The Fable of the Bees

or

Private vices, public benefits

Bernard Mandeville

1732

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

•a set of 20 'Remarks' on bits of a 9-page poem; preceded by

•the poem itself, presented with letters of the form of **[A]** against the bits to which Remarks are addressed;

•a longish Essay on charity and charity schools, and another on the origin of society (the black-type subheadings in these are not in the original); and

•materials attacking the first edition of this work, followed by Mandeville's defence.

In some Remarks and in the Essay, each CROSS-HEADING in small capitals marks the start of a new topic, but no indication is given of where the topic ends.

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Glossary

connive: Used here in its proper sense: if you 'connive at' my doing x, you pretend not to know that I am doing it, although really you ought to stop me. From a Latin verb meaning 'wink'.

content: In Remark V and the related part of the Poem, this noun means 'contentment'.

cross: a small coin; 'without a cross' means 'without money'.

curious: Mandeville's uses of this seem to involve one or more of three of the OED's senses for it: 'exquisite, excellent, fine', 'interesting, noteworthy', 'deserving or arousing curiosity; strange, queer'.

dipped: mortgaged

emulation: competitive copying

encomium: high praise

enthusiasm: This is sometimes replaced by 'fanaticism'. Where it is allowed to stand, it still stands for something hotter than mere 'enthusiasm' is taken to be today.

felicity: happiness

industry: industriousness, willingness to work hard

Leviathan: As used on page 118 this has both its role as the name of a mythical sea-monster and its meaning (derived from Hobbes's classic work) as 'commonwealth'.

limner: painter; especially portrait-painter

mischief: harm

mortify: humiliate; similarly 'mortification'

operose: labour-intensive

polite: polished, civilised

politician: Mandeville often uses this word to mean something like 'person who makes it his business to modify and manipulate our behaviour'.

presentment: An action whereby a local Grand Jury 'presents' to the relevant judges its considered opinion that a certain person ought to be charged with a crime.

prodigal: excessively free-spending. The idea that a prodigal is someone who leaves home and then returns comes from misunderstanding the biblical title 'the parable of the prodigal son'.

rapine: plunder; seizing property by force

sumptuary laws: Laws enforcing frugal and simple modes of living.

temporal: Temporal happiness is happiness in this life; in contrast with eternal happiness in the after-life.

vicious: morally bad; not as intense or focussed as the word is today; Similarly 'vice'.

voluptuous: Given to sexual pleasure

vulgar: 'the vulgar' are people who not much educated and not much given to thinking.

Remarks M through P

Remark M

'and odious pride a million more'

Pride is the natural quality by which every mortal that has *any* understanding over-values himself and imagines better things of himself than any impartial judge who thoroughly knew all his qualities and circumstances could allow him. We have no other quality so beneficial to society as pride—so necessary to make it wealthy and flourishing—yet it is the one that is most generally detested. What is very special about this quality of ours is that those who are the fullest of it are the least willing to connive at [see Glossary] it in others; whereas the heinousness of other vices is extenuated most by those who are guilty of them themselves. The chaste man hates fornication, and drunkenness is most abhorred by the temperate; but none are so much offended by their neighbour's pride as those who are themselves proudest; and the most humble are the most apt to pardon it. I think we can soundly infer from this that its being odious to all the world is a certain sign that all the world is troubled by it. All men of sense are ready to admit this, and nobody denies having pride in general. But if you get down to particulars, you won't find many who will admit that any action of theirs that you can name was a product of pride.

·OBJECTIONS BY 'HAUGHTY MORALISTS'·

There are likewise many who accept that among the sinful nations of today pride and luxury are great promoters of trade, but they refuse to admit that in a more virtuous age—which should be free from pride—trade would in a great measure decay. The Almighty, they say, has endowed us with the dominion over all things that the earth and sea produce or contain; and man's skill and industry above other animals were given him so that he could make them and everything else within the reach of his senses more serviceable to him. On this consideration they think it impious to imagine that humility, temperance and other virtues should debar people from enjoying those comforts of life that are not denied to the most wicked nations; and from this they infer that without pride or luxury

- the same things might be eaten, worn and consumed,
- the same number of handicrafts and artificers employed, and
- a nation be in every way as flourishing

as where pride and luxury are the most predominant.

As to clothing in particular, they'll tell you •that pride—which clings more tightly to us than our clothes—is only lodged in the heart, and that rags often conceal more pride than the most pompous attire; and •that, just as there have undeniably been virtuous princes who with humble hearts have worn their splendid diadems and swayed their envied sceptres solely for the good of others, so it is very probable that silver and gold brocades and the richest embroideries may be worn without a thought of pride by many whose quality and fortune are suitable to them. May not (they say) a good man of extraordinary revenues make a greater variety of suits than he could possibly wear out, purely so as to set the poor at work, to encourage trade, and to promote the welfare of his country? And considering food and clothing to be necessities—the two chief articles to which all our worldly cares are extended—why may not all mankind set aside a considerable part of their income for the one as well as the other, without the least tincture of pride? Indeed, is not

every member of the society in a way *obliged* to contribute what he can to maintaining that branch of trade on which the whole has so great a dependence?. . . .

·ANSWERING THEM·

These are the objections generally made by haughty moralists who cannot bear to hear the dignity of their species arraigned; but if we look closely into them, they can soon be answered. If we had no vices, I cannot see why any man should ever make more suits than he has use for, however much he wanted to promote the good of the nation; for though his only purpose in wearing choice clothes was to set more people to work and thus promote the public welfare, he could consider clothes in exactly the way lovers of their country consider taxes now: they may pay them with alacrity, but nobody gives more than his due; especially where all are justly rated according to their abilities, as they would be in a very virtuous age. Also, in such golden times nobody would dress above his condition, nobody would pinch his family or cheat or over-reach his neighbour to purchase finery, so there would not be half the consumption or a third as many people employed as now there are.

To make this clearer, and demonstrate that for the support of trade nothing can be as effective as pride, I shall examine men's various views about outward apparel, and present what daily experience can teach everybody regarding dress.

Clothes were originally made •to hide our nakedness and •to shelter our bodies against the weather and other outward injuries; and to these our boundless pride has added a third, namely •ornament. . . . It is indeed amazing that so sensible a creature as man, who lays claim to so many fine qualities of his own, should condescend to value himself on what is robbed from such an innocent and defenceless an animal as a sheep, or what he is beholden for to the most insignificant thing on earth, a dying worm; yet he has the folly to laugh at the Hottentots in remote Africa who adorn themselves with the guts of their dead enemies, without considering that they are the signs of their valour and that if their pride is more savage than ours it is certainly less ridiculous, because they wear the spoils of the more noble animal.

But the world has long since decided the matter; handsome apparel is a main point, fine feathers make fine birds, and people in places where they are not known are generally honoured according to their clothes and other accoutrements; from the richness of them we judge of their wealth, and by their ordering of them we guess at their understanding. This encourages everybody who is conscious of his little merit to wear clothes above his rank, if he can, especially in populous cities where obscure men may hourly meet with fifty strangers to one acquaintance, and consequently have the pleasure of being esteemed by a vast majority, not as what they are but what they appear to be. . . .

[Mandeville now devotes a page or more to different manifestations of pride expressed in clothing:

- •On 'great holidays', 'women of almost the lowest rank wear good and fashionable clothes'.
- •'The poorest labourer's wife in the parish' half-starves herself and her husband to purchase a 'genteel' second-hand gown and petticoat.

And on it goes:] •The weaver, the shoemaker, the tailor, the barber and every impoverished working fellow uses the first money he can accumulate to dress himself like a tradesman of substance. •The ordinary retailer in the clothing of his wife copies his neighbour, who deals in the same commodity by wholesale. . . . •The druggist, mercer, draper, and other creditable shopkeepers can find no difference between themselves and merchants, and therefore dress and live like

them. •The merchant's lady, who cannot bear the confident bearing and appearance of those mechanics, flies for refuge to the other end of the town and scorns to follow any fashion except what she takes from there. This haughtiness alarms the Court; •the women of quality are frightened to see merchants' wives and daughters dressed like themselves, finding intolerable this impudence of the city; mantua-makers are sent for, and the devising of fashions becomes all their study, so that they may have always new modes ready to take up as soon as those cheeky shopkeepers begin to imitate the existing ones. The same competitiveness is continued up through the various degrees of quality, to an incredible expense, until at last •the prince's great favourites and those of the first rank of all, having nothing else left to outstrip some of their inferiors ·in respect of clothing·, are forced to lay out vast estates in pompous equipages, magnificent furniture, sumptuous gardens and princely palaces.

[Answering the objection that many people wear fine clothes simply because they are used to them, and that pride doesn't come into it, Mandeville says that those people's fine clothes were invented in the first place because of pride. Then he adds a further point.] Not everybody is without pride that appears to be so; the symptoms of that vice are not all easily discovered; they are manifold, and vary according to the age, humour, circumstances, and often constitution, of the people. •The choleric city captain seems impatient to come to action, and expressing his warlike genius by the firmness of his steps, makes his pike tremble at the valour of his arm; his martial finery inspires him with an unusual elevation of mind, by which—trying to forget his shop as well as himself—he looks up at the balconies with the fierceness of a Saracen conqueror. •The phlegmatic alderman, now become venerable both for his age and his authority, contents himself with being thought a considerable man; and knowing no easier way to express his vanity, looks big in his coach where. . . .he receives in sullen state the homage paid to him by the lower sort of people. •The beardless ensign counterfeits a gravity above his years, and with ridiculous assurance strives to imitate the stern countenance of his colonel. •The young woman, with a vast concern not to be overlooked, reveals a violent desire to be observed by continually changing her posture and courting with obliging looks the admiration of her beholders. •The conceited coxcomb displays an air of sufficiency, is wholly taken up with the contemplation of his own perfections, and in public places reveals such a disregard for others that the ignorant must imagine he thinks himself to be alone.

These and their like are all tokens of pride that are obvious to all the world; but man's vanity is not always so soon found out. When we see men who have an air of humanity and seem not to be employed in admiring themselves or entirely unmindful of others, we are apt to pronounce them free of pride, when they may be only fatigued with gratifying their vanity and languid from a satiety of enjoyments. The outward show of peace within and drowsy composure of careless negligence with which a great man is often seen in his plain chariot to loll at ease are not always as free from artifice as they may seem to be. Nothing is more entrancing for the proud than to be thought happy.

The well-bred gentleman places his greatest pride in how skillfully he covers it, and some are so expert in concealing this frailty that when they are the most guilty of it the vulgar think them the most exempt from it. When the dissembling courtier appears in state, he assumes an air of modesty and good humour; and while he is ready to burst with vanity he seems to be wholly ignorant of his greatness, knowing that those lovely qualities must heighten him in the esteem of others. . . .

Remark N

'envy itself, and vanity, were ministers of industry'

Envy is the baseness in our nature that makes us grieve and pine at what we conceive to be a happiness in others. I don't believe there is a human creature in his senses arrived to maturity that has not at some time been carried away by this passion in good earnest; and yet I never heard anyone dare to admit to being guilty of it except in jest. What makes us so generally ashamed of this vice is the strong habit of hypocrisy, which has helped us—from our cradle—to hide even from ourselves the vast extent of our self-love and all its different branches. . . . Well as we think of ourselves, we often think as ill of our neighbour, with equal injustice; and when we learn that others do or will enjoy something we think they don't deserve, it makes us angry. Secondly, we are constantly employed in wishing well for ourselves, everyone according to his judgment and inclinations, and when we observe others having possession of something that we like and don't have, this brings us sorrow for not having the thing we like. This sorrow is incurable while we continue our esteem for the thing we want; but self-defence makes us try any possible way of removing evil from us; and experience teaches us that nothing in nature more alleviates this sorrow than our anger against those who have what we esteem and want. So we cherish and cultivate this anger so as to save or relieve ourselves, at least in part, from the sorrow.

Envy then is a compound of grief and anger; the degrees of this passion depend chiefly on the nearness or remoteness of the objects as to circumstances. If someone forced to walk on foot envies a great man for keeping a coach and six horses, it will never be with the violence of the envy of a man who also keeps a coach but can only afford four horses.

The symptoms of envy are as various and as hard to describe as those of the plague. Among women the disease is very common, and the signs of it are very conspicuous in their opinions and censures of one another. Beautiful young women will often hate one another mortally at first sight, purely from envy; and you can read this scorn and unreasonable aversion in their faces if they have not learned skills in hiding it.

In the rude and unpolished multitude this passion is very bare-faced; especially when they envy others for the goods of *fortune*. They rail at their betters, rip up their faults, and take trouble to misconstrue their most commendable actions; they murmur at Providence, and loudly complain that the good things of this world are chiefly enjoyed by those who do not deserve them. The grosser sort of them are often affected so violently by envy that if they were not deterred by the fear of the laws they would *beat* those their envy is levelled at, solely because of their envy.

Men of letters suffering from this illness reveal quite different symptoms. When they envy a person for his abilities and erudition, their main concern is to conceal their frailty, which they generally try to do by denying and depreciating the good qualities they envy: they carefully read his works, and are displeased with every fine passage they meet with; they look for nothing but his errors, and wish for no greater feast than a gross mistake; in their censures they are captious as well as severe, make mountains of molehills, and will not pardon the least shadow of a fault but exaggerate the most trifling omission into a capital blunder.

Envy is visible in brute beasts [and he devotes a paragraph to unconvincing examples].

If envy was not rivetted in human nature, it would not be so common in children, and youth would not be so generally spurred on by emulation [see Glossary]. Those who want to

derive everything beneficial to society from a good cause ascribe the effects of *emulation* in schoolboys to a virtue of the mind: it requires labour and pains, so those who act from it are clearly committing a self-denial—so they think. But if we look closely into this we shall find that this sacrifice of ease and pleasure is only made to envy and the love of glory. If there was not something like this passion mixed with that supposed virtue, it would be impossible to create and increase it by the same means that create envy. The boy who receives a reward for the superiority of his performance is conscious of how annoyed he would have been if he had fallen short of it; this thought makes him exert himself not to be outdone by those whom he now regards as his inferiors; and the greater his pride is, the more self-denial he'll practise to maintain his conquest. The other boy, who tried hard but has missed the prize, is sorry, and consequently angry with the one he must see as the cause of his grief; but showing this anger would be of no service to him, so that he must either **a** be contented to be less esteemed than the other boy or **b** renew his efforts and become more proficient; and it is ten to one that the disinterested, good-humoured, and peaceable lad will choose **a** the first, and so become lazy and inactive, while the covetous, peevish, and quarrelsome rascal will **b** take incredible pains and make himself a conqueror in his turn.

