forgotten the rest of the world. It is the natural voice of the deepest being alone, which talks about itself and to itself, and has completely forgotten that out in the world there are listeners, effects, misunderstandings and failures. In short, the music we just heard is exactly this rare and noble kind. Everything I said about it was made up. Forgive my little trick, if you can!

B: Oh, so you like this music too? In that case, many of your sins will be forgiven!

256.

THE HAPPINESS OF EVIL PEOPLE. These quiet, gloomy, evil men have something special that you cannot take away from them. It is an unusual, strange pleasure in sweet idleness, in simply doing nothing. It is like a sunset and a peaceful evening rest, which no one can enjoy except a heart that has too often been eaten up, torn apart, and poisoned by strong passions.

257.

THE WORDS WE HAVE AT HAND. We always put our thoughts into whatever words are closest to hand. Or rather, if I may share my whole suspicion: at any moment, we only have the thought that fits the words already in our minds.

258.

FLATTERING THE DOG. You only need to stroke this dog's fur once, and right away he crackles and throws off sparks, just like any other flatterer. And he is clever in his own way. So why shouldn't we put up with him like that?

259.

THE MAN WHO USED TO PRAISE ME. "He has gone quiet about me now, even though he knows the truth and could tell it. But it would sound like revenge, and he values truth so highly, this honourable man!"

260.

THE LUCKY CHARM OF PEOPLE WHO DEPEND ON OTHERS. Anyone who cannot avoid depending on some master should have

something that makes the master a little afraid of him and keeps him in line. For example: being completely honest, or being upright, or having a sharp, nasty tongue.

261.

WHY SO LOFTY? Oh, I know this breed of animal very well! Of course they would rather walk on two legs "like a god." But I prefer it when they drop back down onto all fours. That is far more natural for them!

262.

THE DEMON OF POWER. It is not need, and not desire, but the love of power that is the demon driving humankind. You can give people everything possible: health, food, a home, pleasure. But they are still unhappy and moody, and they stay that way, because the demon waits and waits, and it has to be satisfied. Take everything else away from people, but satisfy this demon, and then they will be almost happy, as happy as humans and demons can ever be. But why am I repeating this? Luther already said it, and said it better than I have, in these lines:

"And even if they take our life, our goods, our honour, our children and our wife, they will gain little from it. All these things will pass away, but the Kingdom will remain."

The Kingdom! There it is again! (7)

263.

A LIVING, BREATHING CONTRADICTION. There is a contradiction in the body and nature of what we call genius. On one side, a genius has a lot of wild disorder and movement it cannot control. On the other side, it has a lot of superior, directed activity within that

movement. On top of this, a genius has a kind of mirror that shows both movements side by side, mixed into each other, but often working against each other. Because it sees this, a genius is often unhappy. And if it feels its greatest happiness while creating, that is because it forgets that exactly then, while working at its most focused and purposeful, it is doing something fanciful and unreasonable (all art is like that), and it cannot help doing it.

264.

FOOLING YOURSELF. Jealous people who have a sharp instinct try not to get to know their rivals too well, so that they can keep feeling superior to them.

265.

THERE IS A TIME FOR THEATRE. When the imagination of a people starts to shrink, they begin to want their legends acted out on stage. At that point they put up with crude replacements for imagination. But in the age of the old storytellers who recited great epic poems, the theatre itself, and the actor dressed up as a hero, get in the way of the imagination instead of giving it wings. They are too close, too exact, too heavy, and have too little of dreamland and the flight of birds about them.

266.

WITHOUT CHARM. He has no charm, and he knows it. Oh, how cleverly he hides this flaw! He does it with strict virtue, gloomy looks, and a distrust he has learned toward everyone and toward life itself. He does it with crude jokes, with scorn for a more refined way of living, with dramatic feeling and showing off, and with a sneering,

cynical philosophy. Yes, he has even become a real character, just by always being aware of what he lacks.

267.

WHY SO PROUD? What sets a noble character apart from a common one is this: the common one does not have ready to use a certain number of habits and ways of seeing things that the noble one has. Fate decided that he would not get them, either by birth or by upbringing.

268.

THE SPEAKER'S TWO DANGERS (like the two sea monsters, Scylla and Charybdis, that sailors had to steer between). How hard it was in ancient Athens to speak so as to win listeners over to your side, without at the same time putting them off by the style of your speech, or pulling their attention away from the actual issue because of that style! How hard it still is to write like that in France!

269.

SICK PEOPLE AND ART. For every kind of sadness and misery of the soul, we should first try changing what we eat and doing hard physical work. But in such cases people usually turn to things that give the mind a rush of excitement, art, for example. This harms both themselves and art! Can't you see that when you, as sick people, demand art, you make the artists themselves sick?

270.

TOLERANCE THAT ISN'T REAL.—Those are good, kind, and sensible words you say about science and in support of it. But sadly, behind those words I can see that you are only putting up with sci-

ence. Deep down, in a corner of your mind, you think, no matter what you say, that *you don't really need it*. You think you are being generous by accepting it and even speaking up for it. You think this all the more because science, for its part, doesn't show the same generosity toward your opinions! Do you know that you have no right at all to be "tolerant" like this? This attitude of looking down kindly on science is an even ruder insult to it than the open scorn that some arrogant priest or artist might allow himself to show. What you are missing is a strong feeling for everything that is true and real. It doesn't hurt you or bother you to find that science goes against your own feelings. You don't know that burning desire for knowledge that rules over a person like a law. You don't feel it as a duty to be there with your own eyes wherever knowledge can be found, and to let nothing that is "known" slip past you. You don't actually know the thing you are being so tolerant toward! And it is only because you don't know it that you can manage to act so kind and gracious about it. Really, you would look at science with hatred and fanatical anger if, just once, it turned its bright, revealing gaze on you! So what does it matter to us if you show tolerance—and toward a ghost, something you imagine, not even toward us! And what do we matter to you!

271.

FESTIVE MOODS.—It is exactly the people who want power most passionately who find it amazingly pleasant to be overpowered! They love to sink suddenly and deeply into a feeling, as if into a whirlpool! They love to let the reins be pulled out of their hands, and to watch themselves being carried along by something to a place they don't know! Whatever or whoever does this for us, it is still a great favor. We feel so happy and out of breath, and we sense an unusual silence all around us, as if we were down in the very center of the earth. To be completely powerless for once! To be a toy for the raw forces of

nature! There is a kind of rest in this happiness. It is like throwing off a heavy load, like going downhill without getting tired, as if we had handed ourselves over to the blind pull of gravity.

This is the dream of the mountain climber. He can see his goal far above him, but he falls asleep on the way because he is completely worn out. And he dreams of the happiness of the opposite—just rolling down the hill without any effort. I am describing happiness the way I picture it in our society today, the hounded, ambitious society of Europe and America. Every now and then these people *want* to fall back into helplessness. Wars, the arts, religions, and geniuses offer them this pleasure. A person may give himself up for a while to a passing impression that swallows and crushes everything else—and that is the modern festive mood. Afterward he becomes freer, cooler, more refreshed, and more strict. And then he once again chases tirelessly after the opposite of all this: power.

272.

THE PURIFICATION OF RACES.—There are probably no pure races at all, only races made pure over time, and even those are extremely rare.(8) Much more often we come across mixed races. In them we find a lack of harmony in body shape (for example, when the eyes don't match the mouth), and along with it, we always and unavoidably find a lack of harmony in habits and in ways of valuing things. (The explorer Livingstone once heard someone say: "God created white men and black men, but the devil created the mixed-race people.")

Mixed races are always also mixed cultures and mixed moralities. As a rule, they are more evil, more cruel, and more restless. Purity is the final result of countless adjustments, absorptions, and removals. You can tell a race is moving toward purity when its hidden strength is

focused more and more on a few special tasks, whereas before it had to do too many things, which often went against each other. This kind of narrowing will always look like a loss, like becoming poorer, so it must be judged carefully and calmly. But in the long run, once the process of purification has been successfully completed, all the forces that used to be wasted in the fight between clashing qualities become available to the whole living body. That is why races made pure over time have always become stronger and more beautiful.—The Greeks can serve as our model of a race and culture made pure over time!—and we may hope that one day a pure European race and culture will appear.

273.

PRAISE.—Here is someone who, as you can tell, wants to praise you. You bite your lips and steel your heart: "Oh, if only *that* cup could pass me by!" But it doesn't pass you by, it comes! So let us drink down the sweet cheekiness of the person praising us. Let us get past the disgust and deep contempt we feel for what his praise really is at its core. Let us put on a look of grateful joy—after all, he wanted to make himself pleasant to us! And now that it's all over, we know that he feels very proud of himself. He has won a victory over us. Yes, and over himself too, the scoundrel!—because it was no easy thing for him to squeeze this praise out of himself.

274.

THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF HUMANS.—We human beings are the only creatures who, when things are going badly for us, can cross ourselves out like a clumsy sentence. We may do this out of respect for humanity, or out of pity for it, or because of the disgust we feel toward ourselves.

275.

THE CHANGED MAN.—Now he is becoming virtuous, but only so that he can hurt others by being so. Don't pay so much attention to him.

276.

HOW OFTEN! HOW UNEXPECTED!—How many married men have woken up one morning and realized that their young wife is dull, even though she thinks just the opposite! And that's not even counting the wives whose body is willing but whose mind is weak!

277.

WARM VIRTUES AND COLD VIRTUES.—Sometimes courage comes from a cold, unshakable decision. At other times it comes from a fiery, reckless burst of energy. There is only one name for these two kinds of courage! And yet how different cold virtues and warm virtues are! A person would be a fool to think that "goodness" can only come from warmth, and just as much a fool to think it can only come from coldness. The truth is that humankind has found both warm courage and cold courage very useful—but it hasn't found them often enough to stop treating both of them as rare and precious, like jewels.

278.

THE KIND MEMORY.—A person of high rank would be wise to build up a kind memory. That means noticing all the good qualities in people and making a special point of remembering them. By doing this, he keeps them pleasantly dependent on him. A person can also treat himself this way. Whether or not he has a kind memory decides, in the end, how he looks at his own wishes and plans: from above,

gently, or with distrust. And in the end it even shapes what those wishes and plans actually are.

279.

HOW WE TURN INTO ARTISTS.—Someone who worships another person as an idol tries to excuse himself in his own eyes by making that person seem perfect. In other words, he becomes an artist so that he can have a clear conscience. When he suffers, he does not suffer because he does not know the truth. He suffers from the lie he told himself so that he would not know it. The deepest misery and longing of such a person—and every passionate lover belongs in this group—can never be used up or satisfied by ordinary means.

280.

CHILDLIKE.—People who live like children stay childlike. These are people who do not have to fight to earn their daily bread, and who do not believe their actions have any final, deeper meaning.

281.

OUR SELF WANTS EVERYTHING.—It almost seems as if people in general are driven only by the wish to own things. At least our languages suggest this. They describe past actions as if we had been given something to own: "I *have* spoken, I *have* fought, I *have* won." It is as if we were saying, "Now I own my words, my fight, my victory." Seen this way, how greedy people look! They cannot even let the past slip away from them. They want to go on *having* it, even now!

282.

THE DANGER IN BEAUTY.—This woman is beautiful and clever. Sadly, how much cleverer she would have become if she had not been beautiful!

283.

PEACE AT HOME AND PEACE OF MIND.—Our usual mood depends on the mood we keep the people around us in every day.

284.

NEW THINGS AS OLD ONES.—Many people seem annoyed when someone tells them something new. They feel the advantage the news has given to the person who found it out first.

285.

WHERE DOES THE SELF END?—Most people treat something they know as if it were under their protection, as if just knowing it were enough to make it belong to them. The greedy, selfish urge to own things has no limits. Great men talk as if all of time stood behind them, and as if they had put themselves at the front of this huge army. And good women brag about how beautiful their children are, or their clothes, their dog, their doctor, or their hometown. The only thing they do not dare to say is, "I am all of that." As they say in Italy, *Chi non ha non è*—"Whoever has nothing is nothing."

286.

FARM ANIMALS, PETS AND THE LIKE.—Could anything be more disgusting than the gushing, sentimental feelings people show toward plants and animals? These feelings come from a creature who, right

from the start, has destroyed them as their fiercest enemy. And in the end he even expects love from the very victims he has weakened and maimed! When facing this kind of "nature," a person must above all be serious, if he is any kind of thinking being at all.

287.

TWO FRIENDS.—They used to be friends, but now they are not anymore. Both of them ended the friendship at the same moment. One did it because he believed he was badly misunderstood. The other did it because he thought he was known far too closely. And both of them were wrong! Because neither of them knew himself well enough.

288.

THE PLAY-ACTING OF NOBLE SOULS.—Some people cannot manage to show a warm, noble, friendly closeness toward others. So they try to let their noble nature show in another way: by being reserved and strict, and by looking down a little on closeness, as if their strong inner confidence were too shy to show itself.

289.

WHERE WE MUST NOT SAY ANYTHING AGAINST A VIRTUE.—Among cowards, it is thought bad manners to say anything against bravery, because saying such a thing would make people look down on you. And people who have no feelings get annoyed when anyone says something against pity.(9)

290.

A WASTE.—With touchy, hasty people, we find that their first words and actions usually tell us nothing about what they are really like. These first words and actions are pushed out of them by the situation,

and in a way they just copy the mood of that situation. But since those words have already been said and those things already done, the words and actions that come afterward, the ones that show who these people really are, often have to be spent on making peace, fixing things, or wiping out what came first.

291.

ARROGANCE.—Arrogance is a fake, put-on kind of pride. But the very heart of real pride is that it cannot fake anything, cannot pretend, and cannot be two-faced. So arrogance is pretending while lacking the ability to pretend. That is a very hard thing to pull off, and most of the time it fails. Now suppose, as usually happens, the show-off gives himself away. Then he gets three kinds of trouble at once. People are angry with him because he tried to fool them. They are angry because he wanted to look better than them. And finally they laugh at him because he failed at both. So how seriously we should try to talk other people out of being arrogant!

292.

A KIND OF MISUNDERSTANDING.—When we hear someone talk, sometimes just the way he says one single consonant, the letter r for example, is enough to make us doubt whether his feelings are honest. We are not used to that way of saying it. If we said it like that, we would be doing it on purpose, for no reason, so it sounds "forced" to us. This is the area where the biggest misunderstandings can happen. And it is the same with a writer's style when he has certain habits that not everyone has. Only he himself feels his style as "natural." And it may be exactly in the parts that he himself feels are "forced," because there he gave in to the current fashion and to so-called "good taste," that he pleases readers and makes them trust him.

293.

THANKFUL.—Just one grain too many of gratitude and devotion makes a person suffer as if from a bad habit. However independent and honest you are, you start to have a guilty conscience.

294.

SAINTS.—It is the men with the strongest bodily desires who feel they must stay away from women and torture their own bodies.

295.

THE FINE ART OF SERVING.—One of the trickiest jobs in the great art of serving someone is serving a man who is more ambitious than usual. Such a man is extremely selfish in everything, yet he absolutely hates to be thought selfish, because that is part of his ambition. He demands that everything go exactly the way he wants and according to his moods. But it must be done in such a way that he always seems to have given something up for others, and seems hardly ever to want anything just for himself.

296.

DUELLING.—Someone once said: I think it is a great advantage to be able to fight a duel, if it really cannot be avoided, of course, because I always have brave friends around me. The duel is the last fully honourable way of killing yourself that is left to us. Sadly, though, it is a roundabout way, and not even a sure one.

297.

HARMFUL.—The surest way to spoil a young man is to teach him to think more highly of people who think like him than of people who think differently.

298.

HERO-WORSHIP AND ITS FANATICS.—Think of a fanatic whose ideal is a real flesh-and-blood person. As a rule, he is right as long as he is saying no to things, and he is fearsome in saying no. He knows what he rejects as well as he knows himself, for a simple reason: he comes from there, he feels at home there, and he always secretly fears that one day he will be forced to go back there. So he tries, by the way he rejects it, to make going back impossible. But as soon as he starts saying yes to something, he half closes his eyes and starts to make it look perfect, often just to annoy the people who stayed behind at home. You could say there is something artistic about this. Agreed, but there is also something dishonest about it.

Someone who turns a person into an ideal imagines that person to be so far away that he can no longer see him clearly. Then he twists the little he can still make out into something "beautiful", that is, something balanced, blurry, and unclear. Since he wants to worship from a distance this ideal floating high up far away, he feels he must build a temple for the one he worships, to protect him from the common crowd. Into this temple he brings all the respected and holy things he still owns, so that his ideal can borrow their charm, and so that, fed in this way, it can become more and more godlike. In the end he really does manage to make his God. But, too bad for him! There is someone who knows exactly how all this was done: his own honesty of mind. And there is someone else who, without even meaning to, starts to protest against all this: the person who was turned into a

god. Because of all this worship, praise, and incense, that person now becomes completely unbearable, and shows in the most obvious and awful way that he is not divine at all, but only too human.

In a case like this, such a fanatic has only one way out left. He patiently lets himself and the others like him be mistreated, and he explains all this misery as being "for the greater glory of God", using a new kind of self-deception and noble lying. He turns against himself, and by doing so, as both the one explaining things and the one being mistreated, he goes through something like being a martyr. In this way he climbs to the very top of his vanity. You could find men like this, for example, among the people around Napoleon. In fact, perhaps it was Napoleon who filled the soul of his century with that romantic habit of falling on its knees before the "genius" and the "hero", a habit so foreign to the reason-loving spirit of the nineteenth century. He was a man about whom even Byron was not ashamed to say that he himself was "a worm compared with such a being." (The words and formulas for this kneeling were found by Thomas Carlyle, that arrogant, confused old grumbler, who spent his long life trying to make the common sense of his fellow Englishmen romantic: but he failed!)

299.

WHAT ONLY LOOKS LIKE HEROISM.—Throwing ourselves into the middle of our enemies may actually be a sign of cowardice.

300.

BEING GRACIOUS TO THE FLATTERER.—Men whose ambition can never be satisfied show their greatest cleverness in this way. When they see flatterers, they feel contempt for people. But they don't

just hide that contempt. They even act kind and gracious toward the flatterers, like a God who can only ever be gracious and kind.

301.

"STRENGTH OF CHARACTER."—"What I have said once, I will do." People believe that thinking this way shows great strength of character. But think how many things we do, not because we picked them as the most sensible choice, but because at the moment we thought of them, they somehow stirred up our ambition and our vanity. So we don't stop until we have carried them out, blindly. In this way, these actions strengthen our belief in our own character and our clear conscience. In short, they strengthen our sense of our own strength. On the other hand, choosing the most sensible actions possible makes us a little doubtful about ourselves, and so it feeds a feeling of weakness in us.

302.

TRUE ONCE, TWICE, AND THREE TIMES.—People lie an enormous amount, and they lie often. But they don't think about it afterward, and usually they don't even believe they lied.

303.

THE PSYCHOLOGIST'S HOBBY.—The thinker says: One man thinks he knows me. Whenever he has any dealings with me, he imagines that he is sharp and important. And I am careful not to show him he is wrong. If I did, I would suffer for it. As things are now, he wishes me well, because I make him feel that he is above me.—There is another man who is afraid that I think I know him, and this makes him feel beneath me. Because of this, when I am around, he acts shy and

unsure of himself. He tries to fool me about what he is really like, so that he can get the upper hand over me again.

304.

THE DESTROYERS OF THE WORLD.—When some people fail to get what they want, they shout in anger, "Let the whole world be destroyed!" This ugly feeling is envy at its very worst. It reasons like this: "Because I can't have this one thing, the whole world must have nothing at all! The whole world shall not exist!"

