An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit

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[Brackets] enclose editorial explanations. Small ·dots· enclose material that has been added, but can be read as though it were part of the original text. Occasional •bullets, and also indenting of passages that are not quotations, are meant as aids to grasping the structure of a sentence or a thought. Every four-point ellipsis . . . . indicates the omission of a brief passage that seems to present more difficulty than it is worth. Longer omissions are reported between brackets in normal-sized type.—Shaftesbury divided the work into Books, Parts and Sections, but all their titles are added in this version.—This work is the fourth of the five Treatises in Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*.

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Contents

Glossary

affection: In the early modern period, 'affection' could mean 'fondness', as it does today; but it was also often used, as it is in this work, to cover every sort of pro or con attitude—desires, approvals, likings, disapprovals, dislikings, etc.

amiable: This meant 'likable', 'lovable', 'very attractive'. A good deal stronger than the word's normal meaning today.

art: In Shaftesbury's time an 'art' was any human activity that involves techniques or rules of procedure. 'Arts' in this sense include medicine, farming, and painting.

bad: With one exception (noted when it occurs), every occurrence of 'bad' in this work replaces Shaftesbury's 'ill'.

evil: This replaces Shaftesbury's 'ill' when that is used as a noun. It means merely 'something bad'. It is customary in English to use 'evil' for this purpose (e.g. 'pain is an evil', and 'the problem of evil' meaning 'the problem posed by the existence of bad states of affairs'). Don't load the word with all the force it has in English when used as an adjective.

generous: It had today's sense of 'free in giving' but also the sense of 'noble-minded, magnanimous, rich in positive emotions' etc.

lot: 'What is given to a person by fate or divine providence; *esp.* a person's destiny, fortune, or condition in life.' (OED)

luxury: This meant something like: *extreme* or *inordinate* indulgence in sensual pleasures. A 'luxurious' person was someone wholly given to the pleasures of the senses—-mostly but not exclusively the pleasures of eating and drinking.

mischief: This meant 'harm, injury'—much stronger and darker than the word's meaning today.

monster: A monster is an organism that is markedly and disturbingly different from what is normal for its species.

moral: In early modern times, 'moral' could mean roughly what it does today, but also had a use in which it meant 'having to do with intentional human action'.

motion: 'An inner prompting or impulse; a desire, an inclination; a stirring of the soul, an emotion.' (OED)

object: In early modern usage, anything that is aimed at, wanted, loved, hated, thought about, feared, etc. is an *object* of that aim, desire, love, etc. *Anything*: it could be a physical object, but is more likely to be a state of affairs, a state of mind, an experience, etc.

occasion: It is often used to mean the same as 'cause' (noun or verb), but it began its philosophical career in opposition to 'cause'. According to the 'occasionalist' theory about body-mind relations: when you are kicked, you feel pain; what causes the pain is not the kick but God, and the kick comes into it not as *causing* God to give you pain (because nothing causes God to do anything) but as the 'occasion' for his doing so. Perhaps a signal or a trigger. Writers who weren't obviously pushing the occasionalist line still used 'occasion' sometimes without *clearly* meaning anything but 'cause'.

principle: Shaftesbury uses this word a few times in a sense, once common but now obsolete, in which 'principle' means 'source', 'cause', 'driver', 'energizer', or the like. (Hume's *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* is, as he explicitly tells us, an enquiry into the *sources in human nature* of our moral thinking and feeling.)

sensible: This means 'relating to the senses', and has nothing to do with being level-headed, prudent, or the like.

set: The phrase 'set or suite of passions' on page 40 is analogous to 'a set of cutlery', 'a suite of bedroom furniture'.

speculative: This means 'having to do with non-moral propositions'. Ethics is a 'practical' discipline, chemistry is a 'speculative' one.

temperament: This is always a replacement for Shaftesbury's 'temper'.

theism: Someone who 'believes in a reigning mind, sovereign in nature and ruling all things with the highest perfection of goodness, as well as of wisdom and power' (Shaftesbury, page 22).

ugly, **ugliness:** These words don't occur in the original version of this work; in the present version they replace 'deformed' (and 'deformity'), which have a stronger and nastier sense today than they did in early modern times.

vice, **vicious:** Morally wrong conduct, not necessarily of the special kind that we reserve 'vice' for these days, or the different special kind that we label as 'vicious'.

BOOK II
Why be virtuous?

Part 1: The mind—an owner's manual

Section 1: An extraordinary hypothesis

We have considered what virtue is, and who is entitled to be called 'virtuous'. Our remaining question is: what obligation is there to virtue? what reason is there to embrace it?