Envy is common among painters, and is of great use for their improvement. I don't mean that little daubers envy great masters, but most painters are tainted with this vice against those *immediately* above them. If the pupil of a famous artist is of a bright genius and uncommon application, he at first adores his master; but as his own skill increases he gradually begins to envy what he previously admired. If by exerting himself a painter comes to surpass the man he envied, his sorrow is gone and all his anger disarmed; and if he hated him before, he is now glad to be friends with him.

Most married women are guilty of this vice, and are always trying to raise the same passion in their spouses; and where they have prevailed, •envy and emulation have kept more men in bounds, and reformed more bad husbands from sloth, drinking and other evil conduct, than •all the sermons preached since the time of the Apostles.

Everybody would like if he could to be happy, enjoy pleasure and avoid pain; so self-love makes us see every creature that seems satisfied as a rival in happiness; and the satisfaction we have in seeing that felicity disturbed, with no advantage to ourselves except the pleasure we have in beholding it, is called loving mischief [see Glossary] for mischief's sake; and the motive of which that frailty is the result is *malice*, another offspring of the same parent; for if there was no envy there could be no malice.

When the passions lie dormant we are not aware of them, and often people think they don't have such a frailty in their nature because at that moment they are not hearing from it.

. . . . At disasters, we either laugh at or pity the sufferers according to our stock of either of malice or compassion. If a man hurts himself so slightly that it does not arouse compassion, we laugh, and here our pity and malice shake us alternately:

> 'Indeed, sir, I am very sorry for it; I beg your pardon for laughing, I am the silliest creature in the world.' Then laugh again; and again 'I am indeed very sorry', and so on.

Some are so malicious they would laugh if a man broke his leg, and others are so compassionate that they can pity a man for a spot in his clothes; but nobody is so savage that *no* compassion can touch him, nor any man so good-natured as *never* to have any malicious pleasure. . . . Men of true good

sense envy less than others because they admire themselves with less hesitation than fools and silly people; for though they do not show this to others, yet the solidity of their thinking gives them an assurance of their real worth, which men of weak understanding can never *feel* though they often counterfeit it.

The ostracism of the Greeks was a sacrifice of valuable men made to epidemic envy, and often applied as an infallible remedy to cure and prevent the mischiefs of popular resentment and rancour. [He develops this through a paragraph, ending with:] Nothing is more tiresome to us than the repetition of praises we have no manner of share in.

The more a passion is a compound of many others, the harder it is to define; and the more tormenting it is to those who labour under it, the greater is the cruelty towards others it can inspire them with. Therefore nothing is more whimsical or mischievous than jealousy, which is made up of love, hope, fear, and a great deal of envy. I have said enough about envy already, and I shall discuss fear in Remark R [see page 61]; so I shall speak here about hope and love, the other two ingredients in this odd mixture that I want to explain and illustrate.

Hoping is wishing with some degree of confidence that the thing wished for will come to pass. The firmness or weakness of our hope depends entirely on the degree of our confidence, and all hope includes doubt; for when our confidence is high enough to exclude all doubts it becomes *certainty*, and we take for granted what we only hoped for before. The phrase 'certain hope' cannot be allowed [though it occurs in the Anglican Order for the Burial of the Dead—'In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life']; for a man who uses an adjective that destroys the essence of the noun he joins it to can have no meaning at all. . . . Why is it less shocking to some to hear a man speak of 'certain hope' than it would be if he spoke of 'hot ice' or 'liquid oak'? It is not because the first is less nonsensical than either of the other two; but because the word 'hope'—I mean the essence of it—is not so clearly understood by the generality of the people as the words and essences of 'ice' and 'oak' are.

Love in the first place signifies affection such as parents and nurses have for children, and as friends have for one another; it consists in a liking and well-wishing to the person who is loved. We give an easy construction to his words and actions, and feel a proneness to excuse and forgive his faults if we see any; in everything we make his interests *our* interests, even to our own disadvantage, and get satisfaction from sympathising with him in his sorrows as well as in his joys. . . .

·Love and lust·

Secondly, by 'love' we understand a strong inclination—distinct in its nature from all other affections of friendship, gratitude and blood-relationship—that persons of different sexes have towards one another. It is in this meaning of the word that *love* is a component in jealousy, and is an effect (as well as the happy disguise) of the passion that prompts us to labour for the preservation of our species. This latter appetite is innate in both men and women who are not defective in their physical constitution, as much as hunger or thirst, though they are seldom affected with it before the years of puberty. If we could undress nature and pry into its deepest recesses, we would discover the seeds of this passion before it expresses itself, as plainly as we see the teeth in an embryo before the gums are formed. There are few healthy people of either sex whom it has made no impression on before twenty; but the peace and happiness of civil society require this to be kept a secret, never talked of in public; so among well-bred people it is counted *criminal*

to mention in company anything in plain words relating to this mystery of succession; which leads to the very name of the appetite that is the most necessary for the continuance of mankind to become odious, and the adjectives commonly joined to 'lust' are 'filthy' and 'abominable'.

In people of strict morals and rigid modesty, this impulse of nature often disturbs the body long before it is known to be what it is, and the most polished and best instructed people are generally the most ignorant about this matter. See the difference between man in **(a)** the wild state of nature and the same creature in **(b)** civil society. In **(a)** men and women, if left rude and untaught in the sciences of modes and manners, would quickly find out the cause of that disturbance and would not be—any more than other animals—at a loss for an immediate remedy. . . . But in **(b)**, where the rules of religion, law and decency are to be obeyed before any dictates of nature, the youth of both sexes are to be armed and fortified against this impulse, and from their infancy deliberately scared off from the most remote approaches of it. The appetite and all its symptoms, though plainly felt and understood, are to be •stifled with care and severity, and in women flatly •disowned and, if there's occasion for this, obstinately •denied. . . . And among people of birth and fortune it is expected that matrimony should never be entered on without a careful attention to family, estate and reputation, with the call of nature being the very last consideration in the making of matches.

Thus, those who would make 'love' and 'lust' synonymous with one another are confounding the effect with the cause of it. But such is the power of upbringing, and the habit of thinking as we are taught to think, that sometimes persons of either sex are actually in love without feeling any carnal desires, and without penetrating into the intentions of nature to identify the goal it proposes, without which they could never have been affected with that sort of passion. . . . Such platonic lovers, male and female, are commonly pale-faced, weakly people of cold and phlegmatic constitutions; hale and robust people never entertain any love so spiritual as to exclude all thoughts and wishes relating to the body. But even the most seraphic ·and 'spiritual'· lovers could learn what the origin is of their inclination: just let them suppose that someone else has the physical enjoyment of the beloved person, and the tortures they'll suffer from that reflection will soon teach them the nature of their passions. . . .

Those who are skilled in anatomising the invisible part of man will observe that the more sublime and exempt this love is from all thoughts of sensuality, the more spurious it is, and the more it degenerates from its honest original and primitive simplicity. The power and sagacity as well as labour and care of the politician [see Glossary] in civilising the society has been nowhere more conspicuous than in the happy contrivance of playing our passions against one another. By •flattering our pride and increasing our good opinion ourselves on the one hand, and on the other •inspiring us with dread and mortal aversion against shame, the artful moralists have taught us to encounter ourselves cheerfully, and if not *subdue* at least to *conceal* and disguise our favourite passion, lust, to such an extent that we hardly recognise it when we meet with it in our own breasts. . . . Can any man abstain from laughter when he considers that our only reward for so much deceit and insincerity practised on ourselves and others is the empty satisfaction of making our species appear more exalted and remote from that of other animals than it really is and we in our hearts know it to be?. . . .

What we call 'love', then, is not a genuine appetite but an adulterated one, or rather a compound, a heap of several contradictory passions blended in one—a product of nature warped by custom and upbringing. So its true origin and first

motive is stifled in well-bred people, and almost concealed from themselves. All this explains why its effects of it are so different, whimsical, surprising and unaccountable, depending as they do on how those affected with it vary in age, strength, resolution, temper, circumstances, and manners.

This passion is what makes jealousy so troublesome. Those who imagine there can be jealousy without love do not understand jealousy. Men who have not the least affection for their wives may be angry with them for their conduct, and suspicious of them, with or without a cause; but in these what affects them is their pride, their concern for their reputation. They feel hatred against them without remorse; they can beat them and go to sleep contentedly; they may watch their wives themselves and have them watched by others, but they are not so inquisitive or industrious in their searches—nor do they feel that anxiety of heart at the fear of a discovery—as when love is mixed with the passions.

What confirms me in this opinion is this: when a man's love for his mistress has gone and he suspects her to be false, he leaves her and forgets about her; whereas it is the greatest difficulty imaginable, even for a man of sense, to part with a mistress as long as he loves her, whatever faults she may be guilty of. [He offers some details.]

Remark O

'real pleasures, comforts, ease'

That the highest good consists in pleasure was the doctrine of Epicurus, whose own life was exemplary for continence, sobriety and other virtues, which led people in later times to quarrel about the meaning of 'pleasure'. Those who argued from Epicurus's own temperance said that the delight he meant was *being virtuous*; so Erasmus tells us in his *Colloquies* that there are no greater Epicureans than pious Christians. Others who reflected on the dissolute manners of most of Epicurus's followers maintain that he must have been referring to sensual pleasures and the gratification of our passions. I shall not decide their quarrel; but I hold that whether men are good or bad, what they take delight in is their pleasure. Not looking for etymological help from the learned languages, I think an Englishman can rightly call a 'pleasure' anything that pleases him; and according to this definition we ought not to dispute about men's pleasures any more than about their tastes. . . .

The worldly-minded, voluptuous and ambitious man, despite being void of merit, covets precedence everywhere and wants to be dignified above his betters; he aims at spacious palaces and delicious gardens; his chief delight is in excelling others in stately horses, magnificent coaches, a numerous attendance, and expensive furniture. To gratify his lust he wants genteel, young, beautiful women of different charms and characters to adore his greatness and be really in love with his person; his cellars he wants stored with the flower of every country that produces excellent wines; his table he wants to be served with many courses, each containing a choice variety of dainties not easily purchased, and ample evidence of elaborate and judicious cookery. . . . [This is developed in considerable detail, involving music, well-made 'trifles', good conversational company, servants who know what he wants without being told, and] as chief officers of his hold he wants men of birth, honour and distinction. . . ., for though he loves to be honoured by everybody and receives the respects of the common people with joy, the homage paid to him by persons of quality is ravishing to him in a more transcendent manner.

While thus wallowing in a sea of lust and vanity and wholly employed in provoking and indulging his appetites, he

wants the world to think him altogether free from pride and sensuality and to put a favourable construction on his most glaring vices. Indeed, if his authority can purchase it, he is anxious to be thought wise, brave, generous, good-natured and endowed with all the virtues he thinks worth having. He would have us believe that

- the pomp and luxury he is served with are merely tiresome plagues to him,
- the grandeur he appears in is an unwelcome burden which, to his sorrow, is inseparable from the high sphere he moves in,
- his noble mind—so much exalted above vulgar capacities—aims at higher ends, and cannot take pleasure in such worthless enjoyments;
- the highest of his ambition is to promote the public welfare, and
- his greatest pleasure is to see his country flourish and everybody in it made happy.

These are called *real pleasures* by the vicious [see Glossary] and earthly-minded, and anyone whose skill or luck enables him in this way to enjoy both the world and the world's good opinion is counted extremely happy by all the most fashionable part of the people.

But on the other side, most of the ancient philosophers and grave moralists, especially the Stoics, would not count as a real good anything that was liable to be taken from them by others. They wisely considered the instability of fortune and the favour of princes; the vanity of honour and popular applause; the precariousness of riches and earthly possessions; and therefore placed true happiness in

> the calm serenity of a contented mind free from guilt and ambition; a mind which, having subdued every sensual appetite, despises the smiles as well as frowns of fortune, and getting no delight from anything but contemplation, desires only what everybody is able to give to himself—a mind armed with fortitude and resolution, that has learned to sustain the greatest losses without concern, to endure pain without affliction, and to bear injuries without resentment.

Many have claimed to reach this height of self-denial, and then, if we may believe them, they were raised above common mortals and their strength extended far beyond the pitch of their first nature: they could behold the anger of threatening tyrants and imminent dangers without terror, and stayed calm in the midst of torments. They could meet death itself with intrepidity; and they had no greater reluctance in leaving the world than they had showed fondness when entering it.

Those ancients have always had the greatest sway; yet others—and no fools either—have exploded those precepts as impracticable, called their notions 'romantic', and tried to prove that what these Stoics asserted about themselves exceeded all human force and possibility, and that therefore the virtues they boasted of could only be haughty pretence, full of arrogance and hypocrisy. Despite these censures, however, the serious part of the world—and most of the wise men who have lived between then and now—agree with the Stoics on the most important points: •that there can be no true felicity in what depends on perishable things; •that inner peace is the greatest blessing, and no conquest is like that of our passions; •that knowledge, temperance, fortitude, humility and other embellishments of the mind are the most valuable acquisitions; •that no man can be happy without being good; and •that only the virtuous are capable of enjoying real pleasures.

I expect to be asked why in the Fable [page 8] I have called 'real' pleasures that are directly opposite to the ones that I admit the wise men of all ages have extolled as the most

valuable. I answer that it's because what I call 'pleasures' are not the things that men *say* are best but the ones they seem to be most pleased with. How can I believe that a man's chief delight is in the embellishments of the mind when I see him constantly engaged in pursuing the pleasures that are contrary to them? John cuts just enough pudding to stop you saying he took none; you see that after much chomping and chewing this little bit goes down with him like chopped hay; then he pounces on the beef with a voracious appetite, and crams himself. Is it not provoking to hear John cry every day that pudding is all his delight, and that he doesn't care a farthing for the beef?

I could swagger about fortitude and contempt for riches as much as Seneca himself, and would undertake to write twice as much on behalf of poverty as ever he did, for the tenth part of his estate; I could teach the way to his *summum bonum* [= 'supreme good'] as exactly as I know my way home; I could tell people that to extricate themselves from all worldly engagements and purify their minds they must get rid of their passions, like removing furniture from a room in order to clean it thoroughly. I am quite sure that the malice and most severe strokes of fortune can do no more injury to a mind thus stripped of all fears, wishes and inclinations than a blind horse can do in an empty barn. In the theory of all this I am perfect, but the practice is difficult; and if you tried to pick my pocket or to take the victuals from before me when I am hungry, or if you made even the least motion of spitting in my face, I dare not promise how philosophically I would behave myself. But the fact that I am forced to submit to every caprice of *my* unruly nature (you'll say) does not show that others are as little masters of *theirs*; so I am willing to worship virtue wherever I can meet with it, as long as I shall not be obliged •to admit anything as virtue where I can see no self-denial, or •to judge men's sentiments from their *words* when I have their *lives* before me.