305.

GREED.—When we go out to buy something, the cheaper the thing is, the greedier we get. Why? Is it because tiny differences in price are exactly what greed's small eye is made to notice?

306.

THE GREEK IDEAL.—What did the Greeks admire about Ulysses, the hero of their old stories? Most of all, they admired how well he could lie, and how he could take clever and terrible revenge. They admired that he could handle any situation. When he needed to, he could seem nobler than the noblest man. He could become whatever he wanted to be. He kept going with heroic stubbornness. He had every tool at his command. He had genius—and the genius of Ulysses was something even the gods admired; they smiled when they thought of it. All of this is the Greek ideal! What is most striking about it is that the Greeks did not feel any clash at all between seeming to be something and really being it. Because of that, they could not judge it in moral terms. Were there ever such skilled actors?

307.

FACTS! YES, MADE-UP FACTS!—The historian doesn't need to care about events that actually happened. He only needs to care about the events people believe happened, because only those have had any effect. The same goes for heroes who existed only in people's minds. What is his subject, this so-called recorded history? It is nothing but opinions about imagined actions and their imagined reasons. These opinions then lead to more opinions and actions. But whatever was real in them disappears at once, like steam, and works only as steam. It is a never-ending birth and breeding of ghosts, floating above the thick fog of a reality too deep to measure. All historians write about things that never existed, except in people's imagination.

308.

IT IS NOBLE NOT TO UNDERSTAND BUSINESS.—Some people sell their good qualities only for the highest price. Some even lend them out for interest, like a moneylender—for example, as a teacher, a government worker, or an artist. Doing that drags genius and talent down to the level of an ordinary shopkeeper. We must be careful not to be crafty and money-minded with our wisdom!

309.

FEAR AND LOVE.—Fear has done more than love to help people understand human beings in general. That is because fear tries to find out who the other person is, what he is able to do, and what he wants. Being fooled about these things would be dangerous and harmful. Love, on the other hand, is driven by a secret longing. It wants to find as many beautiful qualities as it can in the person it loves, or to lift that person up as high as possible. For love, being

fooled in this way is a pleasure and a gain—and that is why love does it.

310.

GOOD-NATURED PEOPLE.—Good-natured people got their character from their ancestors, who lived in constant fear of being attacked by outsiders. Those ancestors were used to calming things down and keeping the peace. They humbled themselves, headed off trouble, changed the subject, flattered, and apologized. They hid their sadness and anger and kept a calm face. In the end, they passed this whole delicate, finely built machinery down to their children and grandchildren. Those descendants had an easier life and did not feel this fear. But they still keep running along the same old track.

311.

THE SO-CALLED SOUL.—People have certain inner movements of feeling that come naturally to them, so they can set them going easily and gracefully. The sum of all these is what we call the soul. And people are thought to have no soul when they let others see that their inner feelings are hard and painful for them.

312.

THE FORGETFUL ONES.—In bursts of passion, and in the false visions of dreams and madness, a person finds again his own earliest history, and the earliest history of the human race: the animal in us and its wild, ugly faces. For once, his memory reaches far back into the past. Yet his civilized state grew out of forgetting these early experiences—that is, out of this memory fading away. Someone with a higher nature, a forgetful one, who has always stayed far from these things, does not understand people. But it is a good thing if, now and

then, there are individuals who do not understand people—individuals who were, so to speak, made from a divine seed and born from reason.

313.

THE FRIEND WE NO LONGER WANT.—If we can't live up to a friend's hopes, we would rather have that friend as an enemy.

314.

AMONG THINKERS.—We thinkers are adventurers and travelling birds. In the middle of the sea of change, we wake up on an island no bigger than a small boat. Here we look around for a moment, as fast and as curiously as we can. After all, a storm could quickly blow us away, or a wave could wash over the little island and leave nothing of us behind! But here, on this tiny patch of ground, we meet other travelling birds, and we hear about others who came even earlier. And so we live together for one precious minute of recognizing each other and guessing at things, among the cheerful flapping of wings and happy chirping. Then, in our minds, we set off far out onto the sea, feeling just as proud as the sea itself.

315.

GIVING SOMETHING UP.—Giving away some of what we own, or letting go of a right, feels good when it shows that we are very rich. Generosity belongs in this group.

316.

WEAK SECTS.—Some religious groups feel that they will always stay small and weak. So they go looking for a few clever people to join

them, hoping to make up in quality for what they lack in numbers. This puts clever minds in quite a lot of danger.

317.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE EVENING.—Think of a man who looks back on his day's work and his life's work when he has come to the end of his journey and feels tired. He usually reaches a sad conclusion. But this is not the fault of the day or of his life. It is the fault of his tiredness.—When we are in the middle of creating something, we usually don't stop to think about life and existence. We don't do it in the middle of our pleasures either. But if this did happen to us just once, we would no longer believe that God was right when he waited for the seventh day, the day of rest, to find that everything that exists was very beautiful.—He had missed the right moment.

318.

WATCH OUT FOR SYSTEM-BUILDERS!—There is something a bit comic about people who build systems of thought. In trying to make their system complete and to round off its edges neatly, they have to make their weaker qualities look as if they were in the same style as their stronger ones.—They want to look like complete people who are equally strong in every way.

319.

HOSPITALITY.—The purpose of hospitality is to freeze any hostile feeling a stranger might have. When we stop seeing strangers as enemies, hospitality fades away. It thrives only as long as its ugly starting point does, which is the belief that strangers are enemies.

320.

THE WEATHER.—When the weather is unusual and unpredictable, people become suspicious, even of each other. At the same time, they start to like new things, because they have to break away from their usual habits. This is why tyrants like countries where the weather is "moral", that is, steady and well-behaved.

321.

THE DANGER IN INNOCENCE.—Innocent people become easy victims in every situation. This is because they don't know enough to tell the difference between moderation and excess, and they don't know how to be on guard against themselves in time. Because of this, innocent young women, which means young women who know nothing, get used to having sex often. Then, in later years, they miss it badly when their husbands fall ill or grow old too early. It is because of this harmless and conventional idea, that frequent sex is right and proper, that they come to feel a need which later exposes them to the hardest troubles, and even worse.

But let us look at the matter from a higher and more general point of view. Whoever loves a person or a thing without really knowing them falls victim to something he would not love if he could see it clearly. Whenever experience, caution, and careful steps are needed, it is the innocent person who will be corrupted most completely. This is because he has to drink, with his eyes closed, the very bottom of the cup and the most hidden poison of everything that is set before him. Think about how all princes, churches, sects, parties, and organizations behave. Isn't the innocent person always used as the sweetest bait for the most dangerous and wicked traps? It is just like the old story where Ulysses used the innocent young Neoptolemus to trick the old, sick hermit and monster on the island of Lemnos out of his

bow and arrows. Christianity, with its contempt for the world, has turned ignorance into a virtue, and called it innocence. Perhaps it did this because the most common result of this innocence is exactly what I described above: guilt, the feeling of guilt, and despair. In other words, it is a virtue that leads to Heaven by taking the long way round through Hell. Only then can the gloomy entrance gates of Christian salvation be opened, and only then does the promise of a second innocence after death have any effect. This is one of the cleverest inventions of Christianity!

322.

LIVING WITHOUT A DOCTOR WHEN YOU CAN.—It seems to me that a sick person lives more carelessly when a doctor is watching over him than when he looks after his own health. In the first case, it is enough for him to follow all the doctor's orders exactly. But in the second case, he pays more attention to the real goal behind those orders, which is his health. He notices much more, and he puts himself under stricter discipline than his doctor's instructions would ever force him to.

All rules have this effect: they pull our attention away from the basic goal of the rule and make us more thoughtless. But just imagine how far people would have gone into excess and self-destruction if they had ever completely and honestly left everything to God as their doctor, and lived by the words "as God wills"!

323.

THE DARKENING OF THE SKY.—Do you know the revenge of those shy people who act in company as if they had stolen their own arms and legs? The revenge of the humble, Christian-like souls who barely manage to sneak quietly through the world? The revenge of those

who always judge too quickly, and who are just as quickly told they are wrong? The revenge of every kind of drunkard, for whom the morning is always the worst part of the day? And also the revenge of all kinds of invalids, sick people, and depressed people who no longer have the courage to get well?

The number of these small-minded, revengeful people is beyond counting, and the number of their small acts of revenge is even greater. The air around us is always whistling with the arrows of spite that they shoot. Because of this, the sun and sky of their lives grow dark. And sadly, not only their lives, but more often ours and other people's too. This is worse than the many wounds they make on our skin and in our hearts. Don't we sometimes deny that the sun and sky exist at all, just because we haven't seen them for so long?—Well then, being alone! Because of this, being alone!

324.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ACTOR.—All great actors share a happy illusion. They imagine that the historical figures they are playing really felt the same way the actors feel while performing them. But in this they are badly mistaken. They have a talent for copying and guessing, which they would love to show off as a kind of magical insight. But this talent only goes deep enough to explain gestures, tone of voice, and looks, and in general anything on the outside. In other words, they can catch the shadow of the soul of a great hero, a statesman, or a warrior, or of someone ambitious, jealous, or desperate. They get fairly close to the soul, but they never reach the innermost spirit of the person they are imitating.

It really would be something to find out that we don't need thinkers, psychologists, or experts at all, and that all we need to shed light on the true nature of any state of mind is actors who can somehow see

inside people. Whenever we hear claims like that, let us never forget that the actor is nothing more than a perfect copycat, an ape that imitates. He is so much of an ape, in fact, that he can't even believe in the "true nature" of anything, or in what is "essential." For him, everything turns into nothing but performance: tone of voice, posture, the stage, the scenery, and the audience.

325.

LIVING AND BELIEVING APART.—The way to become the prophet and miracle-worker of your time is the same today as it was long ago. You have to live apart from others, with little knowledge, a few ideas, and a huge amount of self-importance. In the end we come to believe that humanity can't get along without us, because it's obvious that we can get along without humanity. Once we are filled with this belief, we find faith. Finally, here is a piece of advice for anyone who needs it. It was given to Wesley by Boehler, his spiritual teacher: "Preach faith until you have it. Then you will preach it because you have it!"

326.

KNOWING OUR CIRCUMSTANCES.—We can measure our separate abilities, but not our overall strength. Our circumstances don't just hide that strength from us at some times and show it to us at others, by turns. They even make it look bigger or smaller than it really is. We should think of ourselves as amounts that keep changing, whose ability to create can climb to the greatest possible heights when conditions are right. So we must think carefully about these circumstances, and spare no effort in studying them.

327.

A FABLE.—The Don Juan of knowledge, a seducer who chases knowledge the way Don Juan chased women: no philosopher or poet has managed to discover him yet. He does not love the things he comes to know. But he has sharp wits, a hungry desire to hunt down knowledge, and a taste for the scheming that goes with the hunt, and he enjoys all of this, all the way up to the highest and farthest stars of knowledge. In the end there is nothing left for him to chase except the part of knowledge that is purely harmful, just like the drunkard who ends up drinking absinthe and even acid. That is why, last of all, he longs for hell, because hell is the final knowledge that tempts him. Maybe even hell would let him down, as everything does once you know it! Then he would have to stand still forever, a victim of endless disappointment, turned into his own enemy, the stone statue, who longs for a supper of knowledge that will never again be served to him! For the whole world of things will not have a single bite left to offer to such hungry men.

328.

WHAT IDEALISTIC THEORIES REVEAL.—The place where we are most sure to find lofty, idealistic theories is among hard-headed practical people who have no scruples. These people need the shine of such theories to protect their good name. They take them up by instinct, and they don't feel at all like hypocrites when they do it—no more than the English feel like hypocrites about their Christianity and their strict keeping of Sunday. On the other hand, there are thoughtful, inward-looking people who must always guard themselves against all kinds of daydreams, and who are afraid of being seen as wild enthusiasts. Such people can only be satisfied with hard, down-to-earth theories. They grab hold of these theories out of the same kind of instinctive need, and they don't lose their honesty by doing so.

329.

THE PEOPLE WHO SPEAK BADLY OF CHEERFULNESS.—People who have been deeply hurt by life's disappointments look at all cheerfulness with suspicion. To them it seems childish and silly, as if it showed a lack of common sense. It stirs pity and tenderness in them, the kind of feeling you would have watching a dying child stroke his toys on his deathbed. Such people seem to see hidden graves under every rose. Parties, noise, and cheerful music look to them like illusions that a dangerously sick man chooses on purpose, because he still wants one quick sip from life's heady cup. But this view of cheerfulness is only cheerfulness reflected against a dark background of tiredness and sickness. In itself, this view is touching, unreasonable, and sad, and even childlike and silly. But it belongs to that second childhood that comes along with old age and announces that death is near.

330.

STILL NOT ENOUGH!—It is not enough to prove something. We also have to draw people toward it, or lift them up to it. That is why the wise man has to learn how to pass on his wisdom—and often in such a way that it may sound like foolishness!

331.

WHERE IT IS RIGHT, AND WHERE IT STOPS.—Strict self-denial is the right way of thinking for people who have to root out their bodily desires, because in them those desires are wild, savage beasts. But it is right only for such people!

332.

THE INFLATED STYLE.—Think of an artist who does not want to pour his lofty feelings into a work and so get them off his chest, but instead wants to pass those lofty feelings on to other people. Such an artist becomes pompous and puffed up, and his style becomes the inflated, overblown style.

333.

"HUMANITY."—We don't think of animals as moral beings. But do you think animals think of us as moral beings? An animal that could talk once said: "Humanity is a prejudice that we animals, at least, don't suffer from."

334.

THE CHARITABLE MAN.—When a charitable man does good, he is satisfying a need in his own feelings. The stronger this need is, the less he tries to put himself in the shoes of the people who are serving to satisfy his desire. He becomes tactless, and sometimes even offensive. (This remark applies to the kindness and charity of the Jews, which, as everyone knows, is somewhat more gushing than that of other peoples.) (10)

335.

SO THAT LOVE MAY FEEL LIKE LOVE.—We have to be honest with ourselves, and know ourselves very well indeed, before we can practise on others that kindly kind of pretending that people call love and kindness.

336.

WHAT ARE WE CAPABLE OF?—There was a man whose wicked, spiteful son had tormented him all day long. In the evening he killed the son. Then, sighing with relief, he said to the rest of his family: "Well, now we can sleep in peace." Who knows what circumstances might push us to do!

337.

"NATURAL."—Take an artist who is fake, who is otherwise theatrical and only half genuine. Perhaps the last praise you can give such an artist is that he is natural, at least in his weaknesses. And for exactly this reason, such a man will boldly show off his weaknesses.

338.

A STAND-IN FOR CONSCIENCE.—One person can be another person's conscience. This matters most of all when the other person has no other conscience.

339.

HOW DUTIES CHANGE.—Sometimes our duties stop being hard to carry out. After long practice they turn into pleasant enjoyments and needs. When that happens, the rights of the other people that our duties (which are now really our desires) are about also turn into something else: they become a cause of pleasant feelings for us. From then on, the "other" person, because of his rights, becomes someone we love, instead of someone we look up to with respect and awe as before. When we recognise and protect how far his power reaches, it is really our own pleasure we are after. The Quietists, a group of Christian mystics, reached a point where they no longer felt their Christian faith as a burden, and found their joy only in God. Then

they took as their motto: “Do everything for the glory of God.” From then on, whatever they did in this spirit was no longer a sacrifice. It was as good as saying, “Everything for the sake of our own pleasure.” Kant demands that duty should always be somewhat of a burden. But to demand that is to demand that duty must never grow into a habit or a custom. There is a small leftover of the cruelty of harsh self-denial in this demand.

340.

APPEARANCES ARE AGAINST THE HISTORIAN.—It has been proven well enough that human beings come out of their mother's womb. And yet, when children have grown up and stand next to their mother, this idea seems quite ridiculous. Everything you can see speaks against it.

341.

THE ADVANTAGE OF NOT KNOWING.—Someone once said that as a child he looked down so much on the moods and whims of gloomy, melancholy people that he didn't know what his own temperament was like until he was grown up and middle-aged. And it turned out his temperament was exactly that: gloomy and melancholy. He said this was the best of all possible kinds of not knowing.

342.

DON'T BE FOOLED!—Yes, he looked at the thing from every side, and you think he must be a man of deep knowledge. But all he wants is to push the price down—he wants to buy it!

343.

A MORAL PRETENCE.—You refuse to be unhappy with yourselves or to suffer from yourselves, and you call this your moral attitude! Fine. Someone else might call it your cowardice! But one thing is certain: you will never travel around the world (and you yourselves are this world). You will always stay, inside yourselves, a mere accident and a lump of dirt on the face of the earth! Do you imagine that we, who think differently from you, are just being foolish when we set off on the journey through our own wildernesses, swamps, and glaciers? Do you think we are choosing sorrow and disgust with ourselves of our own free will, like the Stylites, those holy men who lived for years on top of pillars?

344.

CLEVERNESS IN MAKING MISTAKES.—People say that Homer sometimes nodded off, meaning he sometimes slipped up. If so, he was wiser than all those artists whose ambition never lets them rest. We have to let our admirers stop for a while and catch their breath, by letting them find something to criticise now and then. Nobody can stand an excellence that is brilliant and tireless without a break. Instead of doing people good, such a master would just become a slave-driver, someone we hate while he walks ahead of us.

345.

OUR HAPPINESS PROVES NOTHING, FOR OR AGAINST.—Many people can only hold a small amount of happiness. If their wisdom cannot give them more happiness than that, this does not prove their wisdom is wrong. In the same way, it does not prove that medicine is useless just because many people cannot be cured, and others are always sick. I wish everyone the luck of finding the way of looking at

life that lets them reach *their own* greatest share of happiness! Even so, that will not always stop their life from being miserable and something nobody would envy.

346.

THE ENEMIES OF WOMEN.—"Woman is our enemy." A man who says this to other men is showing an out-of-control lust, a desire that hates not only itself but also the thing it uses to satisfy itself.

347.

THE SCHOOL OF THE PUBLIC SPEAKER.—When a man has stayed silent for a whole year, he learns to stop chattering and to speak with real thought instead. The Pythagoreans, who practised such silence, were the best statesmen of their time.

348.

THE SENSE OF POWER.—Notice the difference. The man who wants to gain a sense of power grabs at any means to get it, and thinks nothing is too small if it can feed that feeling. But the man who already has power has become picky and refined in his tastes, and he finds very few things that satisfy him.

349.

NOT SO VERY IMPORTANT.—When we are at someone's deathbed, a certain thought always comes to us, and we push it away at once out of a false sense of what is proper. The thought is this: dying is less important than the usual deep respect for it wants us to believe. And the dying person has probably already lost, during his life, things that mattered more than what he is about to lose by dying. In this case, the end is certainly not the goal.

350.

THE BEST WAY TO PROMISE.—When someone makes a promise, it is not just the words that make the promise, but also what lies unspoken behind the words. In fact, words make a promise weaker, because they let out and use up some of the very strength that does the promising. So shake hands when you make a promise, but put your finger on your lips. That way your promises will be the safest.

351.

USUALLY MISUNDERSTOOD.—In conversation we sometimes see people trying to set a trap to catch others. They do it not out of meanness, as you might think, but because they enjoy feeling clever. Other people set up a joke so that someone else can say the punchline; they tie the knot so that others can untie it. They do this not out of kindness, as you might think, but out of nastiness, and because they look down on slow, crude minds.

352.

CENTRE.—The feeling "I am the centre of the world" hits us hard when we are suddenly caught in disgrace. Then we feel as if we were standing stunned in the middle of a crashing wave, blinded by the stare of one huge eye. That eye looks down on us from every side and sees right through us.