We have found that for a creature to deserve the label 'good' or 'virtuous' all his inclinations and affections, his dispositions of mind and temperament, must be •suitable and in line with the good of his kind or of the system that he is a part of. To be well affected in this way—to have one's affections right and complete in respect not only of one's self but also of society and the public—this is rectitude, integrity, or virtue. And to be lacking in any of these, or to have their contraries, is depravity, corruption, and vice.

I have already shown that the passions and affections of particular creatures constantly relate to the interests of a species. . . . This has been demonstrated in the case of

- •natural affection,
- •parental kindness,
- •zeal for posterity,
- •concern for the propagation and nurture of the young,
- • love of fellowship and company,
- •compassion,
- •mutual help,

and the rest of this kind. No-one will deny that this affection of a creature towards the good of his species. . . .is as proper and natural for him as it is for any organ. . . .of an animal body to do its familiar work in aiding the animal's growth. . . .

In a creature that has **(a)** such affections as those towards the species to which he belongs and also **(b)** other affections that concern himself as an individual, it will appear that in following **(a)** the creature must often contradict and go against **(b)**. If he didn't, how could the species be preserved? And what would the point be of the implanted natural affection by which a creature through so many difficulties and dangers preserves its offspring and supports its kind?

This may lead some people to think that there is a plain and absolute opposition between these two habits or affections. They may presume that **(a)** pursuing the common interest or public good through affections of one kind must be a hindrance to **(b)** the attainment of private good through affections of the other kind. Anyone who thinks this will be taking it for granted that dangers and hardships of any sort are naturally the evil of the private state, and combining this with something that is certainly true, namely that it's the nature of **(a)** those public affections to lead often to the greatest hardships and dangers of every kind. ·From these two premises· they rapidly infer that it's in the creature's interests to have no **(a)** public affection whatsoever.

We know for certain that **(a)** all social love, friendship, gratitude, and everything else of this generous kind •does by its nature take the place of **(b)** the self-interested passions, •draws us out of ourselves, and •makes us unconcerned about our own convenience and safety. It follows from this, according to a certain well-known view about self-interest,

that **(a)** anything of a social kind in us should be abolished. Thus kindness of every sort, indulgence, tenderness, compassion, and in short all natural affection should be industriously suppressed and—as mere folly and weakness of nature—be resisted and overcome; so as to bring it about that there nothing remains in us that. . . .might stand in opposition to a steady and deliberate pursuit of the most narrowly confined self-interest.

According to this extraordinary hypothesis it must be taken for granted that

> in the system of a kind or species, the interests of any private nature are directly opposite to those of the common nature, the interests of individuals directly opposite to those of the public in general.

A strange constitution! It contains much disorder and clumsiness, unlike what we see elsewhere in nature. As if in any plant or animal body a part or member could be supposed to be, itself, in a good and prosperous state while there's something unnatural about the state of the organism of which it is a part.

I'll try to show that this is entirely false, so as to convince you of the following:

> What men represent as a bad order and constitution in the universe, by making moral rectitude appear an evil for the creature who has it, and depravity a good or advantage for the creature, has the truth of the matter precisely backwards. Having good affections towards the public interest is not only •consistent with having them towards one's own interests, but is •inseparable from it; so that moral rectitude or virtue must be to the advantage of every creature, and vice must be harmful and disadvantageous.

Section 2: The misery of immorality

Consider a creature devoid of natural affection and wholly without any communicative or social principle [see Glossary]: I don't think that many people who know this about him will also suppose him to be reasonably happy either in himself or in his relations with his fellow-creatures, his species. It is generally thought that a creature like this feels little joy in life, and finds little satisfaction in the mere sensual pleasures that remain with him after the loss of social enjoyment and whatever can be called humanity or good-nature. We know not only that •such a creature as this is apt to be morose, rancorous and malignant, but that •a mind or temperament thus deprived of mildness and benignity *must inevitably* go the opposite way and be worked on by passions of a different kind. Such a heart as this must be a continual nest of perverse inclinations and bitter aversions, arising from a constant bad humour, sourness, and disquiet. The creature's awareness that it has a nature that is so much hated by mankind, and by all beings that approach it, must cause its mind to be overclouded with dark suspicion and jealousy, alarm it with fears and horror, and raise in it a continual disturbance—even in the most sunny and secure state of fortune and in the highest degree of outward prosperity.

This is what men notice, unprompted, about the •completely immoral state. Where there is this •absolute degeneracy—this •total abandonment of all candour, fairness, trust, sociableness, or friendship—nearly everyone can see and acknowledge the misery that results from it. Such extreme cases, with immorality at its worst, are seldom misunderstood. Unfortunately, though, we don't attend to milder degrees of this depravity and think about *their* consequences for the person in question. We don't think that

the calamity for the person is necessarily proportional to his degree of immorality—as though being •absolutely immoral and inhuman is indeed the greatest misfortune and misery, whereas to be only •slightly so is no misery or harm at all! Accepting this is just as reasonable as accepting that it's the greatest evil for a body to be in the utmost manner distorted and maimed but that to lose the use only of one leg. . . .is not an inconvenience or evil worth mentioning.