Having searched through every degree and station of men, I have found nowhere more austerity of manners or greater contempt for earthly pleasures, than in some religious houses where people—freely resigning and retiring from the world to combat themselves—have no other business but to subdue their appetites. What can be better evidence of perfect chastity and a superlative love for immaculate purity in men and women than that in the prime of their age, when lust is most raging, they should actually seclude themselves from each others' company and voluntarily debar themselves for life not only from uncleanness but from even the most lawful embraces? [He adds self-flagellation, midnight prayers, refusal even to touch money, eating only what they can get by begging.]

Such fair instances of self-denial would make me bow down to virtue, if I were not deterred and warned from it by so many eminent and learned persons who unanimously tell me that I am mistaken and all I have seen is farce and hypocrisy; that whatever seraphic love they may pretend to, there is nothing but discord among them; and that however penitential the nuns and friars may appear in their convents, none of them sacrifice their darling lusts; that among the women not all are virgins who pass for such, and that if I were let into their secrets and examined some of their subterraneous privacies, I would soon be convinced by scenes of horror that some of them must have been mothers. That among the men I would find calumny, envy and ill-nature in the highest degree, or else gluttony, drunkenness, and impurities of a worse kind than adultery itself. And as for the mendicant orders, that they differ only in their clothing from other sturdy beggars who deceive people with a pitiful tone and an outward show of misery, and as soon as they are out of sight indulge their appetites and enjoy one another.

If the strict rules, and so many outward signs of devotion observed among those religious orders, deserve such harsh censures, we may well despair of meeting with virtue anywhere else; for if we look into the actions of the antagonists and greatest accusers of those votaries we shall not find so much as the appearance of self-denial. [He goes into some detail about how pleasantly 'reverend divines of all sects' manage to live, including taking care of the comforts of (and he puts this in Latin, quoting Luther) the stomach and what is below the stomach.]

I have nothing against all this, but I see no self-denial, and without that there can be no virtue. Is it such a mortification [see Glossary] not to want a greater share of worldly blessings than what every reasonable man ought to be satisfied with? Is there any mighty merit in not being villainous, forbearing indecencies that no prudent man would be guilty of even if he had no religion at all?

I shall be told that the reason why the clergy are so violent in their resentments when at any time they are even slightly disparaged, and so impatient when their rights are invaded, is their great care to preserve their calling—their *profession*—from contempt, not for their own sakes but to be more serviceable to others. It is the same reason that makes them care about the comforts and conveniences of life; for if they allowed themselves to be insulted, or were content with a coarser diet and more ordinary clothes than other people, the multitude—who judge from outward appearances—would be apt to think that the clergy were no more the immediate care of providence than other folks, and so would not only undervalue their persons but despise all the reproofs and instructions that came from them. This is an admirable plea, and as it is much made use of I'll test it. [The test, which is much longer in the original than in this version, ends at ■ on page 50.]

I do not agree with the learned Dr. Echard that poverty brings the clergy into contempt, except that it may be an occasion of their revealing their blind side; for when men are always struggling with their low condition and cannot bear the burden of it willingly, they show how uneasily their poverty sits on them, how glad they would be to have their situation upgraded. and what a real value they have for the good things of this world. Someone

- who harangues on the contempt of riches and the vanity of earthly enjoyments, in a rusty threadbare gown because he has no other, and would wear his old greasy hat no longer if anyone gave him a better,
- who drinks small-beer at home with a heavy countenance but leaps at a glass of wine if he can catch it elsewhere,
- who with little appetite feeds upon his own coarse food mess but falls to greedily where he can please his palate and expresses an uncommon joy at an invitation to a splendid dinner,

is despised not because he is poor but because he does not know how to be poor with the contentment and resignation that he preaches to others, and so reveals his inclinations to be contrary to his doctrine. But when a man—from the greatness of his soul (or an obstinate vanity, which will do as well)—resolves to subdue his appetites in good earnest, refuses all offers of ease and luxury, embraces a voluntary poverty with cheerfulness, rejects whatever may gratify the senses, and actually sacrifices all his passions to his pride in acting this part, the vulgar will be ready to deify and adore him. How famous have the cynic philosophers made themselves purely by refusing to dissimulate and make use of superfluities? Did not the most ambitious monarch the world has ever seen condescend to visit Diogenes in his tub, and reply to a deliberate piece of rudeness with the highest

compliment a man of his pride was able to make?

Mankind are very willing to take one another's word when they see things that corroborate what is told them; but when our actions directly contradict what we say, it is regarded as impudent to desire belief. [He gives examples.] If there are any who want to be thought not to care for the world, and to value the soul above the body, they have only to forbear showing more concern for their sensual pleasures than they generally do for their spiritual ones and they can be sure of not being brought into contempt by poverty, however dire, if they bear it with fortitude. . . .

[He develops a story about a greatly admired pastor who is devoted to his 'little flock', and lives in voluntary penury on less than half of his small salary; imagines someone objecting this this is unfair to the pastor's wife and children; and continues:] I confess I forgot the wives and children, mainly because I thought poor priests could have no occasion for them. Who could imagine that the parson who is to teach others by example as well as precept was not able to withstand desires that the wicked world itself calls unreasonable? When an apprentice marries before his apprenticeship is over, unless he meets with a good fortune all his relations are angry with him and everybody blames him. Why? Simply because at that time he has no money at his disposal, no leisure (because he is still bound to his master's service), and perhaps little capacity to provide for a family. Then what must we say to a parson who has twenty or forty pounds a year, is bound more strictly to all the services a parish and his duty require, and has little time and generally much less ability to get any more? Is it not very unreasonable for him to marry?. . . .

When we see so many of the clergy, to indulge their lust (a brutish appetite), run themselves into inevitable poverty in this way

> —poverty that is sure to make them contemptible to all the world unless they bear it with more fortitude than they show in all their actions—

how are we to believe them when they claim that they conform themselves to the world not because they take delight in its various decencies, conveniences, and ornaments but only to preserve their profession from contempt, in order to be more useful to others? Don't we have reason to believe that what they say is full of hypocrisy and falsehood, and that sexual desire is not the only appetite they want to gratify; that the haughty airs and quick sense of injuries, the elaborate elegance in dress, and delicacy of palate that are to be seen in most of them who are able to show them, are the results of pride and luxury in them as they are in other people, and that the clergy are not possessed of more intrinsic virtue than any other profession?■

If the great ones of the clergy as well as the laity of any country had no value for earthly pleasures and did not try to gratify their appetites, why are envy and revenge so raging among them, and all the other passions improved and refined on in courts of princes more than anywhere else, and why is their whole manner of living always of the kind approved of, coveted, and imitated by the most sensual people of that same country? If they despise all visible decorations and love only the embellishments of the mind, why do they use the most darling toys of the luxurious? Why should a lord treasurer—or a bishop, or even the grand signior, or the Pope of Rome—wanting to be good and virtuous and trying to master his passions, need greater revenues, richer furniture, or more personal servants than a private man? What virtue is it the exercise of which requires as much pomp and superfluity as all men in power are seen to have? A man who has only one dish at a meal has as much opportunity to practise temperance as one who is constantly served with

three courses; one may exercise as much endurance and be as full of self-denial on a skimpy mattress as in a velvet bed sixteen feet high. The virtuous possessions of the mind are not a load or a burden; a man may bear misfortunes with fortitude in a garret, forgive injuries when he is on foot, and be chaste when he has not a shirt to his back. So I believe that all the learning and religion that one man can contain might be carried as well by a second-rate solo boatman as by a barge with six oars, especially if it was only to cross from Lambeth to Westminster; and that humility is not such a heavy virtue that it requires six horses to draw it.

It has been said that men are not so easily governed by their equals as by their superiors, so those who rule over us must, to keep the multitude in awe, excel others in outward appearance. This is a frivolous objection. **(a)** It applies only to poor princes and weak and precarious governments which, being actually unable to maintain the public peace, are obliged to make up with a pageant show for what they lack in real power. . . . **(b)** What must protect the lives and wealth of people from the efforts of wicked men in all societies is the severity of the laws and diligent administration of impartial justice. Theft, house-breaking and murder are not to be prevented by the scarlet gowns of the aldermen, the gold chains of the sheriffs, the fine trappings of their horses, or any gaudy show whatever. . . . If my Lord Mayor had nothing to defend himself but his great two-handed sword, the huge cap of maintenance and his gilded mace, he would soon be stripped in the very streets of the city of all his finery in his coach.

[He goes on about extravagances that grandees indulge in that the public don't even know about and so can't be defended as needed to maintain their dignity and power; and then cites historical examples of leaders and rules who lived frugally without losing respect and authority, ending with a striking case:] There has not for many years been a prince less inclined to pomp and luxury than the present King of Sweden, who. . . .has sacrificed not only the lives of his subjects and welfare of his dominions but (what is more uncommon in sovereigns) his own ease and all the comforts of life, to an implacable spirit of revenge; yet he is obeyed in obstinately maintaining a war that has almost utterly destroyed his kingdom.

Thus I have proved that the real pleasures of all men in nature are worldly and sensual, if we judge from their conduct; I say all men 'in nature' because devout Christians cannot be said to be in nature, because they are regenerated and supernaturally assisted by the divine grace. How strange it is that they should all so unanimously deny it! Ask not only the divines and moralists of every nation but likewise all who are rich and powerful about real pleasure and they'll tell you as the Stoics did that there can be no true felicity in worldly and corruptible things; but then look at their lives and you will find they take delight in no other.

What must we do in this dilemma? Shall we be so uncharitable as to say, judging from men's actions, that **(a)** all the world prevaricates and that this is not their opinion, whatever they say? Or shall we be so silly as to think them sincere in their sentiments, relying on what they say and not believing our own eyes? Or shall we rather try to believe ourselves and them too, and say with Montaigne that **(b)** they are fully persuaded that they believe something that in fact they do not believe? These are his words:

> 'Some impose on the world, and would be thought to believe what they really don't; but a much greater number impose on themselves, not considering or thoroughly grasping what it is to believe.'

But this is making all mankind either **(b)** fools or **(a)** impostors. Our only other resource is to say what Mr. Bayle

has tried to prove at large in his reflections on comets: that **(c)** man is so unaccountable a creature as to act most commonly against his principles; and this is so far from being insulting that it is a *compliment* to human nature because the only alternatives are worse.

This contradiction in man's make-up is the reason why the •theory of virtue is so well understood and the •practice of it so rarely met with. If you ask me where to look for those beautiful shining qualities of prime ministers and favourites of princes that are so finely painted in dedications, addresses, epitaphs, funeral sermons and inscriptions, I answer: *there* and nowhere else. Where would you look for the excellence of a statue but in the part you see? Only the polished outside has the skill and labour of the sculptor to boast of; what's out of sight is untouched. If you broke the head or cut open the breast to look for the brains or the heart, you would only show your ignorance, and destroy the workmanship. This has often made me compare great men's virtues to large china jars: they make a fine show, and are ornamental even to a chimney; judging by their bulk and the value that is set upon them, one would think they might be very useful; but look into a thousand of them and you'll find nothing but dust and cobwebs.

Remark P

'the very poor lived better than the rich before'

If we trace the most flourishing nations in their origin we'll find that in the remote beginnings of every society the richest and most considerable men were for a long time destitute of many comforts of life that are now enjoyed by the lowest and most humble wretches; so that many things once regarded as the invention of luxury are now counted as so necessary that we think no human creature ought to be without them.

In the first ages, no doubt, man fed on the fruits of the earth without any previous preparation, and reposed himself naked like other animals on the lap of their common parent. Whatever has since contributed to making life more comfortable must have been the result of thought, experience, and some labour, so its entitlement to be called 'luxury' depends on how much trouble it required and how far it deviated from the primitive simplicity. Our admiration is extended only to what is new to us, and we all overlook the excellence of things we are used to, however curious [see Glossary] they are. You would be laughed at if you described as 'luxury' the plain dress of a poor creature who walks along in a thick parish gown with a coarse shirt under it; yet how many people, how many trades, and what a variety of skill and tools must be employed to produce the most ordinary Yorkshire cloth? What depth of thought and ingenuity, what toil and labour, and what length of time must it have cost before man could learn to get from a seed to such a useful product as linen?

[He talks about the fastidiousness of a society that regarded linen as unfit to be worn, even by the poorest people, when it is a bit dirty; describes this as requiring the use of fire to boil water to dissolve 'one of the most difficult compositions that chemistry can boast of'; and says that there was a time when laundering clothes was seen in that way.] But the age we live in would call a man fool if he described as 'extravagant' and 'fastidious' a poor woman who, after wearing her smock for a whole week, washed it with a bit of stinking soap costing a groat a pound.

The arts of brewing and making bread have gradually been brought to the perfection they are now in, but to have invented them all at once would have required more knowledge and a deeper insight into the nature of fermentation than the greatest philosopher has yet been endowed with;

but the products of both are now enjoyed by the lowest of our species—a starving wretch cannot make a more humble and modest request than by asking for a bit of bread or a draught of small beer.

Man has learned by experience that the small plumes and down of birds, heaped together, would gently resist any incumbent weight and heave up again as soon as the pressure is over. The first use of them to sleep on was, no doubt, aimed at complimenting the vanity as well as ease of the wealthy and potent; but they have now become so common that almost everybody lies on featherbeds, and to replace them by flocks [= 'tufts of wool'] is looked on a miserable shift of the most necessitous. What a vast height luxury must have achieved for sleeping on the soft wool of animals to be reckoned a hardship!

[Similarly with buildings. 'If the ancient Britons and Gauls came out of their graves', they might envy the care with which paupers are now treated in 'stately palaces' such as Greenwich Hospital or the *Invalides* in Paris.]