353.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH.—"The truth must be told, even if the world should be smashed to pieces"—so cries the famous Fichte, in his grand, showy way. Yes, of course; but first we have to actually have the truth. What he really means, though, is that everyone should say

what they think, even if it turned everything upside down. That point, however, is open to argument.

354.

THE COURAGE TO SUFFER.—The way we are now, we can put up with a fair amount of unpleasantness, and our stomach is built to handle such hard-to-digest food. In fact, if it were taken away from us, we might find the feast of life tasteless. And if we were not willing to suffer pain, we would have to let too many pleasures slip away!

355.

ADMIRERS.—A man who admires something so much that he would be ready to crucify anyone who did not admire it too must be counted among the executioners of his group. Be careful about shaking hands with him, even when he is on your own side.

356.

THE EFFECT OF HAPPINESS.—The first effect of happiness is the sense of power. This feeling wants to show itself, whether toward ourselves or other people, or toward ideas and imaginary beings. The most common ways it shows itself are giving gifts, mocking, and destroying. All three come from the same basic instinct.

357.

MORAL MOSQUITOES.—Some moralists have no love of knowledge and know only the pleasure of causing pain. They have the narrow mind and dullness of small-town people. Their hobby, as cruel as it is sad, is to watch the other person as closely as they can and, without being noticed, to place a pin where he cannot help pricking himself on it. Such people have kept some of the nastiness of schoolboys, who

cannot have fun without chasing and tormenting something, alive or dead.

358.

REASONS AND THEIR LACK OF REASON.—You dislike him, and you give countless reasons for your dislike. But I believe only in your dislike, not in your reasons! You flatter yourself by presenting, to yourself and to me, as a logical conclusion something that is really just a matter of instinct.

359.

APPROVING OF SOMETHING.—We approve of marriage, first, because we do not know it yet; second, because we have got used to it; and third, because we have entered into it. That is how it goes in most cases. And yet none of this proves anything about the value of marriage in general.

360.

NOT ABOUT USEFULNESS.—"Power that has suffered greatly, in action and in thought, is better than weakness that is only treated kindly." That was how the Greeks thought. In other words, they valued the sense of power more highly than simple usefulness or a good reputation.

361.

UGLY TO LOOK AT.—Moderation thinks of itself as quite beautiful. It does not realise that to people who live without limits it looks crude and dull, and therefore ugly.

362.

DIFFERENT IN HOW THEY HATE.—Some people do not start to hate until they feel weak and tired; otherwise they are fair-minded and above such things. Others only start to hate when they see a chance for revenge; otherwise they carefully avoid anger, both hidden and open, and let it pass whenever there is a reason for it.

363.

PEOPLE OF CHANCE.—Pure luck plays the key part in every invention, but most people never come across this luck.

364.

CHOOSING WHERE TO LIVE.—We should be careful not to live among people where we can neither keep a proud, dignified silence nor share our higher thoughts. In such a place, all that is left for us to talk about is our complaints, our needs, and the whole sad story of our troubles. Because of this, we grow unhappy with ourselves and with the people around us. On top of the discomfort that makes us complain in the first place, we add the irritation of always being the one who grumbles. Instead, we should live in a place where we would feel ashamed to talk about ourselves, and where there would be no need to do so.—But who actually thinks about such things, or about choosing in such matters? We just talk about our "fate," brace our shoulders as if carrying a great weight, and sigh, "Poor me, I am like Atlas, forced to hold up the whole world!"

365.

VANITY.—Vanity is the fear of seeming original. So it shows a lack of pride, but it does not have to mean a lack of originality.

366.

THE CRIMINAL'S SORROW.—When a criminal is caught, he does not suffer because of the crime he committed. He suffers because of the shame and annoyance he feels, either because he made some mistake, or because he has been taken away from the way of life he was used to. It takes sharp judgment to tell these cases apart. Anyone who has spent a lot of time around prisons and reform schools is amazed at how rarely they see truly honest "regret." They are even more amazed at how strongly prisoners long to go back to their old, wicked crime, which they love.

367.

ALWAYS LOOKING HAPPY.—In Greece in the third century, philosophy had become a public contest, where thinkers tried to outdo one another. At that time, quite a few philosophers became happy just by thinking that others, who lived by different rules and suffered because of them, must surely be jealous of their happiness. They believed that their happiness was the best way to prove these other people wrong. To do this, they were willing to look happy all the time. But by keeping this up, in the end they actually had to become happy! This was the case, for example, with the Cynics.

368.

THE CAUSE OF MUCH MISUNDERSTANDING.—When our nervous energy is growing, our morality is cheerful and restless. When our nervous energy is fading, such as toward evening, or in sick people and old people, our morality is passive, calm, patient, and sad, and quite often even gloomy. Depending on which of these two moralities we have, we do not understand the one we lack. We often see it in other people as immorality and weakness.

369.

LIFTING YOURSELF ABOVE YOUR OWN LOWNESS.—They really are "proud" people, those who need others to bully and push around in order to feel worthy and important. These are the people who need others so powerless and cowardly that they can make grand, angry displays in front of them without any punishment. In other words, they need the lowness of the people around them in order to lift themselves, for one short moment, above their own lowness!—For this purpose, one man needs a dog, another needs a friend, a third needs a wife, a fourth needs a political party, and a fifth, who is very rare indeed, needs a whole era.

370.

HOW FAR THE THINKER LOVES HIS ENEMY.—Make it a rule never to hold back or hide from yourself anything that could be argued against your own ideas. Promise it! This is the most basic requirement of honest thinking. You must fight this kind of battle against yourself every single day. Winning, and holding the ground you have won, is no longer your business, but the business of truth—and your losing is no longer your business either!

371.

THE HARM THAT COMES FROM STRENGTH.—Violence that comes from strong emotion, for example from rage, should be understood in terms of the body: it is an attempt to escape a feeling of choking that is about to come over us. Countless acts that come from excess energy and are taken out on other people are simply ways of releasing a sudden build-up of pressure through a burst of muscle effort. Perhaps the whole "harm that comes from strength" should be seen this way. (This harm from strength hurts others without mean-

ing to—it simply has to come out somewhere. The harm that comes from weakness, on the other hand, wants to hurt, and wants to see signs of suffering.)

372.

IN PRAISE OF THE TRUE EXPERT.—As soon as someone who is not an expert starts acting like a judge, we should object, whether that person is a cocky young man or a cocky young woman. Being excited about something or someone, or delighting in it, is not an argument. Neither is disgust or hatred.

373.

SNEAKY CRITICISM.—When some people say, "He doesn't know people," they mean, "He doesn't know what meanness is." When others say it, they mean, "He doesn't know the rare exceptions, and he knows all too well what meanness is."

374.

THE VALUE OF SACRIFICE.—The more people question whether states and rulers have the right to sacrifice the individual (for example, in courts of law, in forcing people into the army, and so on), the more the value of sacrificing oneself will rise.

375.

SPEAKING TOO CLEARLY.—There are several reasons why we pronounce our words too clearly. First, because we do not trust ourselves when we use a new language we have not practised. Second, because we do not trust other people, since they are stupid or slow to understand. The same is true in matters of the mind: what we say is sometimes too clear, almost painfully so, because otherwise the people we

are speaking to would not understand us. So a perfect, effortless style is only allowed when we are speaking to a perfect audience.

376.

PLENTY OF SLEEP.—What can we do to wake ourselves up when we are worn out and tired of our own self? Some people suggest the gambling table, others suggest Christianity, and still others suggest electricity. But the best cure, my dear worrier who is always imagining illness, is now and always will be plenty of sleep, both in the real sense and in the wider sense of resting and stepping back. That way, a new morning will finally rise for us. The trick of practical wisdom is to know the right time to use this cure, in both of its forms.

377.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM WILD, FANCIFUL IDEALS.—Wherever we are lacking something, that is where our passion lies. The passionate rule "love your enemies" had to be invented by the Jews, the best haters who ever lived. And the most beautiful praise of chastity has been written by people who, in their youth, lived wild and immoral lives.

378.

CLEAN HANDS AND CLEAN WALLS.—Do not paint a picture of God or of the devil on your walls. If you do, you will ruin your walls and everything around them as well.(11)

379.

LIKELY AND UNLIKELY.—A woman secretly loved a man. She placed him far above herself, and hundreds of times, deep in her heart, she said to herself: “If a man like that were ever to love me, I would see it

as such a great favour from him that I would have to bow down to the ground before him." And the man felt the very same way about the woman. Deep in his heart, he had exactly the same thought. At last they both found the courage to speak, and they told each other their most secret thoughts. After that, there was a long, deep, thoughtful silence. Then the woman said in a cold voice: "It's perfectly clear! Neither of us is the person we loved! If you are only what you say you are, and nothing more, then I lowered myself and loved you for nothing. Some evil spirit fooled me, just as it fooled you." This story is very likely, yet it never happens. And why not?

380.

ADVICE THAT HAS BEEN TESTED.—Of all the ways to comfort someone who needs it, none works as well as telling him that, in his case, no comfort is possible. This makes him feel so special and set apart that the suffering person will lift his head up again right away.

381.

KNOWING YOUR "PERSONALITY".—We too often forget that strangers who see us for the first time see someone quite different from the person we think we are. Most of the time, we show them only one particular feature that catches their eye, and that one feature decides the impression we make on them. So even the most peaceful and fair-minded man, if he happens to have a big moustache, may, so to speak, rest in the shade of that moustache. Ordinary people will see him simply as the owner of a big moustache. To them that means a soldierly, hot-tempered, and sometimes violent character, and they will treat him that way.

382.

GARDENERS AND GARDENS.—Wet, gloomy days, loneliness, and unkind words make conclusions sprout inside us like mushrooms. One morning we find they have grown up right in front of us, and we have no idea where they came from. And there they sit, frowning at us, sulky and grim. Too bad for the thinker who, instead of being the gardener who tends his plants, is only the soil they grow out of.

383.

THE PLAY-ACTING OF PITY.—No matter how much we feel for a friend who is unhappy, we are always a little bit insincere when we are with him. We hold back from telling him everything we think, and how we think it. We are as careful as a doctor standing beside the bed of a seriously ill patient.

384.

ODD SAINTS.—There are timid, faint-hearted people who think badly of the very best parts of their own work, and who also explain and talk about their work badly. But, as a kind of revenge, they also think badly of other people's sympathy, and they don't believe in sympathy at all. They are ashamed to look as if they have been swept away by their feelings, and they take a stubborn comfort in looking ridiculous, or even in becoming ridiculous.—You can find moods of the soul like these in gloomy, sad artists.

385.

VAIN PEOPLE.—We are like shop windows. In them we keep arranging, hiding, or putting up front the qualities that other people think we have—and we do it in order to fool *ourselves*.

386.

Dramatic and Simple.—Some people never miss a chance to put on a deeply serious, emotional air. They do it because they enjoy picturing the onlooker beating his chest and feeling small and miserable. That may be a very common, low habit. So it may also be the sign of a noble mind to make fun of solemn, emotional moments, and to act in them without any show of dignity. The old fighting nobility of France had that kind of distinction and fine taste.

387.

A Thought Before Marriage.—Suppose she loved me: what a burden she would be to me in the long run! And suppose she did not love me: what an even bigger burden she would be to me in the long run! We have to choose between two different kinds of burden. So let us get married.

388.

Cheating With a Clear Conscience.—In certain countries, the Tyrol for example, it is extremely annoying to be cheated in small deals. That is because, on top of the bad deal, we also have to put up with the nasty face and crude greed of the man who cheated us, along with his guilty conscience and his hostile feelings toward us. In Venice, on the other hand, the cheater is thrilled at his clever trick, and is not angry at all with the man he has cheated. In fact, he is even ready to be a little kind to him, and above all to share a good laugh with him, if the other person feels like it. In short, to be a rogue you need wit and a clear conscience, and then the one who was cheated almost makes peace with the cheater.(12)

389.

A Bit Too Clumsy.—Some good people are too clumsy to be polite and charming. So when someone is polite to them, they hurry to pay it back with some important service, or with a gift bigger than they can really afford. It is touching to watch them shyly bring out their gold coins when others have only offered them copper coins painted gold!

390.

Hiding Your Cleverness.—When we catch someone hiding his cleverness from us, we call him wicked. We do so even more if we suspect that he did it out of good manners and kindness.

391.

The Bad Moment.—Lively, excitable people only lie for a moment. After that, they have fooled themselves, and they truly believe what they said and are honest about it.

392.

What Politeness Needs.—Politeness is a very good thing. It really is one of the four main virtues, even if it is the last of them. But there is a condition, so that it does not make us boring and tiring to each other. The person I am dealing with has to be either a little more polite or a little less polite than I am. Otherwise we would never get anywhere. The soothing oil of politeness would not only smooth things between us, it would glue us stuck together.

393.

Dangerous Virtues.—"He forgets nothing, but forgives everything." Because of this, people will hate him twice as much. He makes us feel ashamed twice over: once by his memory, and once by his generosity.

394.

Free of Vanity.—Passionate people do not care much about what others might think. Their strong feelings lift them above vanity.

395.

Deep Thinking.—For some thinkers, the quiet, reflective state that belongs to a thinker always comes after a state of fear. For others, it always comes after a state of desire. For the first kind, deep thinking seems tied to the feeling of being safe. For the second kind, it seems tied to the feeling of being stuffed full and having had too much. In other words, the first kind are lively and spirited in their mood, while the second kind are overfed and indifferent.

396.

Hunting.—One person hunts for pleasant truths, another for unpleasant ones. But even the first one enjoys the hunt more than the prize he catches.

397.

Education.—Education carries on what having children started. Very often it is also a kind of extra coat of paint brushed over it.

398.

How to Spot the Hot-Tempered.—When two people are fighting each other, or love and admire each other, the more hot-tempered one will always come off worse. The same is true of two nations.

399.

Making Excuses for Yourself.—Many people have every right to act in this way or that. But as soon as they start making excuses for what they did, we stop believing that they were right. And we are wrong.

400.

Moral Spoiling.—There are tender, very moral people who feel ashamed of all their successes, and feel guilty after every failure.

401.

Dangerous Unlearning.—We start by forgetting how to love others, and we end up finding nothing lovable in ourselves.

402.

Another Kind of Tolerance.—"Staying a minute too long on red-hot coals and getting a little burned does no harm, either to people or to chestnuts. A bit of bitterness and toughness makes the inside all the sweeter." Yes, that is your view, you who enjoy the taste! You lofty cannibals!

403.

Different Kinds of Pride.—Women go pale at the thought that the man they love may not be worthy of them. Men go pale at the thought that they may not be worthy of the women they love. I am talking

about perfect women and perfect men. Men like that, who usually rely on themselves and feel their own strength, become shy and full of doubt about themselves when they are gripped by a strong passion. Women like that, on the other hand, usually see themselves as the weaker sex, the one that devotes itself to others. But in the great exception of passion they become proud and aware of their power, and they ask: "Who, then, is worthy of me?"

404.

When We Rarely Act Fairly.—Some people cannot get excited about a great and good cause without doing a great injustice somewhere else. That is *their* kind of morality.

405.

Luxury.—The love of luxury is rooted deep in a person's heart. It shows that what is extra and beyond all limits is the sea in which his soul likes best to float.

406.

Making Someone Live Forever.—If you want to kill your enemy, first think about whether, by doing so, you will make him live forever inside you.

407.

Against Our Nature.—Sometimes the truth we have to say goes against our character, as very often happens. Then we act as if we had told a clumsy lie, and so we make people suspicious.

408.

Where a Lot of Gentleness Is Needed.—Many people have only two choices: to be open wrongdoers, or to carry their pain in secret.

409.

Illness.—Growing old too early, ugliness, and gloomy, hopeless opinions should all be counted as illnesses. These three things always go together.

410.

Timid People.—It is clumsy, timid people who easily become murderers. They do not know the small but good-enough ways to defend themselves or get back at someone. And because they lack cleverness and quick thinking, their hatred can think of no other solution than destroying the other person.

411.

Without Hatred.—You want to say goodbye to your passion? Fine, but do it without hating it! Otherwise you just have a second passion. The Christian who has freed himself from sin usually has his soul ruined afterwards by his hatred of sin. Just look at the faces of the great Christians! They are the faces of great haters.

412.

Clever and Narrow-Minded.—He cannot value anything outside himself. When he wants to value other people, he always has to begin by turning them into copies of himself. At that, though, he is very clever.

413.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ACCUSERS.—Keep a close eye on the person who accuses and investigates. He shows who he really is. And quite often, he turns out to be a worse person than the one whose crime he is looking into. The accuser believes, quite innocently, that anyone who is against a crime and a criminal must naturally be a good person, or at least must look like one. That is why he relaxes and lets himself go. In other words, he takes off his mask.

414.

CHOOSING TO BE BLIND.—There is a kind of eager, extreme devotion to a person or a group that actually shows something hidden. Deep down in our hearts, we feel that we are better than this person or group, and so we feel angry at ourselves for it. It is as if we make ourselves blind on purpose, to punish our eyes for having seen too much.

415.

A CURE FOR LOVE.—There is an old cure for love that goes straight to the root, and in most cases it still works as well as it always did: being loved back.

416.

WHERE IS OUR WORST ENEMY?—Someone who can take good care of his own business, and knows he can, is usually willing to make peace with the person against him. But when we believe that we are in the right, and we know that we are not able to defend that right, this creates a fierce hatred that cannot be calmed, aimed at whoever opposes our cause. So let everyone work out from this where to look for his worst enemies.

417.

HOW FAR HUMILITY CAN GO.—Many people have surely reached the kind of humility that says, in Latin, "I believe it because it is absurd," and gives up their reason for it. But as far as I know, nobody has ever reached the kind of humility that is really only one step further, the kind that says, "I believe it because I am absurd."

418.

ACTING OUT THE TRUTH.—Many people are truthful, not because they would be ashamed to show fake feelings, but because they would not be very good at getting others to believe their fakery. In short, such a person does not trust his own skill as an actor, so he would rather honestly act out the truth.

419.

COURAGE IN A GROUP.—The poor sheep say to the leading ram, the one wearing the bell: "Just lead us, and we will never be short of courage to follow you." But the poor ram thinks to himself: "Just follow me, and I will never be short of courage to lead you."

420.

THE TRICK OF THE ONE WHO SACRIFICES.—What a sad trick it is when we want to fool ourselves about the person we have given ourselves up for! We do it by giving him a chance to act, a situation in which he has to look to us exactly the way we would like him to be.

421.

THROUGH OTHERS.—There are people who only want to be seen through other people's eyes. Wanting this shows a great deal of wisdom.

422.

MAKING OTHERS HAPPY.—Why does making other people happy please us more than any other kind of pleasure? Because when we do it, we satisfy fifty different desires at once. Taken one by one, they might each be very small pleasures. But when they are all gathered into one hand, that hand is fuller than it has ever been, and so is the heart.

Book Five

423.

In the Great Silence. Here is the sea. Here we can forget the town. It's true that the town's bells are still ringing the evening prayer bell, the Angelus. It is a solemn and silly sound, and yet a sweet one, right where day meets night. But wait just one moment more! Now everything is silent. Over there lies the ocean, pale and shining. It cannot speak. The sky is glowing with its endless, silent evening colors, red, yellow, and green. It cannot speak. The small cliffs and rocks reach out into the sea, as if each one were trying to find the loneliest spot. They too are silent. This huge silence is truly beautiful and frightening. It comes over us so suddenly and makes our heart swell.

Oh! What a trick is hiding in this silent beauty! How well it could speak if it wanted to, and how cruelly, too! Its tongue is tied up and held down, and its face shows a happiness that is full of suffering. But all this is just spite, making fun of our sympathy. Fine, let it be so! I am not ashamed to be the toy of such powers! But I feel pity for you, nature, because you have to stay silent, even if the only thing tying your tongue is your own spite. No, more than that: I feel pity for you because of your spite!

Oh! The silence grows deeper, and once again my heart swells inside me. It is startled by a new truth: my heart, too, is silent. It also sneers

when my mouth calls out something to this beauty. It also enjoys the sweet spite of its own silence. I begin to hate speaking, yes, even thinking. Behind every word I say, don't I hear the laughter of mistakes, fantasy, and madness? Shouldn't I laugh at my own pity and make fun of my own mocking? Oh sea, oh evening, you are bad teachers! You teach a human being how to stop being human. Should he give himself up to you? Should he become what you are now: pale, shining, silent, enormous, resting calmly on himself, raised up above himself?

424.

Who the Truth Is For. Until now, mistaken beliefs have been the strongest source of comforts. Now we expect the same comfort from the truths we have accepted, and we have been waiting for it a bit too long. What if these truths simply cannot give us the comfort we are looking for? Would that be a reason to reject them? What do these truths have to do with the sick state of suffering, worn-down people, that they should be of any use to them? Of course, it proves nothing against a plant being real and true if it turns out that the plant does nothing at all to help sick people get better. In the past, though, people were so sure that humans were the final purpose of nature that they believed knowledge could never reveal anything that was not good and useful for humans. In fact, they believed that nothing else could or should even exist.

Maybe all this leads to the conclusion that truth, as one complete and connected whole, exists only for certain kinds of people: those who, like Aristotle, are both strong and harmless, both cheerful and peaceful. Only people like that would even be able to search for such truths. Everyone else is really searching for cures for themselves. However proud they may be of their minds and their freedom, they are not searching for truth. That is why these others take no real joy

in science, and instead blame it for being cold, dry, and inhuman. This is how sick people judge the games of healthy people. Even the Greek gods could not give comfort. And when the whole Greek world finally fell ill, this was one reason those gods were destroyed.

425.

We Gods in Exile. Because of mistaken beliefs about where they came from, how special they are, and what their mission is, and because of the claims they built on those mistakes, people have again and again "risen above themselves." But these same mistakes have filled the world with unspeakable suffering, with people hunting each other down, with suspicion and misunderstanding, and with even more misery for each single person. Humans have become suffering creatures because of their morals. And the total of what they have gained from those morals is simply the feeling that they are much too good and too great for this world, and that they are only passing through it for a short time. So far, the "proud sufferer" is still the highest type of human being.

426.

The Color-Blindness of Thinkers. The Greeks must have seen nature very differently from us. We have to admit that they were completely color-blind when it came to blue and green. They thought blue was a deeper brown, and green was yellow. For example, they used the same word for the color of dark hair, of the blue cornflower, and of the southern sea. And they used exactly the same word for the color of the greenest plants, human skin, honey, and yellow raisins. So their greatest painters showed the world they lived in using only black, white, red, and yellow. Because of this, nature must have seemed very different to them, and much closer to humans. In their eyes, the colors of human beings were also the main colors in nature, and

nature seemed to float, so to speak, in a colored air made of humanity. Blue and green, more than anything else, make nature feel less human. It was this very defect that gave the Greeks their playful ease in seeing things in nature as gods and half-gods, which means as human shapes.

But let this just be a comparison to explain another idea. Every thinker paints his world and the things around him in fewer colors than really exist, and he is blind to certain colors. This is more than just a weakness. Because he brings things closer together and makes them simpler, he imagines he sees color harmonies in things. These harmonies are very charming and can make nature much richer. Maybe this is actually how people first learned to enjoy looking at life: it was first shown to them in just one or two shades, and so it seemed harmonious. They practiced with these few shades, so to speak, before they could move on to more. And even today, some people try to get rid of their partial color-blindness so they can see more richly and notice more differences. As they do this, they find that they not only discover new pleasures, but also have to lose and give up some of the pleasures they had before.

427.

MAKING SCIENCE PRETTY.—Once people felt that "nature is ugly, wild, and boring—we must make it prettier." That feeling gave rise to the fancy, decorated gardens of the rococo style. In the same way, the view that "science is ugly, hard, dry, dull and tiring, so we must make it prettier" always gives rise to something called philosophy. This philosophy sets out to do what all art and poetry try to do, which is, above all, to entertain. But because it has inherited a sense of pride, it wants to do this in a grander, loftier way, in front of an audience of superior minds. It is no small ambition to build a kind of garden for these minds. Like an ordinary fancy garden, its main charm is to trick

the eye. To put it in images, it uses temples, clever views into the distance, little caves, winding paths, and waterfalls. It shows science in a squeezed-down form, lit up in all kinds of strange and surprising ways. It mixes into science just enough uncertainty, unreason, and dreaminess so that we can stroll around in it "as if in wild nature," but without any effort or boredom.

People who have this ambition even dream of making religion unnecessary. In earlier times, religion was the highest kind of entertainment people had. All of this is now taking its course, and one day it will reach its peak, like a high tide. Even now, voices are rising up against philosophy, shouting: "Go back to science, to nature, and to the naturalness of science!" And so a new age may begin. It may find the strongest beauty exactly in the "wild and ugly" areas of science. In the same way, it is only since the time of Rousseau that people have learned to feel the beauty of high mountains and empty wilderness.

428.

TWO KINDS OF MORAL THINKERS.—Seeing a law of nature for the first time, and seeing it as a whole, is one thing. Examples would be the law of gravity, or the way light and sound bounce back. Explaining that law afterwards is a different thing. These two jobs belong to different kinds of minds. In the same way, there are moral thinkers who watch human rules and habits and point them out. They have sharp ears, noses, and eyes for telling things apart. They are completely different from the moral thinkers who explain what was observed. These second ones must, above all, be inventive. They must have an imagination that is not held back by cleverness and knowledge.

429.

THE NEW PASSION.—Why are we afraid of the possibility of going back to a savage, uncivilized state? Is it because people would be less happy than they are now? Certainly not! Savage peoples of every age have been happier than we are. Let us not fool ourselves about that! The real reason is that our drive to know things has grown too strong. We can no longer value happiness without knowledge, or the happiness that comes from a strong, fixed false belief. It even hurts us to imagine such a state! Our restless hunt for discoveries and for guessing hidden truths has become as attractive and necessary to us as an unhappy love is to a lover. He would never trade that love for not caring at all. And maybe we, too, are unhappy lovers! Knowledge inside us has grown into a passion. It does not back away from any sacrifice, and deep down it fears nothing except its own death. We honestly believe that all of humanity, even though it is weighed down by the burden of this passion, must feel more uplifted and comforted than in earlier times. Back then, people had not yet gotten over their longing for the cruder pleasures that come with savagery.

It may be that humanity will one day be destroyed by this passion for knowledge! But even that does not scare us off. Did Christianity ever back away from a similar thought? Are love and death not brother and sister? Yes, we hate savagery. We would all rather see humanity die out than see knowledge go backward. And in the end, if humanity is not destroyed by some passion, it will be destroyed by some weakness. Which would we choose? That is the main question. Do we want humanity to end in fire and light, or to fade away in the sand?

430.

HEROIC AS WELL.—Some things are disgusting and smell as bad as can be. We hardly dare to talk about them. Yet they are useful and

necessary. Doing such things is also heroic. The Greeks were not ashamed to count even the cleaning out of a stable among the great labours of Hercules.

431.

HOW WE TREAT OUR OPPONENTS' VIEWS.—If we want to measure how sharp or how weak even the cleverest minds really are, we should look at how they pick up and repeat the opinions of the people who disagree with them. This shows the true size of any mind. The truly wise person, without even meaning to, presents his opponent at his best. He clears away the flaws and the accidental mistakes in his opponent's ideas. Only after he has turned his opponent into a god with shining weapons does he begin to fight him.

432.

THE RESEARCHER AND THE ONE WHO TRIES THINGS OUT.—In science there is no single, only way of knowing. We have to approach things by trying things out. Sometimes we treat them harshly, sometimes fairly, sometimes with passion, sometimes coldly. One researcher handles things like a policeman, another like a priest hearing confession, and a third like a curious traveller. We get things out of them sometimes through sympathy and sometimes through force. One researcher is pushed forward and helped to see clearly by the deep respect that the secrets of things stir up in him. Another is pushed forward by the nosiness and spite that come with uncovering those secrets. We researchers, like all conquerors, explorers, sailors, and adventurers, are people with a bold kind of morality. And we have to accept that we will mostly be seen as wicked.

433.

SEEING WITH NEW EYES.—Let us suppose that "beauty in art" always means copying something that is happy. I believe this is true. What counts as happy depends on how an age, a people, or a great, commanding individual pictures happiness. If so, what does the so-called realism of our modern artists tell us about the happiness of our own time? Without doubt, it is this kind of beauty that we now understand most easily and enjoy most of all. Because of this, we are led to believe that the happiness special to us today rests on realism. It rests on having the sharpest possible senses and a true picture of what is real. In other words, it rests not on reality itself, but on what we know about reality. The findings of science have already grown so deep and so wide that the artists of our century, without meaning to, have become people who celebrate the "blessings" of science for their own sake.

434.

SPEAKING UP FOR OTHERS.—Plain, modest landscapes are the subjects of great landscape painters. Striking and rare landscapes are the subjects of lesser painters. This is because the great things of nature and of humanity have to speak up on behalf of their small, ordinary, and vain admirers. The great person, on the other hand, speaks up on behalf of modest, humble things.

435.

NOT TO DIE WITHOUT NOTICING.—Our best qualities and our greatness are not worn down just once. They are crumbling away all the time. Weeds grow among everything and cling to everything, and they ruin all that is great in us. These weeds are the misery of our surroundings, which we always try to ignore even though it is right in

front of us every hour of the day. They are also the countless little roots of mean and petty feelings that we let grow up all around us, at our workplace, among our friends, and in our daily jobs. If we let these small weeds slip past without noticing them, they will destroy us, and we will not even notice it happening!—And if you must be destroyed, then let it happen at once and suddenly. That way, you may at least leave proud ruins behind you! You will not leave behind, as we now have reason to fear, only molehills covered with grass and weeds. Those weeds are small and miserable winners, as lowly as they ever were, and too pitiful even to celebrate their victory.

436.

A TRICKY MORAL CASE.—We sometimes face a very bitter and painful choice, and not everyone has enough courage and character to solve it. Imagine we are passengers on a steamship. We discover that the captain and the man steering are making dangerous mistakes, and that we know more about sailing than they do. Then we ask ourselves: "What would happen if we led a rebellion against them and locked them both up? Since we know better, isn't it our duty to do this? And on the other hand, wouldn't they be right to put us in chains for stirring up disobedience?"

This is a comparison that stands for bigger and worse situations. In the end, the question we have to settle is this: in such a case, what proves that we really are better, and what gives us the right to trust ourselves? Success? But to find that out, we would have to do the very thing that is so dangerous. And it is dangerous not only for us, but for the whole ship as well.

437.

PRIVILEGES.—Think of the man who truly belongs to himself, that is, the man who has finally mastered himself. He sees it as his own right to punish himself, to forgive himself, or to pity himself. He does not have to hand this right over to anyone. He may, however, freely give it to someone else, a friend, for example. But he knows that by doing so he is granting a right, and that only someone who holds full power can grant rights.

438.

A PERSON AND THINGS.—Why can't a person see things as they are? Because he himself is standing in the way: he hides the things from his own view.

439.

SIGNS OF HAPPINESS.—All feelings of happiness have two things in common. First, there is an overflowing rush of feelings. Second, this comes with lively, almost animal high spirits. So, like fish, we feel we are in our element and we play around in it. Good Christians will understand what Christian joy that overflows like this means.

440.

NEVER GIVE THINGS UP.—If you give up the world without knowing it, the way a nun does, you end up in a being alone that bears no fruit and may even be sad. This has nothing to do with the being alone that a thinker chooses in the thinking life. When a thinker chooses this kind of being alone, he does not want to give up anything. On the contrary, he would see it as giving something up, as a sad destruction of his own self, if he were forced to keep on living the practical, busy life. He turns away from that busy life because he

knows it, and because he knows himself. So he jumps into his own water, the place where he belongs, and that is how he finds his own cheerfulness.

441.

WHY THE THINGS NEAREST TO US KEEP GETTING FARTHER AWAY.—The more we give our minds over to everything that has been and everything that will be, the paler the present becomes. When we live with the dead and share in their death, what do the people around us, our "neighbours," mean to us anymore? We become lonelier precisely because the whole flood of humanity is rushing all around us. The fire that burns inside us, and glows for everything human, keeps growing stronger. And so we look at everything right around us as if it had become less important to us, more like a shadow. But our cold look offends people.

442.

THE RULE.—"To me, the rule always seems more interesting than the exception." Anyone who thinks this way has come a long way in understanding, and is one of those who are in on the secret.

443.

ON EDUCATION.—Little by little, I have come to see clearly what the most common fault is in the way we educate and train people: nobody learns how to put up with being alone, nobody teaches it, and nobody even wants to.

444.

SURPRISED THAT SOMETHING PUSHES BACK.—Once we are able to see through something, we believe that from then on it can no

longer stand in our way. And then we are surprised to find that we can see through it, yet we still cannot get through it. This is the same kind of foolishness and surprise that a fly shows when it bumps against a window pane.

445.

WHERE THE MOST NOBLE PEOPLE GO WRONG.—At last we give someone our dearest and most precious possession, and after that, love has nothing left to give. But the person who receives the gift will surely not see it as his dearest possession. So he will not feel the full and complete gratitude that we expect from him.

446.

RANKING.—First of all, there are the shallow thinkers. Second, there are the deep thinkers, the ones who dive into the depths of a thing. Third, there are the thinkers who reach the bottom, who get all the way to the bottom of a thing, and that matters much more than just diving into its depths. And finally, there are those who jump head first into the swamp. But this should not be taken as a sign of either depth or thoroughness! These are simply people who love to be unclear.(13)

447.

TEACHER AND STUDENT.—When a teacher warns his students to be careful of him, he shows how humane he is.

448.

RESPECTING REALITY.—How can we look at this cheering crowd without tears and without agreeing with them? There was a time when we thought little of the thing they are cheering about. And we would still think so if we had not gone through a similar experience

ourselves. And where might such experiences lead us! What are our opinions really worth! So that we do not lose ourselves and our reason, we must run away from experiences. That is how Plato ran away from the real world and wanted to look at things only as pale ideas in the mind. He was very sensitive, and he knew how easily the waves of that sensitivity could drown his reason.—So must the wise man say, "I will respect reality, but at the same time I will turn my back on it, because I know it and I fear it"? Should he act the way certain African tribes act in front of their king, whom they approach walking backwards, showing both their respect and their fear at the same time?

449.

WHERE ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?—Oh, how much I hate pushing my own thoughts onto other people! And how happy I am about every mood and hidden change inside me that lets other people's thoughts win out over my own! But now and then I feel an even greater joy: when I get the chance to give away what I have in my mind. I am like a priest sitting in the confession box, waiting eagerly for some troubled person to come in who needs comfort. That person will be only too glad to pour out all the misery of his thoughts, so that the listener's hand and heart are full once again, and the troubled soul feels lighter. The priest in that box does not want fame. He would even rather avoid being thanked, because gratitude is pushy, and it has no respect for being alone or for silence.

But imagine living without a name, and even being laughed at a little. Being too unknown to make anyone jealous or hostile. Having a calm head with no fever in it, a handful of knowledge, and a pocketful of experience. Being a kind of doctor for the poor in spirit, helping this person or that one whose head is troubled by opinions, without them even noticing who actually helped them! Not wanting to look like you are right in front of your patient, or to win the argument. Speaking to

him in such a way that, after a short hint or objection he barely notices, he figures out for himself what is right and walks away proud! Being like a small, unknown inn that turns no one away who needs a place, but which is later forgotten and laughed at! Having no advantages over others—not better food, not cleaner air, not a happier mind—but always giving things away, giving things back, sharing, and getting poorer! Knowing how to be humble, so that many people can come close to you and none of them feel put down! Taking a lot of unfairness onto your shoulders, and creeping through the cracks and gaps of all kinds of mistakes, so that we can reach many hidden souls along their secret paths! Always having some kind of love, and some kind of selfishness and enjoyment of oneself! Having power, and yet staying hidden and content to step back! Always soaking in the sunshine and sweetness of grace, and yet knowing that, very close by, there stands the ladder that leads up to the highest things!—That would be a real life! That would truly be a reason to want to live a long time!

450.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE.—For people with passionate spirits, one look through the gate of science works like the strongest magic spell of all. They will probably become dreamers, or, if things go best, poets, because they want so badly to have the happiness of the person who truly sees and understands. Can't you feel it in all your senses, this sweet, tempting tune? Science has announced its happy message in a thousand ways, and in the thousand-and-first way, the noblest of all, it says: "Away with illusion! Because then 'Poor me!' disappears too, and along with it the pain itself is gone" (as Marcus Aurelius put it).

451.

WHO NEEDS A COURT JESTER.—People who are very beautiful, very good, or very powerful almost never hear the full, bare truth about anything. That is because, around them, we lie a little without even meaning to. We feel the pull of their influence, and because of it we hand them the truth in an adjusted form. We change the shades and degrees of the facts, we leave out details or add them, and we hold back anything that can't be adjusted. But if, despite all this, people like that still insist on hearing the truth, they need to keep a court jester. A jester is someone who has the special freedom of a madman: he simply cannot adjust himself to please anyone.

452.

IMPATIENCE.—Some people who think and act have a certain kind of impatience. When they fail, it pushes them straight over to the opposite side. They get very interested in that side and throw themselves into new projects there—until, once again, success comes too slowly, and that drives them away too. So they wander around like reckless adventurers, trying out the ways of many countries and many kinds of people. In the end, thanks to all the knowledge of people and things they have picked up from their amazing travels and experience, and with their cravings calmed down a little, they become powerful, practical people. So a flaw in someone's character can turn into a school that trains genius.

453.

A TIME BETWEEN MORAL RULERS.—Who can describe right now what will one day replace our moral feelings and moral judgments? We may be quite sure that these feelings rest on mistakes, and that the building put up on top of such foundations cannot be fixed. Their

hold on us has to grow weaker day by day, as long as the hold of reason does not grow weaker! The job of setting up new laws for how to live and act is still too big for our sciences: the study of the body and medicine, of society and of being alone. Even so, these sciences are the only place we can get the building blocks for new ideals (though not the ideals themselves). So, depending on our tastes and talents, we live either a life that comes before the new order or a life that comes after the old one. The best thing we can do in this in-between time is to be, as much as we can, our own "kings," and to set up small, experimental states. We are experiments—if we want to be!

454.

A SIDE NOTE.—A book like this one is not meant to be read straight through in one go, or to be read out loud. It is meant more to be dipped into, especially when we are out walking or travelling. We should pick it up, read a little, and put it down again. And most of all, we should not be in our usual surroundings when we read it.

455.

OUR FIRST NATURE.—The way we are raised today, we start by taking on a second nature, and we have it fully by the time the world calls us mature, grown up, and capable. A few people are snake-like enough that one day they shed this skin, once their first, true nature has grown up underneath it. But in most people, the seed of that first nature dries up and dies.

456.