·EATING MEAT·

Another piece of luxury the poor enjoy that is not looked on as such is their making use of the flesh of animals to eat. There is no doubt that in a golden age the wealthiest would abstain from this. I have often thought that if it were not for the tyranny that custom usurps over us [he devotes a paragraph to this], men of any tolerable good nature could never be reconciled to the killing of so many **animals** for their daily food, as long as the bountiful earth so plentifully provides them with varieties of **vegetable** dainties. I know that reason arouses our compassion only faintly, so I am not surprised that men so little commiserate such imperfect creatures as crayfish, oysters, cockles, and indeed all fish in general: as they are mute, and different from us in their inward formation and outward shape, and they express themselves unintelligibly to us; so it is not strange that their grief does not affect our *understanding*, which it cannot reach; for nothing stirs us to pity so effectively as when the symptoms of misery strike immediately on our senses. . . . But in such perfect animals as sheep and oxen, whose heart, brain and nerves differ so little from ours, and in whom the organs of sense and consequently feeling itself are the same as they are in human creatures, I can't imagine how a man not hardened in blood and massacre is able to see a violent death, and the pangs of it, without concern.

Most people will think it a sufficient answer to this to say that there can be no cruelty in putting creatures to the use they were designed for; but I have heard men say this while their inner nature has reproached them with the falsehood of the assertion. Almost everyone who was not brought up in a slaughter-house will admit that of all trades he could never have been a butcher; and I question whether anyone, ever, so much as killed a chicken without reluctance the first time. Some people refuse to eat poultry that they fed and took care of themselves; yet they will feed heartily and without remorse on beef, mutton and fowls bought in the market. This behaviour seems to show something like a consciousness of guilt; it looks as if they tried to save themselves from the imputation of a crime (which they know sticks somewhere) by removing the cause of it as far as they can from themselves; and I find in this some strong remains of primitive pity and innocence, which the arbitrary power of custom has not yet been able to conquer.

What I am building on here, I shall be told, is a folly that wise men are not guilty of. I admit that; but it comes from a real passion inherent in our nature, and demonstrates that we are born with a repugnance to the killing and thus to the eating of animals. . . .

[After a paragraph based on his belief (mistaken, in fact) that English law would not allow surgeons or butchers to serve on juries in capital cases because they might be too callous, Mandeville tells a 'fable' in which an eloquent lion debates with a castaway Roman merchant about whether the lion should refrain from eating him. The merchant eventually pleads the superiority of the human species, whereupon the lion pitches in at great length, with a very Mandevillean series of put-downs, focussing on the faults that have led humans to be carnivores. After all this—which Mandeville cheerfully invites us to skip—he sums up.]

The lion, in my opinion, has stretched the point too far. But when to soften the flesh of male animals we have by castration prevented their tendons from becoming tough, I confess that I think it ought to move a human creature when he reflects on the cruel care with which they are fattened for destruction. When a large and gentle bullock after many blows falls stunned at last, and his armed head is fastened to the ground with cords; as soon as the wide wound is made and the jugulars are cut, what mortal can without compassion •hear the painful bellowings intercepted by his blood, the bitter sighs that declare the sharpness of his anguish, and the deep groans fetched with anxiety from the bottom of his strong and palpitating heart; •look on the trembling and violent convulsions of his limbs; •see his eyes become dim and languid; and •behold his strugglings, gasps and last efforts for life, the certain signs of his approaching fate? When a creature has given such convincing and undeniable proofs of the terrors on him, and the pains and agonies he feels, is there a follower of Descartes so inured to blood as not to refute by his commiseration the philosophy of that vain reasoner?

Remarks Q and R

Remark Q

'for frugally they now lived on their salary'

When people have small incomes and are honest, *that* is when most of them begin to be frugal, and not before. In ethics 'frugality' is the name for the virtue whose principle leads men to •abstain from superfluities, •despise laborious artificial contrivances to procure ease or pleasure, •content themselves with the natural simplicity of things, and •be carefully temperate in the enjoyment of them, without a touch of covetousness. Thus defined, 'frugality' may be scarcer than many imagine; but what is generally understood by the word is a commoner quality, consisting in a medium between profuseness and avarice, rather leaning to the latter—a prudent economy that some people call 'saving'. In private families it is the most certain method to increase an estate, and some people imagine that this holds also for whole nations, and that (for example) the English would be much richer than they are if they were as frugal as some of their neighbours. This (I think) is an error. To prove my case I first refer the reader to what I said about this in Remark L, and then go on thus.

Experience teaches us •that just as people differ in their views and perceptions of things, so they vary in their inclinations; one man is given to covetousness, another to prodigality, and a third is only saving. And •that men are very seldom reclaimed from their favourite passions by reason or by precept, and that if anything ever draws them away from what they are naturally attracted to, it must be a change in their circumstances or their fortunes. These observations show us that to make a nation as a whole lavish, the product of the country must be considerable in proportion to the inhabitants, and what they are lavish with must be cheap; that on the contrary to make a nation as a whole frugal, the necessities of life must be scarce and consequently expensive; and that therefore—let the best politician [see Glossary] do what he can—the profuseness or frugality of a people in general must always depend on and be proportioned to the fruitfulness and product of the country, the number of inhabitants, and the taxes they are to bear. If anyone would refute this, let him prove from history that any country ever had a national frugality without a national necessity.

Let us examine, then, what is needed to aggrandise and enrich a nation. The first desirable blessings for any society of men are a fertile soil and a happy climate, a mild government, and more land than people. These things will make men easy, loving, honest and sincere. In this condition they may be as virtuous as they can, without the least injury to the public, and consequently as happy as they please themselves [that sentence is exactly as Mandeville wrote it]. But they will have no arts or sciences, and will be quiet as long as their neighbours will let them; they will be poor, ignorant, and almost wholly destitute of what we call the comforts of life, and all the cardinal virtues together won't so much as procure a tolerable coat or a porridge-pot among them; for in this state of slothful ease and stupid innocence, while you need not fear great vices you must not expect any considerable virtues. Man never exerts himself except when aroused by his desires: while they lie dormant and there is nothing to raise them, his excellence and abilities will be for ever undiscovered, and the lumpish machine without the

influence of his passions can be fairly compared to a huge windmill without a breath of air.

To make a society of men strong and powerful, you must touch their passions. Divide the land (even if there is plenty to spare) and their possessions will make them covetous; arouse them from their idleness with joking praises, and pride will set them to work seriously; teach them trades and handicrafts and you'll bring envy and emulation among them. To increase their numbers, set up a variety of manufactures and leave no ground uncultivated; let property be inviolably secured, and privileges equal to all men; allow nobody to act unlawfully and everybody to think what he pleases; for a country where anyone willing to work can be maintained. . . .must always be thronged and can never lack people as long as there are any in the world. If you want them to be bold and warlike, turn to military discipline, make good use of their fear, and flatter their vanity with skill and persistence; but if you want them also to be an opulent, knowing and polite nation, teach them commerce with foreign countries, and do everything you possibly can to get them to use the sea; then promote navigation, cherish the merchant, and encourage every branch of trade. This will bring riches, and where there are riches there will soon be arts and sciences. By doing these things, and by good management, politicians can make a people potent, renowned and flourishing.

But if you want a frugal and honest society, the best policy is to preserve men in their native simplicity, try not to increase their numbers; let them never be acquainted with strangers or superfluities, but keep from them anything that might raise their desires or improve their understanding. Great wealth and foreign treasure will never consent to come among men unless they can bring their inseparable companions, avarice and luxury; where trade is considerable, fraud will intrude. To be both *well-bred and sincere* is a contradiction: while man advances in knowledge and his manners are polished, we must expect to see his desires enlarged, his appetites refined and his vices increased.

·The flourishing of the Dutch·

[Mandeville was Dutch. He first went to England and began to learn the language at the age of 21. What follows reflects how thoroughly he came to think of himself as English.]

The Dutch ascribe their present grandeur to the virtue and frugality of their ancestors, but actually what made that negligible patch of ground so considerable among the principal powers of Europe has been •their political wisdom in making everything secondary to merchandise and navigation, •the unlimited liberty of conscience that is enjoyed among them, and •their tireless efforts to use the most effective means to encourage and increase trade in general.

They never were noted for frugality before Philip II of Spain began to rage over them with that unheard-of tyranny. Their laws were trampled on, their rights and large immunities taken from them, and their constitution torn to pieces. Several of their chief nobles were summarily condemned and executed. Complaints were punished as severely as resistance, and those who escaped being massacred were plundered by ravenous soldiers. This was intolerable to a people that had always had the mildest of governments and greater privileges than any of the neighbouring nations; so they chose to die in arms rather than perish by cruel executioners. Given Spain's strength at the time and the low circumstances those distressed Dutch states, there never was a more unequal strife; yet such was their fortitude and resolution that those provinces jointly maintained against the greatest and best-disciplined nation in Europe the most protracted and bloody war in all of history.

Rather than become a victim to the Spanish fury, they were willing to live on one third of their revenues, and spend the greatest part of their income on defending themselves against their merciless enemies. These hardships and calamities started them on that extraordinary frugality, and continuance of the same difficulties for more than 80 years inevitably made it customary and habitual to them.

But all their arts of saving, and penurious way of living, could never have enabled them to overcome such a powerful enemy if their industry in promoting their fishery and navigation in general had not helped to make up for the natural wants and disadvantages they laboured under.

The country is so small and so populous that there is not land enough (though hardly an inch of it is unimproved) to feed the tenth part of the inhabitants. Holland itself is full of large rivers, and lies lower than the sea, which would run over it every tide and wash it away in one winter if it weren't kept out by vast banks and huge walls. The repairs of those—and their sluices, keys, mills, and other things they need to keep from being drowned—are a greater expense to them than could be raised by a general land tax of four shillings in the pound deducted from the neat product of the landlord's revenue.

It is not surprising that people in such circumstances, including greater taxes than any other nation, are obliged to be *saving*. But why must they be a pattern to others who

- are more happily situated,
- are much richer within themselves, and
- have ten times as much ground per person?

The Dutch and we often buy and sell at the same markets, and to that extent our views may be said to be the same; but apart from that, the interests and political reasons for the economies of the two nations are very different. It is in *their* interest to be frugal and spend little because they have to get everything from abroad except butter, cheese and fish, of which they consume three times as much per person as we do here. It is in *our* interest to eat plenty of beef and mutton to maintain the farmer, and further improve our land, of which we have enough to feed twice our population if it was better cultivated. The Dutch may have more shipping and more ready money than we, but those are only the tools they work with. Similarly, a carrier may have more horses than a man of ten times his worth, and a banker may usually have more ready cash at hand than a gentleman who is vastly wealthier. . . .

Those who are frugal *on principle* are frugal in everything; but in Holland the people are sparing only in things that are daily wanted and soon consumed. In things that are lasting they are quite otherwise: in pictures and marble they are profuse; in their buildings and gardens they are extravagant to the point of folly. Other countries have stately courts and extensive palaces that belong to princes, which nobody can expect in a commonwealth that has as much equality as Holland does; but in all Europe you'll find no private buildings so sumptuously magnificent as many of the merchants' and other gentlemen's houses are in Amsterdam and some other great cities of that small province. . . .

Those who maintain that the frugality of that nation flows not so much from necessity as from a general aversion to vice and luxury point us to their public administration and smallness of salaries, their prudence in bargaining for and buying commodities, their great care not to be imposed upon by those who serve them, and their severity against those who break their contracts. But what these people ascribe to the virtue and honesty of ministers is wholly due to their strict regulations governing the management of the public treasure, from which their admirable form of government will not allow them to depart. One good man may take

another's word, if they so agree, but a whole nation ought never to trust to any honesty except what is built upon necessity; for a people will be unhappy and their constitution always precarious if their welfare depends on the virtues and consciences of ministers and politicians.

The Dutch generally try to promote as much frugality among their subjects as possible, not because it is a virtue but because it is generally speaking in their interest, as I have shown; for as their interest changes, so do their maxims, as can be seen from this:

> As soon as their East-India ships come home, the company pays off the men, and many of them receive the greatest part of what they have earned in seven or eight or more years. These poor fellows are encouraged to spend their money with all profuseness imaginable; and—considering that have been so long kept at hard labour without money, with a miserable diet, in the midst of danger—it cannot be difficult to make them lavish as soon as they have plenty. They squander away in wine, women and music as much as people of their taste and education are capable of, and are allowed (as long as they abstain from doing mischief) to revel and riot with greater licentiousness than is usually allowed to others. [He gives details.] This madness continues in most of them while they have anything left, which never lasts long. After about six weeks the company has other ships ready to depart; where these infatuated wretches (their money being gone) are forced to enter themselves again, and may have leisure to repent their folly.

In this stratagem there is a double policy. **(i)** If these sailors who have become accustomed to hot climates and unwholesome air and diet were to be frugal and stay in their own country, the ·East-India· company would be continually obliged to employ fresh men who would not be so fit for their business. . . . **(ii)** The large sums so often distributed among those sailors are in this way put immediately into circulation throughout the country, from which most of it is soon drawn back into the public treasury by heavy excises and other impositions.

·Supposing frugality in Great Britain·

Suppose that I am mistaken in everything I said in Remark L on behalf of luxury, and the need for it to maintain trade. Then let us examine what general frugality, if forced on people whether they have occasion for it or not, would produce in such a nation as ours. Let us suppose then that all the people in Great Britain consume only four fifths of what they do now, and so save one fifth of their income; and let us further suppose—though this is impossible—that this has no harmful effect on trade or agriculture. . . . The consequence would be that, unless money suddenly fell prodigiously in value while everything else (contrary to reason) became very expensive, at the end of five years all the working people and the poorest of labourers would be have as much ready cash as they now spend in a whole year.

Let us now, overjoyed with this increase of wealth, consider the condition the working people would be in (I'm not going to discuss anyone else); reasoning from experience and what we daily observe of them, let us judge what their behaviour would be in such a case. Everyone knows that there are many journeymen weavers, tailors, clothworkers, and twenty other handicrafts who, if they can maintain themselves by four days' labour in a week, will hardly be persuaded to work the fifth; and that there are thousands of labouring men who, though they hardly enough to live on, put themselves to fifty inconveniences, disoblige their masters, pinch their bellies and run in debt so as to have

holidays. When men show such an extraordinary proclivity to idleness and pleasure, what reason have we to think that they would ever work unless they were forced to it by immediate necessity?. . . .