A VIRTUE STILL BEING BORN.—Think of the claims and promises of the ancient philosophers that being good and being happy are one and the same thing. Or think of the Christian saying: "Seek first the

Kingdom of God and his goodness, and all these things will be given to you as well." These were never said with complete sincerity, but they were said without a guilty conscience all the same. People were used to boldly stating principles they wished were true as if they were the truth itself, even when everything around them pointed the other way. And when they did this, they felt no religious or moral guilt at all. After all, they had gone beyond the truth "for the greater honour" of virtue or of God, and without any selfish motive!

Many good people still live by this level of truthfulness: when they feel they are being unselfish, they think it is all right to be a bit careless with the truth. We should remember that the word honesty does not appear among the virtues of Socrates or among the Christian virtues. It is one of our newest virtues. It has not fully grown up yet. It is often misread and misunderstood, and it is hardly aware of itself. It is like an unborn baby, something we can either help along or hold back, as we choose.

457.

KEEPING SILENT IN THE END.—Some people end up like someone digging for buried treasure. Quite by accident, they uncover the carefully hidden secrets of another person's soul, and so they come to know things that are often a heavy weight to carry. In some situations we may come to know the living and the dead so well, and see so deeply into their innermost thoughts, that it hurts us to talk about them to anyone else. With every word we say, we are afraid of giving away too much.—I can easily picture even the wisest historian suddenly falling silent.

458.

THE BIG PRIZE.—There is something very rare, but also very wonderful: a person with a finely built, noble mind who also has the character and the tastes that fit such a mind—and who even has the kind of life experiences that suit it.

459.

THE GREATNESS OF HEART OF THE THINKER.—Both Rousseau and Schopenhauer were proud enough to write across their lives the motto "To devote one's life to the truth." And how much their pride must have hurt, because they could not manage the reverse: "to devote the truth to life"—the truth as each of them understood it. Their lives ran alongside their knowledge like a clumsy bass line that does not match the tune.

But knowledge would be in a sorry state if each thinker were given only as much of it as could be made to fit his own person. And thinkers would be in a sorry state if they were so vain that they could only stand that kind of fitting. For the noblest virtue of a great thinker is his greatness of heart. It drives him, in his search for knowledge, to give up himself and his life without flinching—often with embarrassment, and often with lofty scorn, and with a smile.

460.

MAKING USE OF OUR DANGEROUS TIMES.—When certain people and situations could, with every move they make, threaten our property, our honour, our life or death, and the people we love most, we will of course learn to know them inside out. Tiberius, for example, must have thought much more deeply about the character and the ruling methods of the Emperor Augustus, and must have known far more about them, than even the wisest historian.

Today, compared with the past, we all live far too safely to become real experts on the human mind. Some people study their fellow humans as a hobby, others because they are bored, and others simply out of habit. But none of them ever study people as closely as they would if they were told, "Understand or die!" As long as truths do not cut us deeply, we look down on them. They still seem to us too much like "winged dreams"—as if we could take them or leave them as we please, and as if we could wake up from these truths just as we wake up from a dream!

461.

HERE IS RHODES, JUMP HERE. (In other words: prove it right here and now.) Our music can turn into anything, and it has to, because, like the shape-changing god of the sea, it has no character of its own. In earlier times this music gave its attention to the Christian scholar, and it turned his ideals into sounds. So why can't it also find brighter, happier, more universal sounds that match the ideal thinker? Why can't there be a music that could rock itself gently and at ease in the huge, floating vaults of the soul? Up to now our music has been so great and so good. Nothing seemed beyond its powers. So may it also turn out to be possible to create these three feelings all at once: grandeur, a deep and warm light, and a delight that holds together as firmly and steadily as possible!

462.

SLOW CURES. Long-lasting illnesses of the soul, just like those of the body, very rarely come from one big mistake against good sense, whether of the body or of the mind. As a rule, they come from countless small, careless habits. Take, for example, a man whose breathing gets a little weaker every day. His lungs take in too little air, so they don't get the exercise they need, and in the end he will be struck

down by some long-lasting lung disease. The only cure for cases like this is a huge number of small exercises that pull the other way. For example, he could make it a rule to take a long, deep breath every fifteen minutes, lying flat on the ground if he can. For this purpose, he should pick a clock that chimes every quarter hour and keep it with him for the rest of his life.

All these cures are slow and seem tiny. Even so, a man who wants to heal his soul will think carefully about changing even his smallest habits. Many people say a cold, angry word to those around them ten times a day without thinking about it. They forget that after a few years it will have become a fixed habit to put the people around them in a bad mood ten times a day. But a person can just as well build the habit of doing those people good ten times a day.

463.

ON THE SEVENTH DAY. Someone speaks: "You praise this as something I created? But all I did was put down something that was weighing on me! My soul is above the vanity of people who create things. You praise this as me giving something up? But all I did was strip off what had become a burden! My soul is above the vanity of people who make a show of giving things up!"

464.

THE GIVER'S MODESTY. It is so ungenerous to always play the part of the giver and the helper, and to show your face while you do it! How much better to give and hand things out while hiding your name and the favour you are doing! Or even to have no name at all, like nature. That is exactly what refreshes us most about nature: here, at last, we no longer meet a giver or a helper, no longer a "kind, gracious face" looking down at us. But it's true that you have now lost even

this comfort, because you have put a God into nature. And now everything is chained up and weighed down again! Well then? Are we never allowed to be alone with ourselves? Must we always be watched, guarded, surrounded by the reins of guidance and by gifts? If someone is always around us, the best part of courage and kindness will never be reachable in this world. Doesn't it make us want to run off to hell, just to escape this constant pushiness of heaven, this supernatural other person we can never get away from? Never mind, it was only a dream. Let's wake up!

465.

AT A MEETING.

The first speaker, A, says: What are you looking at? You've been standing here for a very long time.

The second speaker, B, answers: It's always the new and the old, over and over! When a thing seems helpless, it pushes me to dive into it so deeply that I end up reaching its very bottom. And then I see that, in reality, it isn't worth all that much. At the end of every experience like this, we run into a kind of sadness and numbness. I go through this on a small scale several times a day.

466.

A LOSS OF FAME. What an advantage it is to be able to speak to people as a stranger! When the gods take away our namelessness and make us famous, they rob us of "half our virtue."

467.

PATIENT TWICE OVER. Someone warns: "By doing this, you will hurt many people." The answer comes: I know that. And I also know

that I will have to suffer for it twice. First, out of pity for their suffering. Second, from the revenge they will take on me. But in spite of this, I can't help doing what I do.

468.

THE KINGDOM OF BEAUTY IS BIGGER. We move around in nature, clever and cheerful, so that we can catch every thing by surprise in the beauty that belongs to it alone. Whether in sunshine or under a stormy sky, we make an effort to see a far-off stretch of coast, with its rocks, its bays, its olive trees and pine trees, from the angle where it reaches its fullest and most complete beauty. In the same way, we should walk among people as their discoverers and explorers. We should hand out good and bad to them so that we can uncover the special beauty each one has. In some people it shows in sunshine, in others under thunderclouds, and in still others only at twilight and under a rainy sky.

So are we forbidden to enjoy a wicked man the way we enjoy a wild landscape, with its own bold, daring lines and its striking effects of light? Meanwhile, this same man, as long as he behaves well and follows the law, looks to us like a badly drawn picture, a mere cartoon that bothers us like a flaw in nature. Is that forbidden? Yes, it is. Because so far we have only been allowed to look for beauty in things that are morally good. And that is enough to explain why we have found so little beauty, and why we have been forced to look for a beauty with no flesh and no bones! Just as wicked people know countless kinds of happiness that virtuous people never even dream of, we may also find among them countless kinds of beauty, many of them not yet discovered.

469.

THE INHUMAN SIDE OF THE WISE MAN. The wise man moves forward heavily, grinding along. In the words of a Buddhist song, he "wanders alone like the rhinoceros." So now and then he needs to show signs of a gentler, softer, more friendly humanity. He needs more than just quicker steps and polite, sociable jokes. More than humour and a bit of laughing at himself. He also needs contradictions, and now and then a slip back into the inconsistencies that most people live by. If a wise man wants to teach, he must not be like a heavy roller that rolls along like fate, crushing everything. So he must make use of his flaws and turn them into decorations for himself. And when he says "despise me," he will be begging for permission to speak up for a bold, daring truth.

This wise man wants to lead you up into the mountains, and he may even put your life in danger. So, as the price for his own enjoyment, he gladly gives you permission to take revenge on such a guide, either before the trip or after it. Do you remember the thoughts that came into your head the time he led you along a slippery path to a dark cave? Your suspicious heart beat fast, and it said to itself: “Surely this guide could find something better to do than crawl around in here! He is one of those idle people who are full of curiosity. Am I not giving him too much honour by following him, as if I thought he was worth anything at all?”

470.

MANY AT THE FEAST.—How happy we are when we are fed like birds, by the hand of someone who throws them crumbs without looking at them too closely or asking whether they deserve it! How good it is to live like a bird that comes and flies off again, and does

not carry its name on its beak! I really enjoy filling my stomach at the feast of the many.

471.

ANOTHER KIND OF LOVE FOR OTHERS.—Everything that is restless, noisy, jumpy, and nervous is the opposite of great passion. A great passion glows in a person's heart like a quiet, dark flame. It pulls into itself everything in him that is fiery and eager. Because of this, it makes the person look cold and uncaring, and it gives his face a kind of calm, unmoved look. People like this are sometimes able to show love for others, but their love is different from the love of friendly, social people who are eager to please. It is a gentle, thoughtful, and calm kindness. It is as if these people are looking out of the windows of a castle, which is their fortress, and for that very reason also their prison. That is why looking out into the far distance, into the open air and a different world, feels so pleasant to them!

472.

NOT DEFENDING ONESELF.—

A asks: But why don't you want to defend yourself?

B answers: I could do it in this case, just as I could in dozens of others. But I look down on the pleasure people get from defending themselves. None of this matters much to me. I would rather have a stained reputation than give those small-minded people the nasty pleasure of saying, "He takes these things very seriously." That isn't true. Maybe I ought to think more of myself, and see it as my duty to correct wrong ideas people have about me. But I am too uncaring and too lazy about myself, and so I am also too uncaring and lazy about everything that happens because of what I do.

473.

WHERE TO BUILD YOUR HOUSE.—If you feel great and creative when you are alone, then being among people will make you feel small and cut off. And the opposite is true too. Look for a strong gentleness, like the gentleness of a father. Wherever that feeling takes hold of you, build your house right there, whether it is in the middle of a crowd or in some quiet place. As the Latin saying puts it: "Where I am a father, there is my homeland."

474.

THE ONLY WAY.—"Logical argument is the only way to reach the true nature of God, and to get behind the curtain of how things appear." Plato said this about logical argument, and he said it as seriously and passionately as Schopenhauer spoke about the very opposite of logical argument. And both of them are wrong. Because the thing they want to show us the way to does not exist. And up to now, haven't all the great passions of humankind been passions for something that does not exist? And haven't all their ceremonies also been ceremonies for something that does not exist?

475.

BECOMING HEAVY.—You don't know him. Whatever weights he ties to himself, he will still be able to lift them all up with him as he rises. But you judge by the weak flapping of your own wings. So you decide that he wants to stay down on the ground, just because he loads himself with those weights.

476.

AT THE HARVEST FESTIVAL OF THE MIND.—Every day there is more and more piling up: more experiences, more events, more opin-

ions about these experiences and events, and more dreams about these opinions. It is an endless and delightful show of riches! The sight of it dazzles the eyes. I can no longer understand how the poor in spirit can be called blessed! Still, sometimes when I am tired, I envy them. Looking after such huge wealth is not an easy job, and its weight often crushes all happiness. Oh, if only just looking at it were enough! If only we could be misers with our knowledge, and simply hoard it!

477.

SET FREE FROM DOUBT.—

A says: Some people come out of a total doubt about morals in a bad mood and weak, eaten away, worm-eaten, and even partly used up. But I came out of it braver and healthier than ever, with my instincts won back once again. Where a strong wind blows, where the waves roll angrily, and where there is more danger than usual to face, that is where I feel happy. I did not turn into a worm, even though I often had to work and dig like a worm.

B replies: Then you have just stopped being a doubter, because you are saying no!

A answers: And by doing that, I have learned to say yes again.

478.

LET US WALK ON BY.—Leave him alone! Let him have his being alone! Do you want to crush him completely? He cracked like a glass that had something hot poured into it all of a sudden. And he was such a precious glass!

479.

LOVE AND TRUTHFULNESS.—Because of our love, we have become terrible offenders against truth. We have even become regular pretenders and thieves, who claim that more things are true than we actually believe are true. For this reason, a thinker must sometimes drive away the people he loves (not necessarily the people who love him), so that they will show their sting and their nastiness and stop tempting him. So the kindness of a thinker will grow and shrink, like the moon.

480.

UNAVOIDABLE.—Whatever you go through, anyone who doesn't like you will find in it some excuse to put you down! You may go through the biggest possible changes in your thinking and your knowledge. In the end, with the sad smile of someone getting over an illness, you may be able to step out into freedom and a bright calm. And still someone will say: "This guy treats his illness as if it proved something. He thinks his own weakness proves that everyone else is weak too. He is so vain that he falls ill just so he can feel superior as a sufferer." And again, if someone broke the chains that held him down, and hurt himself badly doing it, someone else would point at him, laugh, and shout: "How clumsy he is! There's a man who had got used to his chains, and yet he's foolish enough to break them apart!"

481.

TWO GERMANS.—Let us compare Kant and Schopenhauer with Plato, Spinoza, Pascal, Rousseau, and Goethe. But let us look at their souls, not their minds. If we do, we will see that the first two thinkers come off worse. Their thoughts do not tell a passionate story of their souls. We do not expect to find in them any adventure, turning

points, disasters, or desperate fights to the death. Their thinking is not, at the same time, a life story of a soul that they told without meaning to. In Kant's case, it is only the life story of a head. And in Schopenhauer's case, it is only the description and mirror image of a character, which he called "the unchanging," along with the pleasure that this mirror image gives. In other words, it is the pleasure of meeting a first-class mind.

When Kant shows through his thoughts, like a light glimmering through a veil, he seems to us an honest and decent man, in the best sense of those words. But he also seems unimportant. He lacks breadth and strength. He had not lived through many experiences, and his way of working did not leave him enough time to live through them. Of course, when I talk about experiences, I do not mean the ordinary outside events of life. I mean the twists of fate and the inner upheavals that happen even in the quietest life spent most alone, as long as that life has some free time and burns with a passion for thinking. Schopenhauer at least has one advantage over Kant. He stood out because of a certain fierce ugliness in his nature, which showed itself in hatred, greed, vanity, and suspicion. He had a rather wilder temper, and he had both the time and the free hours to give in to that wildness. But he lacked "development," and this was also missing from the range of his thinking. He had no "history" of growth.

482.

SEEKING ONE'S COMPANY.—So are we asking too much when we look for the company of people who have become gentle, pleasant to the taste, and nourishing? They are like chestnuts that were put into the fire and taken out at just the right moment. Are we asking too much when we look for people who expect little from life, and who would rather take that little as a gift than as something they earned, as if birds and bees had carried it to them? People who are too proud

ever to feel they have been rewarded, and too serious in their passion for knowledge and honesty to have time for fame, or to enjoy it? We would call such people philosophers. But they themselves will always find some humbler name for what they are.

483.

SICK AND TIRED OF HUMANITY.—

A says: Search for knowledge! Yes! But always as a human being! What? Must I always watch the same comedy, and always play a role in that same comedy, without ever being able to look at things with any eyes other than these human ones? And yet there may be countless kinds of beings whose senses are better made for knowledge than ours! At the end of all their searching for knowledge, what will humans finally come to know? Their own senses! And that may be the same as saying: knowledge is impossible! What misery and disgust!

B answers: This is a bad fit you are having. It is reason itself that is attacking you! But tomorrow you will be back in the middle of knowledge, and so back in the middle of unreason too. That is, you will be delighted again by everything human. Let us go to the sea!

484.

GOING OUR OWN WAY.—When we take the big step and decide to follow your own way, a secret is suddenly shown to us. It becomes clear that everyone who had been friendly and close to us until now had thought of themselves as better than us, and now they feel insulted. The best of them are patient with us. They are happy to wait calmly until we find the "right path" again—they seem to know what it is. Others make fun of us. They pretend we have caught a passing

fit of mild madness, or they nastily point to someone who must have led us astray. The meaner ones say we are vain fools, and they do all they can to make our reasons look dirty. And the worst of all see us as their greatest enemy, someone who is hungry for revenge after many years of depending on them—and they are afraid of us. So what should we do? In my opinion, we should begin our rule over ourselves by promising all the people we know, ahead of time, a full year of forgiveness for every kind of wrong they do.

485.

SEEING THINGS FROM FAR AWAY.—

A asks: But why do you want this being alone?

B answers: I am not angry with anyone. But when I am alone, I seem to see my friends in a clearer and kinder, rosier light than when I am with them. And back when I loved music most and felt it most deeply, I lived far away from it. It seems that I need to see things from a distance in order to think well of them.

486.

GOLD AND HUNGER.—Every now and then we meet a man who turns everything he touches into gold. But one fine, unlucky day he will find out that this very gift will make him starve. Everything around him shines, it is splendid, and its perfect beauty puts it out of reach. And now he longs eagerly for things he cannot possibly turn into gold—and how strong this longing is! It is like a starving man's longing for a meal! So here is the question: What will he grab?

487.

SHAME.—Look at that fine, proud horse. It scrapes the ground with its hoof, snorts, longs to be ridden, and loves the rider it is used to. But, shameful to say, the rider cannot get on today—he is tired. That is the kind of shame a worn-out thinker feels when he stands in front of his own philosophy!

488.

AGAINST WASTING LOVE.—Don't we blush when we catch ourselves feeling a fierce dislike for someone? Well, then, we should also blush when we find ourselves full of strong affection, because of the unfairness that is hidden inside it. And more than that: there are people who feel their hearts weighed down and burdened when someone gives them so much love and sympathy that others are left without their share. The sound of his voice tells us that we have been specially picked out and preferred! But, sadly, I am not grateful for being picked like this. Inside myself I feel a kind of resentment toward the person who wants to single me out in this way—he must not love me at the cost of others! I will always try to take care of myself and to put up with myself, and my heart is often full to overflowing, and with some good reason. A man like that should not be given anything that others need so badly.

489.

FRIENDS IN NEED.—Now and then we may notice that one of our friends feels more warmly toward someone else than toward us. His sensitive nature is troubled by this, and his selfishness is not strong enough to break down his feelings of affection for us. In a case like that, we should make the parting easier for him. We should push him away a little in some way, to widen the distance between us. This is

also needed when we fall into a way of thinking that might do him harm. Our affection for him should lead us to ease his conscience as he leaves us, by doing him some wrong that we take on ourselves on purpose.

490.

THOSE SMALL TRUTHS.—Someone says: "You know all of that, but you have never lived through it—so I will not accept your word on it. You think those 'small truths' are small only because you have not paid for them with your blood!" The answer comes: But are they really great just because they were bought at such a high price? And blood is always too high a price! The first speaker replies: "Do you really think so? How stingy you are with your blood!"

491.

SO, BEING ALONE!—

A asks: So you want to go back to your wilderness?

B answers: I am not a quick thinker. I have to wait a long time for myself. It always takes longer and longer before the water from the spring of my own self comes bursting out, and I often have to stay thirsty for longer than my patience can stand. That is why I go off to be alone—so that I don't have to drink from the shared water tanks that everyone uses. When I live in the middle of the crowd, my life is like theirs, and I do not think like myself. But after a while it always seems to me as if the crowd wants to drive me out of myself and steal my soul. Then I get angry with all these people, and afraid of them, and I need the wilderness to feel kindly toward them again.

492.

UNDER THE SOUTH WIND.—

A says: I can't understand myself anymore! Only yesterday I felt so stormy and full of fire, and at the same time so warm and sunny and unusually bright! But today! Now everything is still, wide, heavy, and dark, like the lagoon in Venice. I want nothing. I take a deep breath, and yet deep inside I am annoyed at this "wanting nothing." And so the waves rise and fall on the sea of my sadness.

B answers: What you are describing is a small, rather pleasant illness. The next wind from the north-east will blow it away.

A asks: Why is that?

493.

ON YOUR OWN TREE.—

A says: No other thinker's thoughts give me as much pleasure as my own. Of course, this proves nothing about how good they are. But I would be foolish to ignore fruit that tastes good to me just because it happens to grow on my own tree! And once I was that kind of fool.

B answers: Other people feel the opposite. That also proves nothing in favour of their thoughts—but it is no argument against their worth either.

494.

THE BRAVE MAN'S LAST ARGUMENT.—One voice says: There are snakes in this little group of trees. The brave man answers: Fine, I will charge into the bushes and kill them. The first voice warns: But if you

do that, you risk being their victim, instead of them being yours. And the brave man replies: But what do I matter?

495.

OUR TEACHERS.—When we are young, we pick our teachers and guides from our own time, and from whatever circles of people we happen to come across. Without thinking about it, we are sure that our own age must have teachers who will suit us better than anyone else could, and that we will find them without having to look very far. Later on, we find out that we must pay a heavy price for this childish belief. We have to pay for our teachers inside ourselves, by undoing what they put there, and then perhaps we start looking for the right guides. We search for them all over the world, in our own time and in times past. But perhaps it is too late by then. And at worst, we discover that they were alive when we were young, and that we missed our chance back then.

496.

THE EVIL PRINCIPLE.—Plato described wonderfully how the thinking philosopher is bound to be seen as the very heart of wickedness in every society that exists. Since he questions and criticizes all of its morals, he is naturally the enemy of the moral man. And unless he manages to become the one who lays down new morals, people remember him for a long time as an example of the "evil principle," the force of evil itself. From this we can guess how badly the city of Athens, even though it was fairly open-minded and liked new things, damaged Plato's reputation while he was alive. So is it any surprise that he, who wrote that he had the "political instinct" in his body, made three separate attempts in Sicily? At that time, it looked as though a single united Greek state around the Mediterranean was taking shape there.

It was in this state, and with its help, that Plato thought he could do for the Greeks what Mohammed did for the Arabs several centuries later. That is, he wanted to set up customs, both small and important ones, and above all to give rules for the daily life of every person. His ideas could have worked in practice, just as surely as Mohammed's ideas did. After all, even much harder-to-believe ideas, those of Christianity, turned out to work in practice! With a little less bad luck here and a little more good luck there, the world would have seen Southern Europe become Platonic. And if we imagine that this had lasted until our own time, we would probably be worshipping Plato today as the "good principle," the force of good itself. But he failed, and so the picture people have handed down of him is that of a dreamer and someone who imagines perfect societies. The harsher names that people called him disappeared along with ancient Athens.

497.

THE PURIFYING EYE.—We have the best reason to speak of "genius" in people such as Plato, Spinoza, and Goethe. Their minds seem to be only loosely tied to their character and temperament, like winged creatures that easily break free from them and then fly high above them. On the other hand, there are people who never managed to cut themselves free from their temperament, but who knew how to give it the most intellectual, lofty, and sometimes even world-sized expression. Schopenhauer is one example. Such people have always loved to talk about their own genius.

These geniuses could not rise above themselves. But they believed that wherever they flew, they would always find themselves again and get themselves back. This is their "greatness," and this really can be greatness! The others, who truly deserve the name of genius, have the pure and purifying eye. This eye does not seem to have grown out of their temperament and character. It seems to stand apart from them,

and usually even goes against them. It looks out at the world as if at a God whom it loves. But even people like these do not get such an eye all at once. They need practice and an early training in how to see. And a person who is truly lucky will, at the right moment, also come across a teacher of pure sight.

498.

NEVER DEMAND!—You do not know him! It is true that he gives way easily and willingly to both people and things, and that he is kind to both. His only wish is to be left in peace. But this is only true as long as people and things do not *demand* that he give way. Any demand makes him proud, shy, and ready to fight.

499.

THE EVIL ONE.—"Only people who live alone are evil!" That is what Diderot said, and Rousseau, who lived alone, immediately felt deeply insulted. In this way he proved that Diderot was right. In fact, in society, or in the middle of social life, every evil instinct is forced to hold itself back. It has to put on so many masks, and squeeze itself so often into the cruel, ill-fitting bed of virtue, like the bed of Procrustes in the Greek myth that stretched or cut people to fit it, that we are quite right to speak of the evil man as a kind of martyr. But when he is alone, all of this disappears. The evil man is even more evil when alone. And so, for someone whose eye sees everything as a drama, the evil man is also more beautiful.

500.

AGAINST THE GRAIN.—A thinker may force himself for years to think against his own nature. That means he does not follow the thoughts that grow up inside him. Instead he follows the thoughts

that he is made to follow by the needs of his job, by a fixed daily schedule, or by some random duty he feels he has to carry out. But in the long run he will get sick. This kind of self-control, which looks so moral, will wreck his nerves just as thoroughly and completely as a steady life of wild excess would.

501.

MORTAL SOULS.—When it comes to knowledge, perhaps the most useful victory ever won is giving up the belief that the soul lives forever. From now on, humanity is free to wait. People no longer need to rush to swallow ideas that have been badly tested, as they had to in earlier times. Back then, the saving of this poor "immortal soul" depended on how much knowledge a person could gain during a short life. Decisions had to be made from one day to the next, and "knowledge" was a matter of terrifying importance!

Now we have found real courage for making mistakes, for trying things out, and for accepting ideas for the time being. None of this is so terribly important anymore! And for exactly this reason, single people and whole peoples can now take on tasks so huge that in earlier years they would have looked like madness, like daring both heaven and hell. Now we have the right to experiment on ourselves! Yes, people have the right to do this! The greatest sacrifices have not yet been made for the sake of knowledge. In fact, in earlier times it would have been a sin against God, and would have meant giving up our eternal salvation, even to guess at the kinds of ideas that now come before our actions.

502.

ONE WORD FOR THREE DIFFERENT STATES.—When one man is gripped by strong passion, he is forced to set loose the wild, terrible,

unbearable animal inside him. Another man, when passion takes hold of him, rises up to a high, noble and grand way of carrying himself, and next to that, his everyday self looks small. A third man is filled with noble feeling through and through, so even his storms of passion are the noblest kind. In this state he stands for Nature at her wild and beautiful moments. He is only one step below Nature in her great and calm moments, which is what he usually stands for. But it is in this state of passion that people understand him better, and they honour him more highly in these moments, because then he is one step closer to them and more like them. Seeing him like this, they feel delighted and frightened at the same time, and they call it—divine.

503.

FRIENDSHIP.—Some people object to the life of a philosopher, saying it makes us useless to our friends. That objection would never have come up in a modern mind. It belongs instead to the ancient Greeks and Romans. The ancient world knew stronger bonds of friendship. It thought deeply about friendship, and almost took it to the grave when that world died. That is where the ancients have the advantage over us. We, on the other hand, can point to how we have made romantic love into an ideal. All the great strengths of ancient people stayed firm because man stood side by side with man. No woman was allowed to claim that she was the closest and highest, or even the only one, he should love, as passionate feeling would teach. Perhaps our trees do not grow as tall today because of the ivy and the vines that wrap around them.

504.

MAKING PEACE BETWEEN THE TWO.—So should the job of philosophy be to make peace between what the child was taught and what the grown man has come to see is true? Should philosophy be a job

for young men, because they stand halfway between child and man and have needs that are halfway too? It almost looks that way, if you think about the ages at which philosophers nowadays usually put forward their ideas: at a time of life when it is too late for faith and too early for real knowledge.

505.

PRACTICAL PEOPLE.—We thinkers have the right to decide what good taste is in all things, and, if we need to, to lay it down as a rule. The practical people get it from us in the end. They depend on us to an amazing degree, and this is one of the most ridiculous sights in the world. They hardly know it themselves, and they proudly like to pick at us for being unpractical. In fact, they would even go so far as to look down on their own practical life if we showed signs of despising it. And sometimes a slightly revengeful feeling might push us to do just that.

506.

WHY EVERYTHING GOOD NEEDS TO DRY OUT.—What! Must we understand a work exactly in the spirit of the age that produced it? But we get more delight and more surprise, and learn more from it, when we do not see it in that spirit! Have you not noticed this? Every new and good work is worth the least as long as it is out in the damp air of its own time. That is because it still carries the whole smell of the marketplace, of quarrels, of the latest ideas, and of everything that passes away from one day to the next. Later on, though, it dries out, and its being "up to date" dies away. Only then does it gain its deep shine and its fragrance—and also, if it is meant for this, the calm gaze of eternity.

507.

AGAINST THE TYRANNY OF TRUTH.—Even if we were crazy enough to think all our opinions were the truth, we would still not want them to be the only opinions in existence. I do not see why we should want truth to rule alone and have total power. It is enough for me to know that it is a great power. But truth must run into opposition and be able to fight. And we must be able to rest from it now and then in falsehood. Otherwise truth will become boring, weak and tasteless, and it will make us the same.

508.

NOT MAKING A BIG EMOTIONAL FUSS ABOUT THINGS.—What we do for our own benefit should not earn us any moral praise, either from other people or from ourselves. The same goes for the things we do to please ourselves. Among people of higher quality, it is thought to be good manners not to make a big emotional fuss about such things, and to hold back from all solemn, dramatic feelings about them. The man who has trained himself to do this has won back his innocent simplicity.

509.

THE INNER SPECTATOR'S EYE.—What! You still need the theatre? Are you still so young? Be wise, and look for tragedy and comedy where they are acted better, where the events are more interesting and the actors more eager—in real life. Of course, it is not at all easy to be only a spectator in those cases. But learn it! Then, in every hard or painful situation, you will have a little gate that leads to joy and shelter, even when your passions attack you. Open your theatre eye, that big inner spectator's eye of yours, which looks out at the world through your other two eyes.

510.

ESCAPING FROM YOUR OWN VIRTUES.—What good is a thinker who does not know how to escape from his own virtues now and then! Surely a thinker should be more than just "a moral being"!

511.

THE TEMPTRESS.—Honesty is the great temptress of all fanatics, the thing that most tempts them away from their cause.(15) Luther felt something tempting him in the shape of the devil or of a beautiful woman, and he fought it off in that rough, clumsy way of his. What tempted him was probably nothing but honesty—and maybe, in a few rarer cases, even truth.

512.

BOLD TOWARDS THINGS.—Think of the man who, by his nature, is careful and shy with people, but brave and bold with things and ideas. He is afraid of new and closer friendships, and he cuts back on his old ones. He does this so that his hiding of who he really is, and his boldness in saying what he thinks, can line up with the truth.

513.

LIMITS AND BEAUTY.—Are you looking for people with a fine, refined culture? Then you will have to be happy with narrow views and limited scenery, just as when you look for beautiful countryside.—There are, of course, people with huge sweeping views, like a wide panorama. They are like those wide panoramic landscapes: you learn from them and they amaze you, but they are not beautiful.

514.

TO THE STRONGER.—You stronger and proud minds, we ask you for only one thing: do not put any more weight on our shoulders. Instead, take some of our burdens onto your own, since you are stronger! But you love to do the exact opposite. You want to fly high, and so we have to carry your load on top of our own—we have to crawl!

515.

WHY BEAUTY HAS GROWN.—Why has beauty grown as civilisation has moved forward? Because the three things that make people ugly happen less and less among civilised people. First, the wildest bursts of frenzied excitement. Second, extreme physical strain. And third, the need to scare others just by how you look and by being there. In the rougher and more dangerous stages of culture, this need comes up so often and matters so much that it even sets the proper gestures and ceremonies, and it turns being ugly into a duty.

516.

DON'T PASS YOUR OWN DEMON ON TO OTHERS.—In our time, let us keep believing that kindness and doing good are the marks of a good man. But let us not forget to add: "as long as he first shows kindness and does good to himself." Because if he acts differently, that is, if he avoids himself, hates himself, or harms himself, then he is certainly not a good man. In that case he is only rescuing himself by using other people. And those other people had better watch out that they don't come to harm because of him, no matter how friendly he may seem toward them! Yet up to now, people have looked at avoiding and hating your own self, and living in others and for others, as

"unselfish," and so as "good." They have done this with as much lack of thought as firm belief.

517.

LURING INTO LOVE.—We should be afraid of a man who hates himself, because we may end up as the targets of his anger and his revenge. So let us try to lure him into loving himself.

518.

GIVING UP.—What is giving up, or resignation? It is the most comfortable position a sick person can lie in. He suffered painful torment for a long time trying to find that position. In the end he grew tired, and then he found it.

519.

BEING FOOLED.—A man of action said: "When you want to act, you have to shut the door on doubt." A man who liked to think things over answered: "And aren't you afraid of being fooled when you do that?"

520.

A FUNERAL THAT NEVER ENDS.—Both inside history and beyond its edges, we might imagine we are hearing one long, never-ending funeral speech. We have buried, and we are still burying, everything we loved most: our thoughts and our hopes. In return we get pride, "gloria mundi," the glory of the world, which really means the showy splendour of a speech at the graveside. That is how everything gets made up for! Even today, the person who gives the funeral speech is still the public's greatest helper.

521.

A SPECIAL KIND OF VANITY.—That man over there has one great quality, and it comforts him. He looks down with scorn at all the rest of himself, and almost his whole character falls under that scorn. But he gets over himself when he comes near his holy place, so to speak, the part of him he truly values. Even the road that leads there feels to him like climbing up wide, soft steps. And yet, you cruel people, you call him vain because of this!

522.

WISDOM THAT DOESN'T LISTEN.—Hearing every day what people say about us, or even trying to find out what they think of us, will in the end destroy even the strongest person. The people around us let us live only so that they can make demands on us every day! They would surely not put up with us if we wanted to claim rights over them, and even less if we wanted to be right! In short, let us make a sacrifice for the sake of general peace. Let us not listen when they talk about us, when they praise us, blame us, wish things for us, or hope things for us. No, let us not even think about it.

523.

A QUESTION OF SEEING THROUGH THINGS.—When someone lets us see something about themselves, we can ask: What is this meant to hide? What is it meant to pull our attention away from? What beliefs is it trying to stir up in us? And then: how clever is this pretending, and how far does it go? And where is this person getting it wrong?

524.

THE JEALOUSY OF LONELY PEOPLE.—Here is the difference between people who like company and people who like to be alone, as long as both kinds are smart: the first kind are happy, or almost happy, with nearly anything at all. As soon as their minds have found a cheerful way of putting it into words that they can share with others, they will make peace even with the devil himself! But lonely people have their own silent joy and their own wordless pain about a thing. They hate it when their deepest questions are shown off in a clever, flashy way, just as much as they hate seeing the woman they love dressed too loudly. When that happens they watch her sadly, as if they were just starting to suspect that she wants to please other people. This is the jealousy that all lonely thinkers and passionate dreamers feel toward clever wit, the kind of brilliance that shows off.

525.

WHAT PRAISE DOES.—Some people become humble when they are praised a lot, and others become rude and arrogant.

526.

NOT WANTING TO BE A SYMBOL.—I feel sorry for princes. They are not free to set aside their high rank, not even for a short while. So they only get to know people from the very uncomfortable position of always having to pretend. Because they are always forced to stand for something, they end up as solemn zeros, important-looking but empty inside.—This is what happens to everyone who thinks it is their duty to be a symbol.

527.

THE HIDDEN PEOPLE.—Have you never met those people who hold back and control even their hearts when they are full of joy, and who would rather go silent than lose their modest self-control? And have you never met those awkward people, who are still so often good-hearted, who do not want to be recognized, and who again and again wipe away the footprints they have left in the sand? And who even fool other people, and themselves too, just so they can stay unknown and hidden?

528.

UNUSUAL PATIENCE.—Not wanting to criticize someone, and even refusing to think about them at all, is often a real sign of kindness.

529.

HOW PEOPLE AND NATIONS COME TO SHINE.—So many truly personal actions never get done, just because before we do them we see, or suspect, that people will misunderstand them! I mean, for example, actions that have real worth in themselves, whether good or evil. So the more an age or a nation values its individual people, and the more rights and power we give them, the more such actions will dare to come out into the open. And so, over a long time, a shine of honesty, of being genuine in both good and evil, will spread over whole ages and nations. Then they—the Greeks, for example—will be like certain stars, which keep giving off light for thousands of years after they have set.

530.

THE THINKER'S SIDE TRIPS.—In some people, the path of their thinking is strict and boldly unbending. Sometimes it is even cruel to

the very people who think this way, even though as persons they may be gentle and easy to bend. Out of good-hearted hesitation, they will turn a matter over in their heads ten times, but in the end they will keep going on their strict path. They are like streams that wind past lonely huts where hermits live. In some places along the way, the stream plays hide-and-seek with itself and enjoys short, peaceful moments with little islands, trees, caves, and waterfalls. And then it rushes forward again, flows past the rocks, and pushes its way through the hardest stones.

531.

DIFFERENT FEELINGS ABOUT ART.—Once we start living like a hermit, eating up our thoughts and being eaten up by them, with deep and rich thoughts as our only company, we want from art either nothing more, or something very different from what we used to want. In short, our taste changes. Before, we wanted art to carry us for a moment into the world we now live in all the time. Back then we dreamed ourselves into the joy of owning something that we now really own. In fact, now it can sometimes delight us to throw away for a while what we have, and to imagine that we are poor, or a child, a beggar, or a fool.

532.

"LOVE MAKES PEOPLE EQUAL."—Love wants to save the person it gives itself to from ever feeling that they are strangers to each other. Because of this, love is full of disguise and pretending. It keeps on fooling the other person all the time, and it acts out an equality that does not really exist. And all of this happens so naturally, by instinct, that women in love deny this pretending and this constant, tender trickery. They even have the nerve to claim that love makes people equal, which would mean that love works a miracle!

This is simple enough when one of the two just lets himself or herself be loved, and does not feel the need to pretend, but leaves the pretending to the other. But no play could show a more tangled and confusing case than when both people are passionately in love with each other. In that case both of them are eager to give themselves up and to try to fit themselves to the other, and in the end neither of them knows what to copy and what to fake. The beautiful madness of this sight is too good for this world, and too delicate for human eyes to see.

533.

WE BEGINNERS.—How much an actor sees and guesses when he watches another actor on stage! He notices right away when a muscle fails during some movement. He can pick out those little fake tricks that were calmly practiced one by one in front of the mirror and that do not fit with the whole performance. He can feel when the actor on stage is surprised by his own new idea, and when he ruins it because of that surprise.—And how differently a painter looks at someone who happens to be moving in front of him! He will see many things that are not really there, so that he can complete the person's actual appearance and give it its full effect. In his mind he tries out several different kinds of lighting on the same thing, and he splits the whole picture with an extra contrast.—Oh, if only we now had the eyes of such an actor and such a painter for looking at the world of the human soul!

534.