What would become of our manufactures? If the merchant would send cloth abroad, he must make it himself, for the clothier cannot get one man out of twelve that used to work for him [meaning that a merchant wanting to export cloth won't be able to get it made for him here, because the clothier won't be able to re-hire one in twelve of his previous workers]. If this happened only with the journeymen shoemakers and nobody else, half of us would go barefoot in less than a year. The chief and most pressing use for money in a nation is to pay for the labour of the poor, and when there is a real scarcity of money, those who have many workmen to pay will always feel it first; but despite this great necessity for cash, it would be easier (if property was well secured) to live without money than to live without poor people; for who would do the work? For this reason •the quantity of circulating coin in a country ought to be proportioned to the number of hands that are employed; and •the wages of labourers ought to be proportioned to the price of provisions—they ought to be kept from starving, but should receive nothing worth saving. If here and there one of the lowest class manages—by uncommon industry [see Glossary] and pinching his belly—to lift himself above the condition he was brought up in, nobody ought to hinder him; indeed, it is undeniably the wisest course for every person and every private family to be frugal; but it is in the interest of all rich nations that most of the poor should almost never be idle, and yet keep spending what they earn.

Sir William Temple rightly says that all men are more prone to ease and pleasure than they are to labour when they are not prompted to it by •pride or •avarice; and those who get their living by their daily labour are seldom powerfully influenced by •either, so that they have nothing to push them to work but their *wants*, which it is prudence to relieve but folly to cure. The only thing that can make the labouring man industrious is a moderate quantity of money; too little will either dispirit him or make him desperate (depending on his temperament), whereas too much will make him insolent and lazy.

Most people would laugh at a man who maintained that too much money could undo a nation; yet this has been the fate of Spain. [He goes into details of how 'a fertile country where trade and manufactures flourished' was ruined by acquiring 'that mighty treasure that was obtained with more hazard and cruelty than the world had ever known, costing the lives of twenty million Indians'. Summing up:] Thus by too much money, the making of colonies and other mismanagements caused by having too much money, Spain has gone from being •a fruitful and well-peopled country, with mighty titles and possessions to being •a barren and empty thoroughfare through which gold and silver pass from America to the rest of the world; and from being •rich, acute, diligent and laborious to being •slow, idle, proud and beggarly. So much for Spain. The next country where money may be called the product is Portugal, and the figure that kingdom makes in Europe with all its gold is not much to be envied.

So the great art of making a nation happy and flourishing consists in giving everybody an opportunity to be employed; and to bring that about a government's first care should be to promote as **(i)** great a variety of manufactures, arts, and handicrafts as human wit can invent; and the second to encourage **(ii)** agriculture and fishery in all their branches; for as **(i)** is an infallible way of drawing vast multitudes of people into a nation, so **(ii)** is the only method to maintain them.

The greatness and felicity of nations must be expected from this policy, not from trivial regulating of lavishness and frugality; for whether the value of gold and silver rises or falls, the enjoyment of all societies will always depend on **(ii)** the fruits of the earth and **(i)** the labour of the people. These two, taken together, are a more certain, more inexhaustible, and more real treasure than the gold of Brazil or the silver of Bolivia.

Remark R

'no honour now' etc.

'Honour' in its figurative sense is a chimera without truth or being, an invention of moralists and politicians, signifying a certain principle [see Glossary] of virtue—not related to religion—that some men have and are kept by it close to their duty and commitments, whatever they may be. For example: a man of honour enters into a conspiracy with others to murder a king; he is obliged to go through with it; and if—overcome by remorse or good nature—he is jolted by the wickedness of his purpose, reveals the plot, and turns a witness against his accomplices, he thereby forfeits his honour, at least among the party he belonged to. The excellence of this principle is that the vulgar are destitute of it, and it is only in people of the better sort, as some oranges have pips and others not, though the outside is the same. In great families it is like the gout, generally regarded as hereditary, and all lords' children are born with it. In some who never felt anything of it, it is acquired by conversation and reading (especially of romances), in others by promotion; but there is nothing that encourages the growth of honour more than a sword, and upon the first wearing of one some people have felt considerable shoots of it in 24 hours.

The chief and most important care a man of honour ought to have is the preservation of this principle. Rather than forfeit it, he must lose his employments and estate, indeed life itself; for which reason, whatever humility he may show by way of good breeding, he is allowed to put an inestimable value upon himself as a possessor of this invisible ornament. The only way to preserve this principle is to live up to the rules of honour, the laws he is to walk by; he is obliged always to be faithful to his trust, to prefer the public interest to his own, not to tell lies or defraud or wrong anyone, and from others to allow no affront, which is a term of art [= 'a technical term'] for every action aimed at undervaluing him.

The men of ancient honour, of whom I reckon Don Quixote to have been the last on record, were very exact observers of all these laws and many others; but the moderns seem to be more remiss; they have a profound veneration for the last of them—·about not allowing any affront·—but they do not pay equal obedience to any of the others; and anyone who strictly complies with that one will have plenty of infringements of all the other laws connived at [see Glossary].

A man of honour is always regarded as impartial and as a man of sense (*of course*, for nobody ever heard of a man of honour who was a fool); and for this reason he has nothing to do with the law and is always allowed to be a judge in his own case. If the least injury is done to himself or his friend, his relation, his servant, his dog, or anything he is pleased to take under his honourable protection, satisfaction must be demanded; and if it proves to be an affront and he who gave it is also a man of honour, a battle must ensue. This makes it evident that a man of honour must have courage, without which his other principle—·honour·—would be no more than a sword without a point. Let us therefore examine what courage consists in, and whether it is what most people think it is, a real something that valiant men have in their nature distinct from all their other qualities.

There is nothing on earth as universally sincere as the love that all creatures have for themselves; and as all love implies a care to preserve the thing beloved, so there is nothing more sincere in any creature than his wishes and attempts to preserve himself. This is the law of nature, by which no creature is endowed with any appetite or passion that does not directly or indirectly tend to the preservation of himself or his species.

The means by which nature makes every creature continually engage in this business of self-preservation are grafted into him; in man they are called *desires*; they compel him to crave what he thinks will sustain or please him or command him to avoid what he imagines might displease, hurt or destroy him. These desires or passions all have their different symptoms, and from the variety of disturbances they make within us their various labels have been given them, as I showed with pride and shame.

·FEAR·

The passion that is raised in us when we think mischief [see Glossary] is approaching us is called 'fear'. The violence of the disturbance it makes within us is always proportional not to the danger but to our apprehension of the mischief dreaded, whether real or imaginary; and because our fear is always proportioned to our apprehension of the danger, it follows that while that apprehension lasts a man can no more shake off his fear than he can shake off a leg or an arm. . . .

Most people think that this apprehension is to be conquered by reason, but I confess I do not. Those who have been frightened will tell you that as soon as they could recollect themselves—i.e. make use of their reason—their apprehension was conquered. But this is no conquest at all, for in such a case the danger either was altogether imaginary or was past by the time they could use their reason; so if they found there was no danger, it is no wonder that they didn't apprehend any. But when the danger is permanent, *then* let them use their reason to examine the greatness and reality of the danger; if they find it less than they imagined, their apprehension will be lessened accordingly, but if the danger proves to be real and exactly what they took it to be at first, then their reason will *increase* their apprehension. No creature can fight offensively while this fear lasts; yet we see brutes fight obstinately and worry one another to death; so some other passion must be able to overcome this fear, and the most contrary to it is anger. To get to the bottom of that, I beg leave to make another digression.

·ANGER·

No creature can subsist without food, and no species of the more perfect animals can continue for long unless young ones are continually born as fast as the old ones die. So the first and fiercest appetite that nature has given them is *hunger*, the next is *lust*; one prompting them to procreate, as the other tells them to eat. Now, if we observe that anger is the passion raised in us when we are thwarted in our desires, and that it sums up all the strength in creatures and was given them to exert themselves more vigorously in trying to remove, overcome, or destroy whatever obstructs them in the pursuit of self-preservation, we shall find that brutes—except when they or what they love, or the liberty of either, are threatened—have nothing significant that can move them to anger but hunger or lust. Those are what make them more fierce, for we must observe that the thwarting of creatures' appetites that occurs when they are hindered from enjoying what they have in view also occurs (though perhaps with less violence) when they want something and cannot find it. This will appear more plainly if we bear in mind that all creatures on earth live •on the fruits and products of it

or •on the flesh of other animals, their fellow-creatures. The latter, which we call 'beasts of prey', have been armed by nature with **(i)** weapons and strength to overcome and tear asunder those it has designed for their food, and been given **(ii)** a much keener appetite than herbivores have. For as to **(i)**: if a cow loved mutton as well as she does grass, having no claws or talons and only one row of teeth, all of equal length, she would be starved even among a flock of sheep. As to **(ii)** their voraciousness: the hunger that can make a creature fatigue, harass and expose himself to danger for every bit he eats is—it stands to reason, and our experience confirms it—more piercing than the hunger that only tells him to eat what stands before him, which he can have merely by stooping down. Also, just as beasts of prey have an instinct to crave, trace and discover the creatures that are good food for them, so the latter have a matching instinct to shun, conceal themselves, and run away from those that hunt after them; from which is follows that beasts of prey go more often with empty bellies than do other creatures whose victuals neither fly from nor oppose them. This must perpetuate as well as increase their hunger, making it a constant fuel to their anger.

What stirs up this anger in bulls and cocks that will fight to death and yet are not very voracious and not animals of prey? I answer, *lust*. [He follows this thread in some detail, emphasising the facts about species in which a male remains peaceful if, but only if, it has a considerable harem of females at its disposal.]

For evidence that the influence of hunger and lust on the temper of animals is not as whimsical as some may imagine, consider our own case. Although our hunger is infinitely less violent than that of wolves and other ravenous creatures, we see that when healthy people with good digestions have to wait beyond the usual time for their food, they are more fretful and more easily annoyed by trifles than at any other time. And although lust in man is not as raging as it is in bulls and other salacious creatures, nothing provokes men and women to anger sooner and more violently than what thwarts their amours when they are heartily in love; and the most timid and gently brought up folk of either sex have slighted the greatest dangers, and set aside all other considerations, to bring about the destruction of a rival.

I have tried to demonstrate that

- •no creature can fight offensively as long as his fear lasts;
- •fear can be conquered only by another passion;
- •the passion most contrary to it and most effective in overcoming it is anger;
- •the two principal appetites which when disappointed can stir up anger are hunger and lust; and
- •in all brute beasts the proneness to anger and obstinacy in fighting generally depend upon the violence of either or both those appetites together;

from which it must follow that what we call 'prowess' or 'natural courage' in creatures is nothing but the effect of anger, and that all fierce animals must be very ravenous or very lustful or both.

Let us now examine how in the light of this we ought to judge of our own species. From •the tenderness of man's skin, •the great care that is required for years together to rear him, •the structure of his jaws, •the evenness of his teeth, •the breadth of his nails, and •the slightness of both, it is not probable that nature designed him for rapine [see Glossary], which is why his hunger is not voracious as it is in beasts of prey. Nor is he as salacious as other animals that are called 'salacious'. And being very industrious to supply his wants, he can have no reigning appetite to perpetuate his anger, and must consequently be a timorous animal.

This is to be understood only of man in his savage state; for if we examine him as a member of a society and a taught animal, we shall find him quite another creature: as soon as his pride has room to play, and envy, avarice and ambition begin to catch hold of him, he is roused from his natural innocence and stupor. As his knowledge increases, his desires are enlarged, and consequently his wants and appetites are multiplied; so he will often be thwarted in the pursuit of them, and meet with vastly more disappointment to stir up his anger than he did in his former condition; and before long man would become the most hurtful and noxious creature in the world, if let alone, whenever he could overpower his adversary with no harm to fear except from the person who angered him.

The first care of all governments, therefore, is by severe punishments to curb his anger when it does harm, and so by increasing his fears prevent the damage it might produce. When various laws to restrain him from using force are strictly enforced, self-preservation must teach him to be peaceable; and as it is everybody's business to be as little disturbed as is possible, his fears will be continually augmented and enlarged as he advances in experience, understanding and foresight. The inevitable consequence is that just as the provocations to anger he will receive in the civilised state will be infinite, so will his fears to damp it down; and thus in a little time he'll be taught by his fears to destroy his anger, and to use skill to pursue in a different way the same self-preservation for which nature had provided him with anger and his other passions.

The only useful passion, then, that man is possessed of toward the peace and quiet of a society is his fear, and the more you work on that the more orderly and governable he'll be; for however useful anger may be to man as a single creature by himself, society has no place for it. . . .

All men, whether born in courts or in forests, are susceptible of anger. When this passion overcomes a man's whole set of fears (as among all degrees of people it sometimes does), then the man has true courage, and will fight as boldly as a lion or a tiger—*then* and only then. I shall argue that whatever is called 'courage' in a man who is not angry is spurious and artificial.

·'COURAGE' WITHOUT ANGER·

It is possible by good government to keep a society always quiet within itself, but nobody can ensure peace from without for ever. The society may have occasion to enlarge their territories, or others may invade theirs, or something else will happen that man must be brought to fight; for however civilised men may be, they never forget that force goes beyond reason. The politician now must alter his procedures and take off some of man's fears; he must try to persuade him that •everything he had been told about the barbarity of killing men ceases when these men are enemies to the public, and that •his adversaries are neither so good nor so strong as himself. When these things are well managed they seldom fail to draw the hardiest, most quarrelsome, and most mischievous men into combat; but if those are their only qualities, I won't answer for their behaviour in battle. Once you make them undervalue their enemies, they'll soon be stirred up to anger, and while that lasts they'll fight with greater obstinacy than any disciplined troop; but if anything unforeseen happens—a sudden great noise, a tempest, or any strange or uncommon event that seems threatening—fear seizes them, disarms their anger, and makes every man of them run away.

[He says that 'natural courage' is useless for military purposes: •those who have been in battle won't believe the propaganda saying that the enemy is weak, and won't be

easy to make angry; •anger is a brief passion, and the enemy won't feel the 'shock' of it for long; and •angry soldiers will be impervious to advice and discipline, and so won't fight intelligently. Therefore:] Anger, without which no creature has natural courage, is altogether useless in a war to be managed by stratagem, so the government must find an equivalent for courage that will make men fight.