SMALL DOSES.—If we want a change to go as deep and be as complete as possible, we have to give the cure in tiny doses, but without stopping, over long stretches of time. What great deed can be done all at once? So let us be careful not to throw away the moral habits we

know, suddenly and in a rush, and swap them for a new way of valuing things. In fact, we may even want to keep living in the old way for a long time yet. Then, probably at some very distant point, we will notice that the new way of valuing has become the strongest power inside us. We will notice that its tiny doses, which we must now get used to, have built a new nature within us.—We are also starting to understand something now about the last attempt at a great change in ways of valuing, the one that dealt with politics: the so-called "great revolution." It was nothing more than a sad and bloody bit of fake medicine. Through sudden crises, it managed to fill a Europe that believed too easily with the hope of a sudden cure. And because of that, it has made everyone who is politically sick impatient and dangerous, right up to this very moment.

535.

TRUTH NEEDS POWER.—Truth on its own has no power at all, no matter what flattering believers in reason usually say to the opposite. Truth must either pull power over to its side, or else join the side of power. Otherwise it will die out again and again. This has already been proven well enough, and more than well enough!

536.

THE THUMBSCREW.—It is disgusting to watch how cruelly everyone holds his two or three personal virtues against other people, who maybe do not have them, and how he torments and pesters them with those virtues. So let us be kind and humane with our "sense of honesty." We should do this even though that sense of honesty could serve us as a thumbscrew, a torture tool, with which we could squeeze to death all those arrogant selfish people who still want to force their own beliefs on the whole world. We know how it works, because we have tried this thumbscrew on ourselves!

537.

MASTERY.—We have become masters when we no longer make mistakes and no longer hesitate while getting the thing done.

538.

THE MORAL MADNESS OF GENIUS.—In a certain kind of great mind, we can see a painful and partly horrible sight. In their most creative moments, their flights up high and far away seem not to fit with the rest of their makeup. These flights seem to go beyond their strength in one way or another. So each time, something is left lacking, and over the long run the whole machine becomes faulty. In such highly intellectual people, this damage shows itself more often through various moral and mental symptoms than through bodily illness.

So all those puzzling traits in their nature—all their fearfulness, vanity, spitefulness, envy, their narrow and narrowing temper—and that overly personal and clumsy side in people like Rousseau and Schopenhauer, may very well come from repeated attacks of heart disease. That heart disease, in turn, may come from a nervous illness, and that nervous illness may be the result of ——(16)

As long as genius lives inside us, we are full of daring, yes, almost mad, and we do not care about health, life, or honour. By day we fly as free and fast as an eagle, and in the dark we feel as sure of ourselves as an owl.—But the moment genius leaves us, we are suddenly struck by the deepest gloom. We can no longer understand ourselves. We suffer from everything that happens to us and from everything that does not. We feel as if we were stuck among bare rocks with no shelter, with a storm raging all around us. And at the same time we are like sad, childish souls, scared of a rustle or a shadow.—Three quar-

ters of all the evil done in the world comes from fearfulness, and fearfulness is above all something happening in the body.

539.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT?—Have you never been bothered by the fear that you might not be fit at all to recognise what is true? By the fear that your senses might be too dull, and that even your sharpest eyesight might be far too blunt? If only you could see, just once, how much your will controls what you see! For example, how yesterday you wanted to see more than someone else, while today you want to see it differently! And how, from the very start, you were eager to see something that would either agree with or go against whatever people believed they had noticed so far. Oh, those shameful cravings! How often you look out for what works, for what soothes you, just because you happen to be tired right now! You are always full of secret decisions, made in advance, about what truth ought to look like, so that you—yes, you, of all people!—might accept it! Or do you think that today you see better because you are as cold and dry as a bright winter morning, and because nothing is weighing on your mind? Are not passion and excitement needed to do justice to the things that thinking creates?—and this, really, is what people call seeing! As if you could treat matters of thought any differently from the way you treat people. In everything you do with thought, there is the same morality, the same honesty of purpose, the same hidden motive, the same laziness, the same cowardice—your whole lovable and hateful self! When your body is worn out, it will give things pale colours, while your fever will turn them into monsters! Does your morning not show things in a different light from your evening? Are you not afraid that in the cave of all knowledge you will find your own ghost, which is the veil that wraps truth up and hides it from your

eyes? Is it not a dreadful comedy that you so carelessly want to play a part in?

540.

LEARNING.—Michelangelo thought that Raphael's genius had been gained by study, while his own was a natural gift: learning against talent. But this is just fussy, narrow thinking, with all due respect to the great fusspot himself. For what is talent but a name for an older bit of learning, experience, practice, taking things in and making them part of yourself, maybe going back as far as the time of our ancestors, or even earlier! And there is more: whoever learns is shaping his own talents. It is just that learning is not so easy, and it depends not only on our being willing, but also on whether we are able to learn at all.

In an artist, jealousy often gets in the way of this. So does a certain kind of pride: the kind that, whenever it meets an unfamiliar feeling, instantly takes up a defensive stance, instead of opening up and taking it in the way a good student would. Raphael, like Goethe, did not have this pride. That is why they were both great learners, and not just people who dug into the stone already piled up for them by their many ancestors, like workers in a quarry. Before our eyes, Raphael disappears as a learner, right in the middle of taking in what his great rival called *his* "nature." Raphael was the noblest of all thieves: every day he carried off a piece of it. But he died before he had made all of Michelangelo's genius his own. And so his last group of works is less perfect and less good. That is because it was the start of a new course of study, and the great student was cut off by death in the middle of his hardest task. He took with him the final goal he had in mind, the goal that would have explained and justified it all.

541.

HOW WE SHOULD TURN TO STONE.—By slowly, very, very slowly, growing hard like a precious stone, and in the end lying still, a joy forever.

542.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND OLD AGE.—It is not wise to let the evening judge the day. Far too often, when that happens, tiredness ends up judging success and good intentions. We should also be extremely careful about everything that has to do with old age and the way it judges life. This is especially true because old age, like the evening, loves to put on a new and charming morality. It knows very well how to make the day look small next to the glow of the evening sky, the twilight, and a calm, longing silence. The respect we feel for an old man, especially an old thinker and wise man, can easily blind us to the decline of his mind. So it is always necessary to bring into the open the hidden signs of this decline and tiredness. In other words, we have to uncover the bodily cause that is still hidden behind the old man's moral judgments and prejudices. Otherwise our deep respect for him might fool us, and we might do something that harms knowledge. For quite often the old man is taken over by the illusion that he has gone through a great moral renewal, a kind of rebirth. Building on this, he then starts giving his opinions on his life's work and how it developed, as if only now, for the first time, he could see clearly. And yet it is not wisdom but tiredness that gives him his present sense of well-being and his confident judgments.

The most dangerous sign of this tiredness is, above all, the belief in genius. As a rule, this belief only shows up in great and half-great thinkers at this stage of their lives. It is the belief that they hold a special position and have special rights. A thinker who comes to be-

lieve that he is inspired by genius decides from then on that he is allowed to take things more easily. He uses his position as a genius to give orders instead of giving proof. But most likely the main source of this belief is the tired mind's need for relief. That need comes first in time, even if it might look as though it is the other way around.

Also at this time, because all tired and old people love pleasure, the kind of men I am talking about want to enjoy the results of their thinking, instead of testing them again and spreading the seeds far and wide once more. This leads them to make their thoughts tasty and pleasant, and to remove their dryness, their coldness, and their lack of flavour. And so it happens that the old thinker seems to rise above his life's work, while in fact he ruins it. He does this by mixing into it a certain amount of fantasy, sweetness, flavour, poetic fog, and mysterious lights. This is how Plato ended up. So did that great and honest Frenchman, Auguste Comte, who mastered the exact sciences so well that no one among the Germans or the English of this century can match him.

There is a third sign of tiredness. The ambition that drove the great thinker when he was young, and that back then could find nothing to satisfy it, has also grown old. Like someone who has no more time to waste, it starts grabbing at rougher and quicker ways of getting what it wants. These are the ways typical of people who are active, bossy, violent, and eager to conquer. From now on the thinker wants to found institutions that will carry his name, instead of just building structures of ideas in the mind. What do they mean to him now, those airy victories and honours to be won in the world of proofs and counter-arguments? Or keeping his fame alive in books? Or the thrill of joy he can stir in a reader's soul? An institution, on the other hand, is a temple, and he knows this well. It is a temple of stone, a lasting building, which will keep its god alive more surely than the offerings of rare and sensitive souls.(17)

Perhaps, too, at this stage of his life the old thinker will for the first time meet a kind of love that is fit for a god rather than for a human being. His whole nature becomes soft and sweet in the rays of such a sun, like fruit ripening in autumn. Yes, he grows more godlike and more beautiful, this great old man. And yet it is old age and tiredness that let him ripen like this, grow quieter, and rest in the bright, adoring praise of a woman. Now his earlier wish is over and done with. That was a wish that stood even above his own self: the wish for real disciples, followers who would carry his thinking forward, which means true opponents. This wish came from the full energy he had had up to then, and from the conscious pride of knowing he could at any moment become an opponent himself, even the deadly enemy of his own teaching. But now what he wants is loyal supporters, comrades who never waver, helpers, messengers, a grand parade of followers. He can no longer bear the terrible loneliness that every mind which moves ahead of the others is forced to live in. From now on he surrounds himself with things to honour, with company, tenderness, and love. But he also wants to enjoy the privileges of all religious people, and to worship whatever he honours most in his little community. He will even go so far as to invent a religion just so that he can have a community.

This is how the wise old man lives. And by living this way, he slides, almost without noticing, into a sad closeness with the wild exaggerations of priests and poets. It becomes hard to remember his wise and strict younger years, the old firm discipline of his mind, and his truly manly fear of fantasies and misplaced enthusiasm. Back then, when he used to compare himself with the older thinkers, he did it only to measure his weakness against their strength, and to become cooler and bolder toward himself. But now he makes this comparison only to get a rush of excitement from his own illusions. Back then, he looked forward with confidence to the thinkers who would come after him,

and he even enjoyed picturing himself being outshone by their brighter light. Now, though, it hurts his pride to think that he cannot be the last. He tries to find some way to force a limit on free, independent thinking onto people, along with the inheritance he is leaving them. He fears and insults the pride and the love of freedom that individual minds have. After him, no one must let his mind rule with complete freedom. He himself wants to stay forever like a sea wall, a barrier where the waves of new ideas will crash and break. These are his secret wishes, and maybe they are not always so secret.

But the hard truth behind these wishes is this: he himself has stopped in front of his own teaching. He has set up his boundary stone, his sign that says, "This far and no farther." By turning himself into a saint, he has signed his own death sentence: from now on his mind cannot grow any further. His race is over; the hand on the clock has stopped. Whenever a great thinker tries to turn himself into a lasting institution for future generations, we can easily guess that he has passed the peak of his powers. He is very tired, very close to the setting of his sun.

543.

WE MUST NOT USE STRONG FEELING AS PROOF OF TRUTH.—Oh, you kind-hearted and even noble enthusiasts, I know you! You want to look right in our eyes and in your own, but most of all in your own! And so often a touchy, clever, guilty conscience pushes you to fight against your very own enthusiasm! How clever you become then at fooling your conscience and putting it to sleep! How you hate honest, simple, and clean souls! How you avoid their innocent looks! They stand for a better knowledge, and you hear its voice all too clearly inside yourselves when it questions what you believe. And how you try to make that knowledge look suspicious, calling it a bad habit, a sickness of the times, a sign that your own mental health has

been neglected and infected! It pushes you to hate even criticism, science, and reason! You have to twist history so that it speaks in your favour. You have to deny other people's virtues, in case they make the virtues of your own idols and ideals look dimmer.

You give colourful pictures where arguments are needed! Passion and powerful words! Silvery mists! Heavenly, perfumed nights! You know very well how to light things up and how to darken them, and even how to darken them by using light! And when your passion can no longer be held back, the moment comes when you tell yourselves: "Now I have earned a clear conscience. Now I am lifted up, brave, self-sacrificing, generous. Now I am honest!" How you long for these moments, when your passion will give you full and complete rights, and even a kind of innocence. How happy you are when you are in the middle of a fight, filled with ecstasy or courage, when you are carried away beyond yourselves, when nagging doubt has left you, and when you can even declare: "Anyone who is not in ecstasy like us cannot possibly know what truth is or where it is." How you long to meet people who share your belief while in this state, which is really a state of a corrupted mind, and to light your own fire from their flames! Oh, how you long for your martyrdom, for the victory of your holy lie! Must you really cause yourselves so much pain? Must you?

544.

HOW PHILOSOPHY IS DONE TODAY.—I can see very clearly that our young people, women, and artists who dabble in philosophy want from it exactly the opposite of what the Greeks got out of it. Think of the constant joy that rings through every speech and every reply in one of Plato's dialogues. It is joy over the new discovery of reasoned thinking. Anyone who does not hear that joy—what can he really know about Plato, or about ancient philosophy? Back then, people's souls were filled with excitement when they threw themselves into

the strict and serious game of ideas, of general rules, of proving others wrong. Perhaps it was the same excitement that the great old masters of music knew—those strict and careful composers who wove many melodies together. Back then, the Greek sense of taste still held on to an older taste, one that had once ruled over everything. Next to that old taste, their new taste seemed wrapped in so much charm that people sang the praises of the godlike art of debate in shaky voices, as if its followers were drunk with the madness of love. That old way of thinking, however, stayed inside the limits of morality. For it, nothing existed except fixed judgments and settled facts, and the only reasons it had were the reasons of authority—"it is so because we were told so." So thinking was simply a matter of repeating things, and all the pleasure people got from speaking and debating could only come from the way things were said, not from what was said.

Whenever the content of something is seen as eternal and accepted by everyone, there is only one great charm left: the charm of changing forms, in other words, of fashion. Even with the poets from Homer's time onward, and later with the sculptors, the Greeks did not enjoy originality, but its opposite. It was Socrates who discovered a different charm: the charm of cause and effect, of reasons and of one thing following from another. We modern people have grown so used to it, and have been raised to need logic so much, that we see it as the normal taste. And because it is normal, it cannot help but disgust passionate and arrogant people. Such people like anything that sticks out boldly from the ordinary. Their sneakier ambition makes them all too quick to believe that they are exceptional souls. They think they are not beings who reason and argue, but, let us say, "intuitive" beings, gifted with an "inner sense" or with some kind of "intellectual insight." Above all, though, they want to be "artistic types," with genius in their heads and a demon in their bodies. And so they be-

lieve they have special rights in this world and in the next—especially the godlike privilege of being impossible to understand.

And people like these are "getting into" philosophy these days! I am afraid that one day they will find out they have made a mistake—what they are really looking for is religion!

545.

BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE YOU.—You would love to be taken for experts on the human mind, but we will not let you! Do you think we will not notice that you pretend to be more experienced, deeper, more passionate, and more complete than you really are? We notice it just as we notice a slight showing-off in the way that painter over there handles his brush, or in the way that musician over there presents his theme, wanting it to seem greater than it really is. Have you lived through history inside yourselves—upheavals, earthquakes, long and deep sadness, and sudden flashes of happiness? Have you acted foolishly alongside great fools and small fools? Have you truly gone through the illusions and the misery of good people? And also through the misery and the strange happiness of the most evil people? If so, then you may talk to me about morality—but not otherwise!

546.

SLAVE AND IDEALIST.—The followers of Epictetus would surely not appeal to the people who today are chasing after ideals. Think of how he was: always holding himself tight, always tirelessly looking inward. Whenever his eyes did turn to the outside world, they were careful and reserved and gave nothing away. And above all, there was his silence, or his very short way of speaking. All these are signs of the toughest kind of inner strength. And what would our idealists care

about that, since what they want most of all is to spread themselves out? Yet in spite of all this, the Stoic is not a fanatic. He hates the show and the bragging of our idealists. His pride, however great it may be, has no wish to bother other people. It allows others to come close in a gentle way, and it does not want to spoil anyone's good mood—in fact, it can even smile. You can see a great deal of the humanity of the ancient world shown in this ideal. But the best thing about it is this: the thinker is completely free of the fear of God, he firmly believes in reason, and he does not preach that people must repent.

Epictetus was a slave. His ideal man has no particular rank and can be found at any level of society. But above all, you should look for him in the deepest and lowest classes. He is the quiet man who needs no one, living in the middle of a world where everyone serves someone. He defends himself alone against the outside world and lives always in a state of the greatest inner strength. He is especially different from the Christian. The Christian lives in hope, trusting the promise of "glory beyond words." He lets gifts be given to him, and he expects and accepts the best things from God's love and grace, not from himself. Epictetus, on the other hand, neither hopes for his greatest treasure nor lets it be handed to him. He already has it. He holds it bravely in his hand and dares the world to take it away from him. Christianity was made for a different class of ancient slaves: for those who had a weak will and weak reason—that is to say, for most slaves.

547.

THE TYRANTS OF THE MIND.—Today, the progress of science is no longer held back by the purely accidental fact that a human being lives for about seventy years. For far too long, that was the case. In earlier times, people wanted to master the whole range of knowledge within that span of life, and every method of gaining knowledge was judged

by this overall wish. Small questions and single experiments were thought unworthy of attention. People wanted to take the shortest road. They believed that since everything in the world seemed arranged to suit human needs, even the gaining of knowledge must be arranged to fit within the limits of a human life.

People secretly wanted to solve everything in one go, with a single word. They pictured the task as cutting the Gordian knot, or as the egg of Columbus, a clever trick that makes a hard problem suddenly easy. Nobody doubted that you could reach the goal of knowledge the way Alexander or Columbus did, and settle every question with one answer. In the philosopher's eyes, the aim of life seemed to be this: "There is a mystery to be solved." First you had to work out what this riddle was, and then squeeze the whole problem of the world down into the simplest riddle-like formula you could find. Many thinkers dreamed of the huge ambition and the joy of being the "one who solves the world." To such a thinker, nothing in this world seemed worth bothering about except the means of bringing everything to a neat and final end. So philosophy turned into a kind of ultimate fight to rule over the mind like a tyrant. And nobody doubted that this tyrant's rule was meant for one very lucky, sharp, clever, bold, and powerful person, just one single person! Many thinkers imagined that they were this chosen person, and the last of them was Schopenhauer.

So it follows that, on the whole, science has stayed rather backward until now, because the people who practised it were narrow-minded in a moral way. From now on, science will have to be done for a higher and more generous reason. Over the door of the thinker of the future these words are written: "What do I matter?"

548.

VICTORY OVER POWER.—Think about everything that people have honoured until now as "superhuman mind" or "genius." Then we have to reach the sad conclusion that, taken as a whole, the mental level of humankind must have been extremely low and poor. After all, until now it has taken so little intelligence to feel, right away, far above all of this! What a shame about the cheap fame of "genius"! How quickly it was put on a throne, and how quickly worshipping it became a habit! We still drop to our knees before power, just as slaves did in the old days. And yet, when it comes to deciding how much something deserves respect, the only thing that will count is how much reason there is in that power. In fact, we have to find out how far power has been mastered by something higher, something that power now obeys, like a tool in its hand.

So far, though, too few people have had eyes for this kind of study. In most cases, even trying to judge the worth of a genius has been seen as almost an insult to something holy. And so perhaps the most beautiful things of all still happen in darkness, and vanish into endless night almost as soon as they appear. What I mean is the sight of the power that a genius does not spend on making works, but spends on himself, as if he himself were the work. That means his own self-control, the cleaning up of his own imagination, and the way he puts his ideas and tasks in order and chooses among them. The great man always stays unseen inside the greatest thing that people worship, like a faraway star. His victory over power has no witnesses, and so it also has no songs and no one to sing them. Nobody has yet worked out how the great men of all human history should be ranked.

549.

RUNNING AWAY FROM ONESELF.—Think of people who suffer from fits of the mind, who are impatient with themselves and look at themselves with gloomy eyes, people like Byron or Alfred de Musset. In everything they do, they are like runaway horses. From their own works they get only a short-lived joy and a burning passion that almost bursts their veins, and after that comes emptiness and disappointment. How do they manage to bear it! They long to reach something "beyond themselves." If we happen to be Christians and are gripped by a longing like this, we try to reach God and become one with Him. If we are a Shakespeare, we are happy to lose ourselves in pictures of a passionate life. If we are like Byron, we long for action, because action pulls us away from ourselves even more than thoughts, feelings, and works do.

So is the wish to do great deeds really, deep down, nothing but running away from ourselves? That is what Pascal would ask us. And in fact this claim could be proved by looking at the noblest examples of this hunger for action. Here, using the knowledge of a doctor who treats mental illness, let us remember this: four of the greatest men of all time who had this hunger for action had epilepsy. They were Alexander the Great, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon. And Byron also suffered from the same illness.

550.

KNOWLEDGE AND BEAUTY.—People still tend to save their deep respect and their feelings of happiness for works of fantasy and imagination. So we should not be surprised if they feel cold and unhappy when faced with the opposite of fantasy and imagination. There is a deep thrill that comes from taking even the smallest sure and clear step forward in understanding. Science today gives this thrill to so

many people, and gives it generously. But for now, this thrill is not believed in by all those who only feel thrilled when they leave reality behind completely and dive into the depths of hazy illusion, in other words, romanticism. These people see reality as ugly. But they completely miss the fact that knowing even the ugliest reality is beautiful. And a person who can see a lot, and see it often, ends up very far from thinking that the main parts of reality are ugly, because discovering them has always filled him with a feeling of happiness.

Is there anything that is "beautiful in itself"? The happiness of those who can understand things adds to the beauty of the world, and bathes everything that exists in a sunnier light. Understanding does not just wrap all things in its own beauty. Over time, it also soaks its beauty into the things themselves. May future ages prove this statement true! In the meantime, let us remember an old experience. Plato and Aristotle were two men who were completely different in every way. Yet they agreed about what the highest happiness was, not only their own happiness and that of people in general, but happiness itself, even the happiness of the gods. They found that this happiness lies in knowledge, in the work of a well-trained and inventive mind. It does not lie in "intuition," as the German theologians and half-theologians say; nor in visions, as the mystics say; nor in work, as purely practical people say. Descartes and Spinoza said similar things. What great joy all these men must have felt in knowledge! And how great was the danger that their honesty might give way, and that they themselves might end up simply singing the praises of things!

551.

FUTURE VIRTUES.—How did it happen that, the better we came to understand the world, the more all kinds of ceremonies faded away? Was fear, so often, the real root of the awe that came over us when we saw anything unknown and mysterious? Was it fear that taught us to

drop to our knees before what we could not understand, and to beg for mercy? And has the world perhaps lost some of the charm it used to have for us, simply because we have become less afraid? Is it possible that our own dignity and grandness, the impressive side of our character, has shrunk along with our sense of dread? Perhaps we think less highly of the world and of ourselves since we started thinking about both more boldly? Perhaps a moment will come in the future when this brave way of thinking will have gone so far that it feels itself flying in the highest pride, far above people and things? Will there be a time when the wise man, who is also the boldest, will look down and see himself, and even more so existence itself, as the lowest thing of all, far beneath him?

This kind of courage, which is not far from being too generous, has been missing in humanity until now.—Oh, if only our poets could become again what they once were: seers, who tell us something about what might happen! For now, more and more, what is real and what is past are being taken away from them, and must keep being taken away—because the time of innocent make-believe is over! Let them try to help us look ahead to future virtues, or to virtues that will never be found on earth, even though they may exist somewhere in the universe!—glowing purple star patterns and whole Milky Ways of beauty! Where are you, you astronomers of the ideal, who study the stars of what could be?

552.

IDEAL SELFISHNESS.—Is there any state more sacred than carrying something new inside? It means doing every single thing with the quiet belief that, one way or another, it will help what is growing inside us. It means believing that each action must add to its mysterious value, and just thinking of that value fills us with joy. At such a time we hold back from many things without having to force

ourselves. We swallow the angry word, we take someone's hand and forgive them. Our child must be born out of everything that is best and gentlest in us. We avoid our own harshness and rudeness, in case they drop even one drop of unhappiness into the cup of the beloved unknown one. Everything is hidden and full of signs; we know nothing about what is happening. We simply wait and try to be ready. During this time we also feel a pure and cleansing sense of deep freedom from responsibility, like someone watching a stage with the curtain still closed. *It* is growing, *it* is coming into the light, and we have no say in how valuable it will be, or when it will arrive. We are left with only indirect influences: kind ones and protective ones. "Something greater than we are is growing here"—that is our most secret hope. We get everything ready for his birth and for his well-being. Not only everything that is useful, but also the noblest gifts of our souls.

We should live, and we can live, guided by such a blessed inspiration! Whether what we are waiting for is a thought or a deed, our relationship to every truly important achievement is exactly like carrying something new inside. So all our proud boasting about "willing" and "creating" should be thrown to the winds! True and ideal selfishness means always watching over the soul and keeping it calm, so that what we are producing can come to a beautiful end. In this indirect way we must care for and watch over the good of everyone. And the frame of mind, the mood we live in, is like a soothing oil that spreads far around us onto restless souls.—Still, these people carrying something inside are funny people! So let us dare to be funny too, and not blame others if they have to be funny in the same way. And even when this thing becomes dangerous and evil, we must not show less respect for what is growing inside us or inside others than ordinary everyday justice does. For that justice does not allow the judge or the executioner to lay a hand on a pregnant woman.

553.

ROUNDABOUT ROUTES.—Where is all this philosophy trying to end up, with all its roundabout routes? Does it do anything more than turn into reasoning, so to speak, a steady and strong urge? An urge for a gentle sun, bright and fresh air, southern plants, sea breezes, small meals of meat, eggs, and fruit, hot water to drink, quiet walks for days on end, little talking, rare and careful reading, living alone, and clean, simple, almost soldier-like habits? In short, an urge for everything that suits my own personal taste? Is it a philosophy that is mostly the instinct for a personal way of living? An instinct that longs for my kind of air, my height above the sea, my temperature, and my kind of health, and takes the roundabout route through my head to talk me into it!

There are many other philosophies, and surely loftier ones, and not just ones that are gloomier and more show-offy than mine. And are they perhaps, taken all together, nothing but roundabout routes of the mind, serving the same kind of personal urges?—Meanwhile I look with new eyes at the mysterious, lonely flight of a butterfly, high on the rocky shore of the lake where so many plants grow. There it flies back and forth, not caring that its life will last only one more day, and that the night will be too cold for its delicate wings. For the butterfly, too, a philosophy might be found, though maybe not my own.

554.

LEADING THE WAY.(18)—When we praise progress, we are only praising movement, and those who do not let us stay in one place. In some situations that is certainly worth something, especially if we live among people as unchanging as the ancient Egyptians. But in changeable Europe, where movement is "understood," as they put it, "as a matter of course"—oh, if only *we* understood something about it too!

—I praise leaders and those who go ahead. That means those who always leave their old selves behind, and do not care at all whether anyone is following them or not. "Wherever I stop, I find myself alone: so why should I stop! The wilderness is still so wide!"—that is how the true leader feels.

555.

THE SMALLEST ONES ARE ENOUGH.—We ought to avoid events, since we know that even the smallest of them often leave a strong mark on us—and those small ones we cannot avoid.—The thinker must have a rough list of all the things he still wants to experience.

556.

THE FOUR VIRTUES.—Honest with ourselves and with everyone and everything that is friendly to us; brave when facing our enemy; generous towards those we have defeated; polite at all times: that is what the four main virtues want us to be.

557.

MARCHING AGAINST AN ENEMY.—When we are setting out to march against an enemy, how pleasant even bad music and bad reasons sound to us!

558.

NOT HIDING YOUR VIRTUES.—I love people who are as clear as water. To use the poet Pope's words, they do not hide the muddy bottom of their stream from view. But even these people have a certain vanity, though it is a rare and more refined kind. Some of them would like us to see nothing but the mud. They want us to pay no attention to how clear the water is, even though it is that very clearness that

lets us see all the way to the bottom. No less a man than Gautama Buddha imagined the vanity of these few people and put it into a rule: "Let your sins be seen by others, and hide your virtues." But this would show the world an unpleasant sight. It would be a sin against good taste.

559.

"NOTHING TOO MUCH!"—How often is a person advised to set a goal that is beyond what he can reach, so that he will at least achieve what lies within his abilities and his hardest efforts! But is it really such a good idea for him to do this? The best people who try to live by this advice are under too much strain. Because of that, don't they and their best deeds end up looking somewhat overdone and twisted out of shape? And in the future, won't a grey fog of failure cover the world? Because everywhere we look, we may see athletes straining and people making huge, dramatic gestures, but nowhere a winner crowned with the laurel wreath and enjoying his victory.

560.

WHAT WE ARE FREE TO DO.—We can act as gardeners of our own urges and drives. And—this is something few people know—we can grow the seeds of anger, pity, vanity, or too much brooding, and make them rich and fruitful, just as we can train a beautiful plant to climb along a wooden frame. We can do this with a gardener's good taste or bad taste, and, so to speak, in the French, English, Dutch, or Chinese style of garden. We can let nature take its own course, and only trim and decorate a little here and there. And finally, without any knowledge or thought at all, we can even let the plants shoot up however they naturally grow, within their own natural limits, and let them fight it out among themselves. In fact, we can even enjoy that kind of chaos, though it may give us a hard time! All of this is up to us. But

how many people know that it is? Don't most people believe that they themselves are finished, complete facts that cannot change? And haven't the great philosophers stamped their approval on this mistaken belief with their teaching that a person's character can never change?

561.

LETTING OUR HAPPINESS SHINE TOO.—Painters cannot copy the deep, brilliant color of the real sky. So they are forced to paint all the colors in their landscapes a few shades darker than nature made them. By using this trick, they manage to come close to the brightness and harmony of nature's own colors. In the same way, poets and philosophers, who cannot reach the bright rays of happiness themselves, must try to find a clever way around this. If they picture everything a shade or two darker than it really is, then their own light, which is the thing they are good at, will give almost exactly the same effect as sunlight. It will look like the light of true happiness.—The pessimist, on the other hand, paints everything in the blackest and gloomiest colors. He uses only bright flames, lightning, heavenly glories, and everything that has a harsh, dazzling power that confuses our eyes. For him, light only serves to make the horror greater, and to make us see things as more dreadful than they really are.

562.

THOSE WHO STAY AND THOSE WHO ROAM.—Only in the Underworld do we get a glimpse of the dark background behind all the happy adventure that shines forever around Ulysses and people like him. That glow around them is like the endless shimmering light of the sea, but behind it lies something we can never forget: the mother of Ulysses died of grief and longing for her son. One person is driven on from place to place, and the heart of the other, the gentle friend

who stays at home, breaks because of it. It is always this way. Sorrow breaks the hearts of people who live to see the ones they love most leave behind their old views and their old faith. This is a tragedy caused by the free thinkers, and now and then they come to realize it themselves. Then perhaps they too, like Ulysses, will have to go down among the dead to get rid of their sorrow and ease their pain.

563.

THE ILLUSION THAT THE UNIVERSE HAS A MORAL ORDER.—There is no "eternal justice" that demands that every wrong must be made up for and paid back. Believing that such a justice existed was a terrible mistake, and it was useful only up to a point. In the same way, it is a mistake to think that everything that feels like guilt really is guilt. What has caused humankind so much trouble is not things themselves, but beliefs about things that do not even exist.

564.

RIGHT NEXT TO EXPERIENCE.—Even great minds have experience only about as wide as a hand. Right at the edge of that small area, their thinking stops, and in its place there is nothing but endless emptiness and stupidity.

565.

DIGNITY AND IGNORANCE.—Whenever we understand something, we become friendly, happy, and clever. And once we have learned enough and have trained our eyes and ears, our souls become more flexible and more charming. But we understand so little, and we know so little, that we rarely grasp something and become likeable at the same moment. Instead, we walk through cities, through nature, and through history stiffly and without caring. And we are even proud

of this stiff, uncaring attitude, as if it simply came from being above it all. In this way, our ignorance and our half-hearted wish to know things know very well how to put on a mask of dignity and strong character.

566.

LIVING CHEAPLY.—The cheapest and most harmless way of life is the life of the thinker. To name its most important feature right away: he needs most of all the very things that other people ignore and look down on. Second, he is easily pleased and does not want any expensive pleasures. His work is not hard; it is, so to speak, sunny and relaxed, like life in the warm south. His days and nights are not wasted on regret. He moves, eats, drinks, and sleeps in a way that suits his mind, so that his mind can become calmer, stronger, and clearer. Also, he enjoys his body and has no reason to be afraid of it. He does not need company, except now and then, so that afterwards he can go back to being alone with even more joy. He looks to the dead to make up for the living, and he finds what he is looking for there. He can even replace his friends this way, by seeking out among the dead the best people who have ever lived. Let us think about whether it is not the opposite desires and habits that have made human life expensive, and because of that, hard and often unbearable. In another sense, though, the thinker's life is surely the most expensive of all, because nothing is too good for him, and it would be an unbearable loss for him to go without the best.

567.

IN THE BATTLEFIELD.—"We should take things more cheerfully than they deserve, especially because for a very long time we have taken them more seriously than they deserved." That is what the brave soldiers of knowledge say.

568.

THE POET AND THE BIRD.—The Phoenix, the bird that rises from fire, showed the poet a glowing scroll that was slowly burning up in the flames. "Don't be afraid," said the bird. "It is your work! It does not hold the spirit of our times, and it holds even less the spirit of those who are against our times. So it has to be burned. But that is a good sign. There is more than one dawn."

569.

TO THOSE WHO ARE ALONE.—If we do not respect other people's honour when we talk to ourselves, just as we do when we speak in public, then we are not true gentlemen.

570.

LOSSES.—Some losses give the soul a kind of grandeur. In that state the soul stops crying out and walks around in silence, as if it were in the shade of tall, dark cypress trees.

571.

THE SOUL'S FIRST-AID STATION ON THE BATTLEFIELD.—What is the most powerful medicine?—Victory.

572.

LIFE WILL COMFORT US.—If we live, as the thinker does, always in the middle of a great stream of ideas and feelings, so that even our dreams follow that stream, then we look to life itself for comfort and peace. Other people, by contrast, want to rest from life when they sit down to think deeply.

573.

SHEDDING ONE'S SKIN.—A snake that cannot shed its skin dies. It is the same with minds that are kept from changing their views: they stop being minds.

574.

NEVER FORGET!—The higher we fly, the smaller we look to those who cannot fly.

575.

WE EXPLORERS OF THE MIND.—All those bold birds that fly farther and farther out into open space will, sooner or later, find that they cannot fly any more. They will land on a ship's mast or on some narrow ledge, and they will be thankful even for this poor resting place! But who could conclude from this that there is no endless free space stretching out in front of them, or that they had flown as far as anyone could? In the end, it is true, all our great teachers and those who came before us have had to stop. And when tiredness made them stop, they were by no means in the noblest or most graceful pose. The same thing will happen to you and to me! But what does that matter to either of us? *Other birds will fly farther!* Our minds and our hopes compete with them, far out and high up. They rise far above our heads and our failures, and from that height they look far out to the distant horizon. There they see hundreds of birds much stronger than we are, pushing toward the place we too have pushed toward, where there is sea, sea, and nothing but sea!

So where are we heading? Do we want to cross the sea? Where is this overwhelming passion driving us, this passion that we value more than any other joy? Why do we fly in exactly this direction, toward the west, where all the suns of humankind have set until now? Could

it be that one day people will say about us that we too sailed west hoping to reach India, but that it was our fate to be shipwrecked on the endless? Or, my brothers? Or—?

Footnotes

1. The book first came out in 1881. The preface was added later, for the second edition in 1886. (Translator's note.)

2. Of course, this is about the way nouns have different genders in other languages. In German, for example, the word for the sun is feminine, while in French it is masculine. (Translator's note.)

3. Mr. Henri Albert points out that this refers to a line from a well-known hymn by Paul Gerhardt, called "Befiel du deine Wege," which means "Trust your ways to Him." (Translator's note.)

4. In Germany, "formal education" is the name for the subjects that train the mind to think logically. It is the opposite of "material" education, which is about learning facts and all kinds of "useful" knowledge. (Translator's note.)

5. This refers to the Odyssey, book 20, line 18, which says in Greek: "Bear up, my heart; you once bore something even more dog-like..." and so on. The Greek word "kynteros" comes from "kyon," which means "a dog." Word for word it means "more dog-like," in other words shameless, horrible, or outrageous. (Translator's note.)

6. If this short saying seems hard to understand, the reader can take Tolstoy as an example of the first kind of person, and Nietzsche as an example of the second. People usually skip over the ways Tolstoy contradicted himself, because he claimed to believe the usual moral ideas of his time. Nietzsche, on the other hand, has had to put up with the harshest examination, because he did not believe those ideas. But in Nietzsche's case, all that close checking has found nothing. Unlike Tolstoy, he had no Christian ideas to defend that could not work in real life, so his life is not a string of half-measures and compromises.

At heart, the life of the great pagan philosopher was much more saintly than the life of the great Christian. And how different from Tolstoy was that noble Christian, Pascal! Pascal's beliefs and his nature were bound to clash, and because of that he died at thirty-eight. Meanwhile Tolstoy, his weaker follower, lived on, fully enjoying his fame, until he was over eighty! (Translator's note.)

7. This is a jab at the German Empire, which Nietzsche always looked down on, because it led to the complete death of the old German spirit. In German, one single word, "Reich," is used both for "the Kingdom" (as in "the Kingdom of God") and for "Empire." (Translator's note.)

8. This sentence fully proves wrong a book that caused a big stir in Germany about ten years ago, and in England just recently. The book is Chamberlain's "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." In it, a Germanic race that exists only in the imagination is held up as the Chosen People of the world. In another place, in the section "Peoples and Countries," saying number 21, Nietzsche says: "Do not mix with any man who takes part in the lying race fraud." (Translator's note.)

9. Even now, the angriest protests against Nietzsche's teaching come from the "unfeeling people." That is why it was so hard to bring his work into English-speaking countries. Luckily, that difficulty is now over. (Translator's note.)

10. The German Jews are well known for giving generously to charity. Probably they do this to show that they are not as bad as the Anti-Semites make them out to be. (Translator's note.)

11. That means: do not talk about either God or the devil. The German proverb goes: "Don't paint the devil on the wall, or he will come." (Translator's note.)

12. This is about the case of that other clever and witty man from Venice, Casanova. (Translator's note.)

13. In German there is a play on words between "gründlich," meaning thinkers who reach the bottom, and "Untergründlichen," which literally means people who are underground, like underground diggers. This wordplay cannot be carried over into English. (Translator's note.)

14. This is a twist on the well-known Latin proverb "Ubi bene, ibi patria," which means "Where life is good, there is my homeland." (Translator's note.)

15. This explains why all fanatics are so violent. They are not really trying to shout down the world around them. They are trying to shout down their own inner enemy, which is the truth. (Translator's note.)

16. This gap is in the original text. (Translator's note.)

17. Of course, this refers to Richard Wagner, and so does the paragraph after it. (Translator's note.)

18. In German there is a play on words between "Vorschritt," meaning leading the way, and "Fortschritt," meaning progress. This wordplay cannot be carried over into English. (Translator's note.)

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