Whoever wants to civilise men and establish them into a body politic must be thoroughly acquainted with all their passions and appetites, strengths and weaknesses, and understand how to turn their greatest frailties to public advantage. I showed in the *Enquiry into the origin of moral virtue* [page 14] how easily men were induced to believe anything said in their praise. So if a law-giver or politician whom they have a great veneration for should tell them that

> most men had within them a principle [see Glossary] of valour distinct from anger or any other passion, which made them despise danger and face death itself with intrepidity, and that those who had the most of it were the most valuable of their kind,

it is very likely that most of them, though they felt nothing of this principle, would swallow it for truth, and that the proudest feeling themselves moved at this piece of flattery, and not skilled in distinguishing the passions, might—mistaking pride for courage—imagine that they felt courage heaving in their breasts. If a mere 10% can be persuaded to declare openly that they have this principle, and maintain it against all gainsayers, it won't be long before 60% say the same. Then the politician has only to take all imaginable care to flatter the pride of those that brag of this and are willing to stand by it. The same pride that drew a man in initially will oblige him to defend the assertion from then on, till at last the fear of revealing the reality of his heart comes to be so great that it outdoes the fear of death itself. Increase man's pride and his fear of shame will grow proportionally, for the greater the value a man sets upon himself, the more pains he'll take and the greater hardships he'll undergo to avoid shame.

·'Courage' based on honour and shame·

The great art to make man courageous, then, is first to make him claim this principle of valour within him, and then to inspire him with as much horror against shame as nature has given him against death. That there *are* things man may be more averse to than he is to death is evident from suicide. Someone who makes death his choice must regard it as less terrible than what he shuns by it; for nobody would deliberately kill himself except to avoid something, whether present or to come, real or imaginary. [He presents a somewhat confused account of Lucretia's suicide after being raped by Tarquin, concluding that 'she valued her virtue less than her glory, and her life less than either'.] So the 'courage' that is only useful to the body politic and is generally called 'true valour' is artificial, and consists in an extreme horror of shame, infused by flattery into men of exalted pride.

As soon as the notions of honour and shame are received in a society, it is not hard to make men fight. First, make sure they are convinced of the justice of their cause, for no man fights heartily who thinks himself in the wrong; then show them that their altars, their possessions, wives, children, and everything near and dear to them is concerned in the present quarrel or may be affected by it later; then put feathers in their caps and distinguish them from civilians, talk of public spiritedness, the love of their country, facing an enemy with intrepidity, despising death, the bed of honour, and such high-sounding words, and every proud man will take up arms and fight himself to death before he'll turn tail—

if it is in daylight. One man in an army is a check on another; and a hundred of them who single and without any witness would all be cowards are for fear of incurring one anothers' contempt made valiant by being together. To continue and heighten this artificial courage, all who run away ought to be punished with ignominy; those who fought well, whether they won or lost, must be flattered and solemnly commended; those who lost limbs should be rewarded; and, above all, those who were killed ought to be taken notice of, artfully [see Glossary] lamented, and have extraordinary encomiums bestowed upon them. Paying honours to the dead will always be a sure method of making dupes of the living.

·THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF COURAGE, REAL OR ARTIFICIAL·

When I say that the courage made use of in the wars is artificial, I don't imagine that all men can be made equally valiant by the same art. Because men do not have an equal share of pride, and differ from one another in shape and inward structure, they cannot possibly all be equally fit for the same uses. Some men will never be able to learn music, yet make good mathematicians; others will play excellently on the violin and yet be coxcombs [= 'foolish fops'] as long as they live, whoever they converse with. But to show that there is no evasion, I shall set aside what I have said about artificial courage and prove that what the greatest hero differs in from the rankest coward is altogether corporeal, and depends upon their constitutions, i.e. the mixture of the fluids in their bodies. The constitution that favours courage consists in the natural •strength, •elasticity, and due •contexture of the finer spirits; and these qualities are the sole source of what we call steadfastness, resolution and obstinacy. They are the only thing common to natural and artificial bravery, and are to either of them what *consistency of the mixture* is to plaster walls, which hinders them from coming off and makes them lasting. That some people are very much frightened at things that are strange and sudden to them others very little is entirely due to the firmness or flabbiness in the tone of their spirits. Pride is useless in a fright, because while the fright lasts we can't think; and because this is counted as a disgrace, people are always angry with anything that frightens them as soon as the surprise is over. When at the turn of a battle the conquerors give no quarter and are very cruel, this is a sign that their enemies fought well and had put them first into great fears.

The effects of strong liquors confirm that resolution depends upon this tone of the spirits. The fiery particles of the liquors crowd into the brain, strengthen the spirits, and produce an imitation of anger. [He •offers to explain why brandy is more apt to make men angry than wine 'at the same pitch of drunkenness'; •says that the 'contexture of spirits is so weak' in some people that even drink doesn't make them angry enough to fight any significant opponent; and •presents this weakness as a physical defect comparable with (say) a club foot:] This is a defect in the principle of the fluids, as other deformities are faults of the solids. . . . This constitution is often influenced by health and sickness, and impaired by great losses of blood; sometimes it is corrected by diet. It is what La Rochefoucauld means when he says: 'Vanity, shame, and above all *constitution* very often make up the courage of men and the virtue of women.'

There is nothing that more improves the useful martial courage I am discussing, and at the same time shows it to be artificial, than *practice*. When men are disciplined, and become familiar with all the tools of death and engines of destruction, the shouts, the outcries, the fire and smoke, the groans of wounded and ghostly looks of the dying, their fears quickly abate; not that they become less afraid to die, but being used so often to see the same dangers, they *apprehend*

the reality of them [Mandeville's words] less than they did. These men are, as they deserve to be, valued for every siege they are at and every battle they are in; so that inevitably the military actions they participate in must serve as solid steps by which their pride mounts up, and with it their fear of shame, which (as I said before) will always be proportional to their pride. Their fear ·of shame· increases as their apprehension of the danger decreases, so it is no wonder that most of them learn to display little or no fear ·of danger·; and some great generals can preserve a presence of mind and counterfeit a calm serenity in the midst of all the noise, horror and confusion of a battle.

·'COURAGE' AND VANITY·

Man is such a silly creature that, intoxicated with the fumes of vanity, he can feast on thoughts of the praises that will be paid his memory in future ages, doing this with so much ecstasy as to neglect his present life—indeed to court and covet death, if he imagines it will add to the glory he had acquired before. There is no pitch of self-denial that a man of pride and constitution cannot reach. . . . I cannot help wondering at the simplicity [here = 'simple-mindedness'] of some good men who, hearing of the joy and alacrity with which holy men in persecutions have suffered for their faith, imagine that such constancy must exceed all human force unless supported by miraculous assistance from heaven. Just as most people are unwilling to acknowledge all the *frailties* of their species, so they are unacquainted with the *strength* of our nature, and don't know that men with firm constitutions can work themselves up into enthusiasm [see Glossary] with no help but the violence of their passions. There have been men who, assisted only by pride and constitution to maintain the worst of causes, have undergone death and torments with as much cheerfulness as the best of men, animated with piety and devotion, ever did for the true religion. [He describes three historical examples.]

I have made this digression chiefly to show the strength of human nature, and what mere man may perform by pride and constitution alone. Man may be roused by his vanity as violently as a lion is by its anger; and almost every passion (avarice, revenge, ambition, even pity), when it is extraordinary, can by overcoming fear serve him instead of valour, and be mistaken for valour even by himself. . . . To see more clearly what this supposed principle ·of courage· is really built on, let us look into the management of military affairs, and we shall find that pride is nowhere so openly encouraged as there. [He exclaims at the gullibility of soldiers who are proud of their rather shabby uniforms, and can be drawn into battle by 'the noise made on a calf's skin'. Especially the lowest rank in the cavalry:] A trooper is even worse than a foot-soldier; for he has the mortification of being groom to a horse that spends more money than himself. When a man reflects on all this, the way they are generally treated by their officers, their pay, and the care taken of them when they are not wanted, must he not wonder how wretches can be so silly as to be proud of being called 'gentlemen soldiers'? But if they were not called that, no art, discipline or money could make them as brave as thousands of them are.

·KNIGHTS ERRANT·

If we think about what would come from an army if man's bravery did not have other qualifications to sweeten him, we shall find that it would be very pernicious to the civil society; for if man could conquer all his fears, you would hear of nothing but rapes, murders and violences of all sorts, and valiant men would be like giants in Romances. That is why politicians revealed in men a mixed-mettle principle made

up of justice, honesty and all the moral virtues joined to courage; and all who had it automatically became knights errant. They did a great deal of good throughout the world by taming monsters, delivering the distressed and killing the oppressors; but the wings of all the dragons being clipped, the giants destroyed and the damsels everywhere set at liberty (except a few in Spain and Italy who remained imprisoned by their monsters), the order of chivalry, to whom the standard of ancient honour belonged, has been laid aside for some time. It was (like their armours) very massy and heavy; the many virtues it involved made it troublesome, and as ages grew wiser and wiser, the principle of honour in the beginning of the last century was melted and brought to a new standard, ·like melting and reminting coinage·. They put in the same weight of courage, half the amount of honesty, a very little justice, and not a scrap of any other virtue; which has made it easy to carry around compared to what it was. However, such as it is, there would be no living without honour in a large nation; it is the tie of society, and though its chief ingredient comes from our frailties, I know of no virtue that has been half so instrumental in civilising men, who in great societies would soon degenerate into cruel villains and treacherous slaves if honour were removed from among them.

·DUELLING·

As for the duelling part of it: I pity the unfortunate whose lot it is ·to be involved in duelling·; but to say that those who are guilty of it go by false rules, or mistake the notions of honour, is ridiculous; for if there is any honour at all, it teaches men to resent injuries and accept challenges. To say that demanding and giving satisfaction is against the laws of true honour is as absurd as saying that what you see everybody wear is not in fashion.

Those who rail at duelling don't consider the benefit the society receives from that fashion: if every ill-bred fellow could use what language he pleased without being called to account for it, all conversation would be spoiled. Some solemn people tell us that the Greeks and Romans were valiant men, and yet knew nothing of duelling except in their country's quarrel; this is very true, but for that reason the kings and princes in Homer gave one another worse language than our porters and hackney coachmen would be able to bear without resentment.

If you want to hinder duelling, pardon nobody that offends that way, and make the laws against it as severe as you can; but don't take away the thing itself, the custom of it. Keeping it will polish and brighten society in general by making the most resolute and powerful men cautious and circumspect in their behaviour. Nothing civilises a man as much as his fear, and most men would be cowards if they dared; the dread of being called to account keeps many of them in awe, and there are thousands of mannerly and well-accomplished gentlemen in Europe who would have been insolent and intolerable coxcombs without it. [He acknowledges that duelling will lead to a few deaths, but contends that this is a small price to pay for the benefits.] It is strange that a nation should grudge seeing perhaps half a dozen *men* sacrificed in a year to obtain such a valuable blessing as the politeness of manners, the pleasure of conversation, and the happiness of company in general, given that it is often willing to expose (and sometimes loses) as many *thousands of men* in a few hours, without knowing whether it will do any good.

. . . . The governors of societies and those in high stations are greater dupes to pride than anyone else. If some great men did not have a superlative pride and everyone understood the enjoyment of life, who would be a Lord Chancellor of England, a Prime Minister of state in France, or—with

more work and not a sixth part of the profit of either—a Grand Pensionary of Holland? The reciprocal services that all men pay to one another are the foundation of the society. The great ones are not flattered with their high birth for nothing: we extol their family (whether or not it deserves it) so as to arouse their pride and excite them to glorious actions; and some men have been complimented on the greatness of their family and the merit of their ancestors, when in the whole lot of them you could not find two who were not uxorious fools, silly bigots, noted poltroons, or debauched whore-masters. The established pride that is inseparable from those who already have titles makes them often put as much effort into not seeming unworthy of them as the ambition of others who don't yet have titles put into deserving them. . . .

The only thing of weight that can be said against modern honour is that it is directly opposite to religion. The one tells you to bear injuries with patience, the other tells you that if you don't resent them you are not fit to live. Religion commands you to leave all revenge to God, honour bids you trust your revenge to nobody but yourself, even where the law would do it for you. Religion mainly forbids murder, honour openly justifies it; religion bids you not shed blood on any account, honour bids you fight for the least trifle; religion is built on humility and honour on pride. How to reconcile these must be left to wiser heads than mine.

Why are there so few men of real virtue, and so many of real honour? It is because all the recompense a man has for a virtuous action is the pleasure of doing it, which most people regard as poor pay; whereas the self-denial a man of honour submits to in one appetite is immediately rewarded by the satisfaction he receives from another, and what he loses on the score of avarice or any other passion is doubly repaid to his pride. Also, honour makes large allowances, and virtue none. A man of honour must not cheat or tell a lie; he must punctually repay what he borrows in gambling, though the creditor has nothing to show for it; but he may drink and swear and owe money to all the tradesmen in town without taking notice of their bills. A man of honour must be true to his prince and country while he is in their service; but if he thinks himself not well used, he may leave their service and do them all the harm he can. A man of honour must never change his religion for interest, but he may be as debauched as he pleases and never practise any religion. He must make no attempts upon his friend's wife, daughter, sister, or anyone entrusted to his care, but he may lie with anyone else.

Remarks S, T, V, X and Y

Remark S

'no limner for his art is famed, stone-cutters, carvers are not named'

Among the consequences of nation-wide honesty and frugality would be that no-one would build new houses or use new materials as long as there were enough old ones to serve; and by this three-quarters of the masons, carpenters, bricklayers etc. would lack employment. And with the building trade thus destroyed, what would become of limning [see Glossary], carving, and other arts that are ministering to luxury, and have been thoughtfully forbidden by lawgivers who preferred a good and honest society to a great and wealthy one, and tried to make their subjects virtuous rather than rich? [Two anecdotes from Plutarch, and then:] The same lack of employment would reach innumerable callings; and among the rest, that of the 'weavers that joined rich silk with plate, / and all the trades subordinate' (as the fable has it) would be one of the first to have reason to complain. With (on one hand) the price of land and houses having sunk very low because of the vast numbers that had left the hive, and (on the other) everyone shrinking from all ways of gain that were not strictly honest, it is not probable that many would be able without pride or prodigality to wear cloth of gold and silver, or rich brocades. The consequence of this would be that not only the weaver but also the makers of metal jewellery [he lists five branches of this trade] would soon be affected with this frugality.

Remark T

'to live great, had made her husband rob the state'

When our common rogues are going to be hanged, what they chiefly complain of as the cause of their untimely end—second to the neglect of the Sabbath—is their having kept company with ill women, meaning whores; and I don't doubt that many of the lesser villains venture their necks to satisfy their low amours. But great men are often caused by their •wives to undertake projects as dangerous, and to do things as pernicious, as the most subtle •mistress could have persuaded them to. I have shown that the worst of women and most profligate of the sex did contribute to the consumption of superfluities as well as necessities, and consequently were beneficial to many peaceful drudges who work hard to maintain their families and have no worse plan than an honest livelihood. 'Let them be banished nevertheless', says a good man: 'When every strumpet is gone and the land wholly freed from lewdness, God Almighty will pour upon it blessings that will vastly exceed the profits that are now got by harlots.' This might be true; but I can make it evident that—with or without prostitutes—nothing could make amends for the harm trade would suffer if all the females who enjoy the happy state of matrimony were to behave themselves as a sober wise man could wish them to.

The variety of work that is performed (and the number of hands employed) to gratify the fickleness and luxury of women is prodigious. If only the married ones were to hearken to reason and just protests, think themselves sufficiently answered with the first refusal and never ask a second time, and spend no money except what their husbands knew of

and freely allowed, the consumption of a thousand things they now make use of would be lessened by at least a fourth part. Let us go from house to house and observe the way of the world only among the middling people, creditable shop-keepers who spend two or three hundred a year. We shall find that the women, when they have a dozen suits of clothes, two or three of them hardly worn, will think it a sufficient plea for new ones if they can say that they don't have a gown or petticoat that they haven't often been seen in, and are known by, especially at church. I am speaking not of extravagant women but of ones who as are regarded as prudent and moderate in their desires.

If we look in the same way at the highest ranks, where the richest clothes are a mere trifle compared to their other expenses, and take account of the furniture of all sorts, equipages, jewels, and buildings of persons of quality, we would find a fourth part of *this* to be a vast article in trade. The loss of it would be a greater calamity to such a nation as ours than any other we can conceive. A raging pestilence not excepted; for the death of half a million of people could not cause a tenth part of the disturbance to the kingdom that would be created by the addition of half a million poor unemployed to those who are already a burden to the society in one way or another.

A few men have a real passion for their wives, and are fond of them without reserve; others that don't care for women are nevertheless seemingly uxorious; they take delight in a handsome wife, as a coxcomb does in a fine horse, not for the use he makes of it but because it is his: the pleasure lies in the consciousness of an indisputable possession, and the consequent reflection on the mighty thoughts he imagines others to have of his happiness. The men of each sort may be very lavish to their wives, and often lavish new clothes and other finery on them faster than they can ask for it; but most are wiser than to indulge the extravagances of their wives so far as to give them immediately everything they are pleased to fancy.

It is incredible what a vast quantity of trinkets as well as apparel are purchased by women, which they could never have acquired except by **(i)** pinching their families, marketing, and other ways of cheating and pilfering from their husbands; others by **(ii)** constantly nagging their spouses, tiring them into compliance and conquering even obstinate churls by perseverance; a third sort **(iii)** are outraged at a denial, and by downright noise and scolding bully their tame fools out of anything they want; while thousands by **(iv)** the force of wheedling know how to overcome the best weighed reasons and the most positive reiterated refusals; the young and beautiful especially laugh at all protests and denials, and few of them scruple to employ the most tender minutes of wedlock to promote a sordid interest. If I had time, I would go on about those base, wicked women who calmly play their arts and false deluding charms against our strength and prudence, and act the harlots with their husbands! Indeed, compared with a whore who impiously profanes and prostitutes the sacred rites of love to vile ignoble ends, a woman who first excites to passion and invites to joys with seeming ardour, then tortures our fondness solely to extort a gift, is worse.

Forgive that digression. I ask the experienced reader to •weigh what I have said on the main topic, then to •call to mind the temporal [see Glossary] blessings that men daily hear not only toasted and wished for when people are merry and idle but likewise gravely and solemnly prayed for in churches and other religious assemblies by clergymen of all sorts and sizes, and to •put these things together with what he has observed in the common affairs of life. When he has reasoned on them without prejudice I dare flatter

myself that he will be obliged to agree that a considerable portion of what makes up the prosperity of London and trade in general, and thus makes up the honour, strength, safety, and all the worldly interest of the nation, depends entirely on the deceit and vile stratagems of women; and that humility, contentedness, meekness, obedience to reasonable husbands, frugality, and all the virtues together, if they had them to the highest degree, could not possibly be a thousandth part as serviceable as their most hateful qualities are in making an opulent, powerful, and what we call a flourishing kingdom.

No doubt many of my readers will be startled at this assertion, and I shall be asked:

> **(i)** Can people not be virtuous in a populous, rich, wide, extended kingdom as well as in a small, indigent state or principality that is poorly inhabited? And if that is impossible, **(ii)** is it the duty of all sovereigns to reduce the wealth and the numbers of their subjects as much as they can?

If I answer Yes to **(i)** I am admitting myself to be wrong; and if I answer Yes to **(ii)** my tenets will justly be called impious or at least dangerous to all large societies. There are many places in my book where such questions might be raised even by a well-meaning reader; so I shall here explain myself, and try to resolve those difficulties that several passages might have raised in him, in order to demonstrate that my opinion is consistent with reason and the strictest morality.

I lay down as a first principle that in all societies, great or small, it is the duty of every member of it to be good, and that it ought to be the case that

- virtue is encouraged,
- vice is discountenanced,
- the laws are obeyed, and
- transgressors are punished.

I next affirm that if we consult history, ancient and modern, for a view of what has passed in the world, we shall find that human nature since the fall of Adam has always been the same, and that its strength and frailties have always been conspicuous around the globe, without any regard to ages, climates, or religion. I never said or thought that man could not be virtuous in a rich and mighty kingdom as well as in the most pitiful commonwealth; but I confess to thinking that no society can become such a rich and mighty kingdom, or stay that way for long, without the vices of man.

This is sufficiently proved throughout the book, I think; and as human nature still continues the same as it has always been for so many thousand years, we have no great reason to suspect a future change in it while the world endures. Now, I cannot see what immorality there is in showing a man the origin and power of the passions that so often, even without his knowing it, hurry him away from his reason; or that there is any impiety in putting him on his guard against himself and the secret stratagems of self-love, and teaching him how actions that come from a victory over the passions differ from those that are only the result of one passion's conquest over another; that is, how real virtue differs from counterfeit. It is an admirable saying of a worthy divine that though many discoveries have been made in the world of self-love there is plenty of *terra incognita* still unexplored.[1] What harm do I do a man if I make him more known to himself than he was before? But we are all so desperately in love with flattery that we can never relish a truth that is humiliating; and I don't believe that the immortality of the soul—a truth broached long before

[1] [The 'saying' is by the famous François de la Rochefoucauld. Mandeville ('divine') may have confused him with a French cardinal of the same name.]

Christianity—would have been so well received if it had not been a pleasing doctrine that extolled and complimented the whole species, including the meanest and most miserable.

Everyone loves to hear the thing he has a share in spoken well of. Even bailiffs, jail-keepers, and the hangman himself want you to think well of their functions; indeed, thieves and house-breakers have more regard for those of their fraternity than for honest people; and I sincerely believe that what has gained this treatise so many enemies is chiefly self-love. Everyone sees it as an affront to himself, because it detracts from the dignity—and lessens the fine notions he had conceived—of mankind, the most worshipful company he belongs to. When I say that societies cannot be raised to wealth, power, and the top of earthly glory without vices, I don't think that by so saying I am telling men to be vicious, any more than I am telling them to be quarrelsome or covetous when I say that the profession of the law could not be maintained in such numbers and splendor if there was not an abundance of too selfish and litigious people.

But as nothing would more clearly demonstrate the falsity of my notions than that the generality of the people should fall in with them, so I don't expect the approval of the multitude. I do not write for the many, but for the few who can think abstractly and have their minds elevated above the vulgar. If I have *shown* the way to worldly greatness, I have always without hesitation *preferred* the road that leads to virtue.

If you want to banish fraud and luxury, prevent profaneness and irreligion, and make the generality of the people charitable, good and virtuous, you should

- break down the printing presses, melt the type, and burn all the books in the island except those at the universities, where they remain unmolested; and allow no volume in private hands except a Bible;
- knock down foreign trade, prohibit all commerce with foreigners, and permit no ships (except fisher boats) to go to sea that ever will return;
- restore to the clergy, the king and the barons their ancient privileges, prerogatives and possessions;
- build new churches, and convert all the coin you can get into sacred utensils;
- erect monasteries and almshouses in abundance, and let no parish be without a charity school;
- enact sumptuary laws [see Glossary], and let your youth be inured to hardship; inspire them with delicately refined notions of honour and shame, friendship and heroism, and introduce them to a variety of imaginary rewards; and then
- let the clergy preach abstinence and self-denial to others and take what liberty they please for themselves; let them have the greatest sway in the management of state affairs, and let no-one but a bishop be made Lord Treasurer.

By such pious efforts and wholesome regulations, the scene would be soon altered. Most of the covetous, the discontented, the restless and ambitious villains would leave the land; vast swarms of cheating knaves would abandon the city and be dispersed throughout the country; artificers would learn to hold the plough, merchants turn farmers; and the sinful over-populated Jerusalem [here meaning 'London'] would be emptied in the most easy manner—without famine, war, pestilence or compulsion—and would for ever after cease to be a source of fear for her sovereigns. The happy reformed kingdom would no longer be crowded in any part of it, and everything necessary for the sustenance of man would be cheap and plentiful. And the root of so many thousand evils, *money*, would be scarce and very little wanted, where every man would enjoy the fruits of his own labour. . . . Such

a change of circumstances would have to influence the manners of a nation, making them temperate, honest, and sincere; and from the next generation we might reasonably expect a more healthy and robust offspring than the present. We would have here a harmless, innocent and well-meaning people who would never dispute the doctrine of passive obedience [= 'unquestioning obedience to the monarch'] or any other orthodox principles, and would be submissive to superiors and unanimous in religious worship.

Here I imagine being interrupted by a self-indulgent epicure who tells me •that goodness and probity can be had at a cheaper rate than the ruin of a nation and the destruction of all the comforts of life; •that liberty and property may be maintained without wickedness or fraud, and men can be good subjects without being slaves, and religious without letting themselves be priest-ridden; •that to be frugal and saving is a duty incumbent only on those, whose circumstances require it, whereas a man of a good estate does his country a service by living up to the income of it. [The imagined epicure now talks about his own ability to 'abstain from anything upon occasion', showing that he is 'master of his appetites', citing occasions when he has settled for something less than the very best wine in his cellar!] He'll quote my Lord Shaftesbury against me, telling me that people can be virtuous and sociable without self-denial, that it is an affront to virtue to make it inaccessible, that I make a bugbear of it to frighten men from it as something impracticable. . . . Finally he'll ask me:

> When the legislature do all they can to discourage profaneness and immorality and to promote the glory of God, don't they also openly profess to have nothing more at heart than the ease and welfare of the subject, the wealth, strength, honour, and whatever else is called the 'true interest' of the country?
>
> When the most devout and learned of our prelates in their concern for our conversion beseech the deity to turn our hearts and theirs from the world and all carnal desires, don't they in the same prayer loudly beg him to pour all earthly blessings and temporal felicity on the kingdom they belong to?

These are the apologies, excuses and pleas not only of those who are notoriously vicious, but of the general run of mankind when you touch on the sources of their inclinations and. . . .try to strip them of what their minds are wholly bent upon. Ashamed of the many frailties they feel within, all men try to hide themselves—to hide their ugly nakedness—from each other. Wrapping up the true motives of their hearts in the attractive cloak of sociableness and concern for the public good, they hope to conceal their filthy appetites and the ugliness of their desires; while they are conscious of their fondness for their favourite lusts and their inability to tread the arduous, rugged path of virtue.

As to those two questions, I admit they are very puzzling. I am obliged to answer each of the epicure's questions in the affirmative; and unless I am willing (which God forbid!) to challenge the sincerity of kings, bishops, and the whole legislative power, the objection stands good against me. All I can say on my own behalf is that in the connection of the facts there is a mystery past human understanding; and to convince you that this is not an evasion I shall illustrate the incomprehensibility of the mystery in the following parable.

·A PARABLE ABOUT THIRST·

In old heathen times there was a whimsical country where the people talked much about religion, and most of them seemed outwardly to be really devout. The chief moral evil among them was *thirst*, and to quench it was a damnable sin; but they unanimously agreed that everyone was born thirsty,

more or less, so small beer in moderation was allowed to all. Anyone who claimed that one could live altogether without it was regarded as a hypocrite, a cynic or a madman; but those who admitted that they loved it and drank it to excess were regarded as wicked. The beer itself was reckoned a blessing from heaven, and there was no harm in the use of it; all the wickedness lay in the abuse, the motive of the heart that made them drink it. He who took the least drop of it to quench his thirst was committing a dreadful crime, while others drank large quantities without any guilt as long as they did it indifferently, purely to mend their complexion.

They brewed for other countries as well as their own, and in return for the small beer they sent abroad they received large quantities of Westphalia hams, neats' tongues, hung beef, Bolonia sausages, red herrings, pickled sturgeon, caviar, anchovies, and everything that would make their liquor go down with pleasure. Those who kept great stores of small beer on hand without making use of it were generally envied, and at the same time very odious to the public; and nobody was comfortable who did not have enough of it come to his own share. The greatest calamity they thought could befall them was to keep their hops and barley upon their hands, and the more of them they consumed each year ·in making small beer·, the more they thought the country was flourishing.

The government had many wise regulations concerning the returns that were made for their exports, encouraged the importing of salt and pepper, and laid heavy duties on everything that was not well seasoned and might in any way obstruct the sale of their own hops and barley. Those at the helm, when they acted in public, showed themselves perfectly exempt from thirst, and made laws to prevent the growth of it and punish the wicked who openly dared to quench it. If you pried narrowly into their private lives and conversations, they seemed to be more fond of small beer than others were, or at least drank larger draughts of it, but always claiming that the mending of complexions required more liquor in them than it did in those they ruled over; and that what they had chiefly at heart—without any concern for themselves—was to procure a great plenty of small beer among the subjects in general and a great demand for their hops and barley.

As nobody was debarred from small beer, the clergy made use of it as well as the laity, some of them very plentifully; but they all wanted it to be thought that their ·religious· function made them less thirsty than others, and would never admit that they drank anything for any reason but to mend their complexions. In their religious assemblies they were more sincere; for as soon as they came there, they all openly confessed—the clergy as well as the laity, from the highest to the lowest—that they were thirsty, that mending their complexions was what they cared about the least, and that all their hearts were set on small beer and quenching their thirst, whatever they might claim to the contrary. But when a cleric made such a confession, it would have been counted very impertinent to hold that against him out of his temple, and everyone thought it a heinous insult to be called thirsty even if he had been seen to drink small beer by the gallon. The chief topic of their preachers was the great evil of thirst, and the folly of quenching it. They exhorted their hearers to resist its temptations, inveighed against small beer, and often told them it was poison if they drank it with pleasure or for any purpose except to mend their complexions.

In their acknowledgments to the gods, they thanked them for the abundance of comfortable small beer they had received from them, despite so little deserving it, and continually quenched their thirst with it; whereas they were

so thoroughly satisfied that it was given them for a better use. Having asked pardon for those offences, they asked the gods to lessen their thirst and give them strength to resist its aggressions; yet, in the midst of their sorest repentance and most humble supplications, they never forgot small beer, and prayed that they might continue to have it in great plenty, with a solemn promise that however neglectful they might hitherto have been about this they would in future not drink a drop of it for any purpose but to mend their complexions.

These were standing petitions put together to last; and having continued to be made unaltered for several centuries, it was thought by some that the gods, who understood futurity and knew that the promise they heard in June would be made to them again in January, did not rely much on those vows. . . . They often began their prayers very mystically and spoke many things in a spiritual sense; but in them they were never so abstracted from the world as to end a prayer without beseeching the gods to bless and prosper the brewing trade in all its branches and, for the good of the whole, more and more to increase the consumption of hops and barley.

Remark V

'content, the bane of industry'

I have been told by many that the bane of industry is laziness and not content [see Glossary]; therefore, to prove my assertion (which seems a paradox to some) I shall discuss **a** laziness and **b** content separately, and afterwards speak of **c** industry, so that the reader may judge which of **a b** the two former is most opposite to **c** the latter.

·LAZINESS·

Laziness is an aversion to work, generally accompanied by an unreasonable desire to remain inactive; and anyone is lazy if, without being hindered by any other proper employment, refuses or postpones any work that he ought to do for himself or others. We seldom call anyone lazy unless we count him as inferior to us and expect some service from him. Children don't think their parents lazy, or servants their masters; and if a gentleman indulges his ease and sloth so abominably that he won't put on his own shoes, though he is young and slender, nobody will call him 'lazy' for this if he can keep a footman or someone else to do it for him.

[Two anecdotes about extreme laziness, one illustrating the claim that 'we often reproach others with laziness, because we are guilty of it ourselves'. Then:]

A thousand wretches are always working the marrow out of their bones for next to nothing, because they are unthinking and ignorant of what the trouble they take is worth; while others, who are cunning and understand the true value of their work, refuse to be employed at under-rates, not because they are inactive but because they won't beat down the price of their labour. A country gentleman sees a porter walking to and fro with his hands in his pockets, and addresses him: 'Pray, friend, if I give you a penny will you take this letter for me as far as Bow Church?' 'I'll go with all my heart,' says the other, 'but I must have twopence, master.' The gentleman refused, and the fellow turned his back and told him that he'd rather play for nothing than work for nothing. The gentleman thought it an unaccountable piece of laziness in a porter, to saunter up and down for nothing rather than earning a penny with no more trouble. [The anecdote continues: some hours later the gentleman is with friends in a tavern; one remembers an urgent bit of business that requires a document to be fetched for him; but it is a rainy wintry night, and all the porters are in bed. A bar-tender says he knows a porter who will do the job if it is worth his while, and the client says he will pay a

crown—60 pennies—if the porter brings the document before midnight. The bar-tender goes to find the porter, and returns with the news that he has accepted the job. Just before midnight he arrives, soaked and sweating, with the wanted document. He is praised, paid his crown, and given a glass of wine. Then:] As the fellow came nearer the light to take up the wine, the country gentleman I mentioned at first recognised him, to his amazement, as the porter who had refused to earn his penny and whom he thought the laziest mortal alive.

The story teaches us that •those who remain unemployed for lack of an opportunity to exert themselves to the best advantage ought not to be confounded with •those who for lack of spirit hug themselves in their sloth, and would rather starve than stir. Without this caution, we must pronounce all the world more or less lazy according to their estimation of the pay they are to get for their labour, and by that standard the most industrious can be called 'lazy'.

·CONTENTMENT·

I label as 'content' [see Glossary] the calm serenity of the mind enjoyed by men when they think themselves happy and are satisfied with the station they are in. It implies a favourable construction of one's present circumstances, and a peaceful tranquillity that men cannot have while they are anxious to improve their condition. Applause for this virtue is very precarious and uncertain, because men will be either blamed or commended for having it, depending on their circumstances.

A single man who works hard at a laborious trade has a hundred a year left him by a relative; this change of fortune soon makes him weary of working, and, not being industrious enough to put himself forward in the world, he decides to do nothing at all and to live on his income. As long as he lives within his limits, pays for what he has, and offends nobody, he will be called an honest quiet man. The victualler, his landlady, the tailor, and others divide what he has between them, and the society is every year the better for his revenue; whereas if he followed any trade he would hinder others, and someone would have less because of what he earned. Therefore, even if he is the idlest fellow in the world, lies in bed more than half the time and does nothing but saunter up and down for the rest of it, nobody would criticise him, and his inactive spirit is honoured with the name of 'content'.

But if the same man marries, gets three or four children, and still continues with the same easy temperament, rests satisfied with what he has, and without trying to get a penny indulges his former sloth; first his relatives and then all those who now him will be alarmed by his negligence: they foresee that his income will not be sufficient to bring up so many children handsomely, and are afraid that some of the children may in time become a burden to *them*, or if not a burden then a disgrace. When these fears have for some time been whispered about among them, his Uncle Gripe takes him to task:

> 'What, nephew, no business yet! I can't imagine how you spend your time. If you won't work at your own trade, there are fifty ways for a man to pick up a penny. You have a hundred a year, it's true, but your expenses increase every year, and what are you to do when your children are grown up? I myself have a better estate than yours, but you don't see me leave off my business. I could not lead the life you do, whatever I was paid for it. It is not my business, I admit, but everybody cries that it's a shame that a young man like you, who has his limbs and his health, should not turn his hands to something or other.'

If these admonitions do not soon reform him, and he continues half a year longer without employment, he'll become a topic for the whole neighbourhood, and the qualifications that previously got him to be regarded as a quiet contented man now get him to be called the worst of husbands and the laziest fellow on earth. It is evident from this that when we pronounce actions good or evil we are attending only to the harm or benefit society receives from them, and not the person who commits them.

·INDUSTRY·

'Diligence' and 'industry' [see Glossary] are often used sloppily to signify the same thing, but there is a great difference between them. A poor wretch may have diligence and ingenuity and be a frugal painstaking man, yet without striving to mend his circumstances remain contented with the station he lives in. Whereas 'industry' implies—along with other qualities—a thirst for gain and a tireless desire to improve one's condition. When men think the customary profits of their calling or the share of their business should be larger, they have two ways to deserve to be called industrious: they must either •be ingenious enough to find out uncommon but permissible methods to increase their business or their profit, or •make up for the short-fall by a multiplicity of occupations. If a tradesman takes care to provision his shop and attends properly to his customers, he is **diligent** in his business; but if he also takes particular trouble to sell a better commodity than his neighbours sell, or if. . . .he uses all possible efforts to draw customers to his shop, then he may be called **industrious**. A cobbler who is not employed half the time, if he neglects no business and deals promptly with any that comes his way, is a **diligent** man; but if he runs errands when he has no work, or serves as a watchman at nights, he deserves the name of **industrious**.

If what I have said in this Remark is duly weighed, it will be found either that laziness and content are very much alike or if they are very different content is more contrary to industry than laziness.

Remark X

'to make a great an honest hive'

This *might* be done where people are contented to be poor and hardy; but if they want to enjoy their ease and the comforts of the world while also being an opulent, powerful, flourishing, warlike nation, that is utterly impossible. I have heard people speak of the mighty figure the Spartans made above all the commonwealths of Greece, despite their frugality and other exemplary virtues. But there never was a nation whose greatness was more empty than theirs; the splendour they lived in was inferior to that of a theatre, and the only thing they could be proud of was that they had no pleasures. They were indeed feared and admired abroad; they were so famed for valour and skill in military affairs that their neighbours not only •courted their friendship and assistance in their wars but •thought themselves sure of victory if only they could get a Spartan general to command their armies. But then their discipline was so rigid, and their manner of living so austere and empty of all comfort, that the most temperate man among us would refuse to submit to the harshness of such uncouth laws. There was a perfect equality among them: gold and silver coin were cried down; their currency was made of iron, to make it bulky and of little worth; to store 20 or 30 pounds required a pretty large room, and to move it required a yoke of oxen. . . .

In training their youth, says Plutarch, their chief care was to make them good subjects, to fit them to endure the fatigues of long and tedious marches, and never to

return without victory from the field. When they were twelve years old they lodged in little bands on beds made of the rushes growing by the banks of the river Eurotas. . . . These circumstances make it clear that no nation on earth was less effeminate; but being debarred from all the comforts of life, they could have nothing for their pains but the glory of being a warlike people inured to toils and hardships—a happiness that few people would have cared for on those terms. Even if they had been masters of the world, as long as they *enjoyed* no more of it, Englishmen would hardly have envied the Spartans their greatness. What men want nowadays has sufficiently been shown in Remark O, where I have treated of real pleasures.

Remark Y

'to enjoy the world's conveniencies'

I have already hinted in remark L that the words 'decency' and 'convenience' are very ambiguous and can't be understood unless we know the quality and circumstances of the persons who use them. The goldsmith, mercer, or any other of the most creditable shopkeepers who has three or four thousand pounds to set up with, must have two servings of meat every day and something special for Sundays. His wife must have a damask bed for childbirth, and two or three rooms very well furnished; the following summer she must have a house or good lodgings in the country. A man that has a home out of town must have a horse; his footman must have another. If he has a tolerable trade, he expects in eight or ten years time to have a coach; despite which he hopes that after he has slaved (as he calls it) for twenty-odd years he will be worth at least a thousand a year for his eldest son to inherit, and two or three thousand pounds for each of his other children to begin the world with. When men of such circumstances pray for their 'daily bread' and mean nothing more extravagant by it, they are counted pretty modest people. Call this pride, luxury, superfluity, or what you please, it is nothing but what ought to be in the capital of a flourishing nation; those of inferior condition must content themselves with less costly conveniences, as others of higher rank will be sure to make theirs more expensive. . . .

Since the first edition of this book, several have attacked me with demonstrations of the certain ruin that excessive luxury must bring upon all nations. I soon answered them, showing them the limits within which I had confined my thesis; and therefore so that no reader in the future may misconstrue me, I shall point out the cautions I have given and the provisos I have made in the former edition as well as this one; if they are attended to, that must prevent all rational censure and block several objections that otherwise might be made against me. I have laid down as maxims never to be departed from that the poor should be kept strictly to work, and that it was prudence to *relieve* their wants but folly to *cure* them; that agriculture and fishery should be promoted in all their branches so as to keep down the cost of provisions and consequently of labour; and I have named ignorance as a necessary ingredient in the mixture of society. That all makes it obvious that I could never have imagined that luxury was to be made general through every part of a kingdom. Similarly, I have required that property should be well secured, justice impartially administered, and in everything the interest of the nation taken care of; but what I have insisted on the most is the great regard that is to be had to the balance of trade, and the care the legislature ought to take that the annual imports never exceed the exports. Where this balance of trade is observed, and the other things I spoke of are not neglected, I still maintain that no foreign luxury can undo a country: the height of luxury is never

seen except in vastly populous nations, and only in the upper part of them; most of the population must be the lowest, the support of all the rest, the working poor.

Those who would too closely imitate others of superior fortune must thank themselves if they are ruined. This does not count against luxury; for anyone who earns enough to live on and lives above his income is a fool. Some persons of quality may keep three or four coaches and six, and also save money for their children; while a young shopkeeper is undone for keeping one sorry horse. There cannot possibly be a rich nation without prodigals [see Glossary], but I never knew a city where the spendthrifts were outnumbered by the covetous people. An old merchant goes bankrupt through being extravagant or careless for a long time, while a young beginner in the same business gets an estate before he is 40 years old, through being frugal or more industrious. Furthermore, the frailties of men often work by contraries: some narrow souls can never thrive because they are too stingy, while others amass great wealth by spending their money freely and seeming to despise it. But the vicissitudes of fortune are necessary, and the most lamentable of them are no more harmful to society than the deaths of the individual members of it. Those who immediately lose by the misfortunes of others are very sorry, complain and make a noise; but the others who gain by these misfortunes—and there always are some—hold their tongues, because it is odious to be thought to have profited from the losses and calamities of our neighbour. The various ups and downs constitute a wheel that keeps turning and giving motion to the whole machine. Philosophers, who dare extend their thoughts beyond the narrow limits of what is immediately before them, look on the alternate changes in the civil society in the way they look on the inflations and deflations of the lungs. The deflations are as much a part of respiration as the inflations; so that the fickle breath of never-stable fortune is to the body politic the same as floating air is to a living creature.

Thus, avarice and prodigality are equally necessary to the society. Men in some countries are more generally lavish than men in others; which comes from differences in circumstances that dispose people to one vice or the other; and these arise from •the condition of the social body as well as •the temperament of the natural body. On behalf of readers with short memories—and with apologies to the others—I repeat some things that I have already said in Remark Q. Things that dispose to avarice:

- •more money than land,
- •heavy taxes and scarcity of provisions,
- •industry,
- •laboriousness,
- •an active and stirring spirit,
- •ill-nature and saturnine temper;
- •old age,
- •wisdom,
- •trade,
- •riches acquired by our own labour,
- •liberty and property well secured.

Circumstances that make men prone to prodigality:

- •indolence,
- •content,
- •good-nature,
- •a jovial temperament,
- •youth,
- •folly,
- •arbitrary power,
- •money easily got,
- •plenty of provisions,
- •uncertainty of possessions.

Where there is the most of the first, the prevailing vice will be avarice; where the second turns the scale, prodigality. But nation-wide frugality never did and never will occur without nation-wide necessity.

Sumptuary laws [see Glossary] may be of use to an indigent country after great calamities of war, pestilence or famine, when work has stood still and the labour of the poor has been interrupted; but to introduce them into an affluent kingdom is the wrong way to serve its interests. I shall end my Remarks on the grumbling hive by assuring the champions of nation-wide frugality that the Persians and other eastern people could not purchase the vast quantities of fine English cloth that they take if we loaded our women with fewer cargoes of Asiatic silks.