The parts and proportions of the mind, their mutual relations and dependencies, the connection and structure of the passions that constitute the soul or temperament, are easy to understand for anyone who thinks it worth his while to study this inner anatomy. It is certain that the order or symmetry of this inner part is no less real and exact than that of the body. But it's obvious that few of us try to become anatomists of this sort, and no-one is ashamed of being deeply ignorant about such a subject. It is generally accepted that •the greatest misery and evil is caused by disposition and temperament, and that •temperament can change and actually does often change in ways that harm us; and yet we don't inquire into how such changes are brought about. . . . The notion of *whole and parts* is not taken seriously in our thoughts about the mind. We don't know what the effect is of straining an affection, indulging a wrong passion, or relaxing a proper and natural habit or good inclination. We can't conceive how a particular action could have such a sudden influence on the whole mind that it makes the person an immediate sufferer. So we hold an alternative view: we suppose that a man can violate his faith, commit any wickedness that is new to him, engage in any vice or villainy, without the least harm to himself or any misery naturally following from the bad action.

So we often hear things like this: 'So-and-so has indeed acted badly, but how is he the worse for it?' Yet when we are speaking of someone whose nature is thoroughly savage, cursed, and malignant, we say truly 'So-and-so is a plague and torment to himself', and we accept that through certain moods or passions—simply from his temperament—a man may be completely miserable, however fortunate his outward circumstances are. These different judgments show well enough that we aren't accustomed to thinking with much coherence on these moral [see Glossary] subjects; and that our notions about them are confused and contradictory.

If the fabric of the mind or temperament appeared to us as it really is; if we saw that it's impossible to remove from it any one good or orderly affection—or introduce any bad or disorderly one—without contributing somewhat to the dissolute state that is agreed to be so miserable out at the extreme; *then* it would undoubtedly be generally accepted that because

> no bad, immoral, or unjust action could be committed without either inflicting a new violence on the temperament and passions or intensifying a violence that had already started,

anyone who acted in some way that went against his integrity, good-nature, or worth would be acting with greater cruelty *towards himself* than someone who didn't hesitate to swallow poison or with his own hands to mangle or wound some part of his body.

Section 3: Tuning the passions

I have shown that no animal can be said properly to *act* except through affections or passions of a kind that only an animal can have; for when a creature strikes himself or others in a convulsive fit, what is at work is a simple mechanism, an engine, a piece of clockwork—it's not an *action* by the animal. . . .

And just as it's necessary that a stronger affection will overcome a weaker one, so also it's necessary that where the affections or passions are mainly the strongest and provide *in general* the most considerable input, either by their force or number, that's the direction in which the animal must •incline and. . . .•be governed and led to action.

The affections or passions that must influence and govern the animal are either **(1)** the **natural** affections, which lead to the good of the public, **(2)** the **self**-affections, which lead only to the good of the individual, or **(3)** affections that tend not to public or to private good but to public or private evil, so that we can rightly call them **unnatural** affections.

A creature is virtuous or vicious, good or bad, depending on which of these affections it has. It's obvious that **(3)** are wholly vicious. **(1)** and **(2)** can be vicious or virtuous, depending on their degree ·of intensity·.

It may seem strange to speak of natural affections as too strong, or of self-affections as too weak. But I have already gone into this, explaining that natural affection can in some cases be excessive, unnaturally intense—for example •when pity is so overwhelming as to destroy its own end, and prevent the support and help that is needed, or •when love to the offspring goes so far that it destroys the parent, and consequently the offspring itself. And although it may seem harsh to describe as 'unnatural and vicious' something that is only an extreme of some natural and kind affection, it's certain that when any single good affection of this sort is too intense it must be harmful to the other affections and detract somewhat from their force and natural operation. A creature that has such an immoderate degree of a passion is bound to allow too much to that one and too little to others of the same sort that are equally natural and potentially useful. . . .

There are other cases of the same kind of thing. Even religion—considered as a passion not of the selfish but of the nobler kind—can in some characters be strained beyond its natural strength and be said also to be too intense. The purpose of religion is to make us more perfect and accomplished in all moral duties and performances; if by the intensity of devout ecstasy and contemplation we are actually disabled in this respect and made less fit for the real duties of civil life, it can be said that in that case religion is indeed too strong in us. ·And I do mean *religion*, not *superstition*·. For we can't possibly call this 'superstition' when the object of the devotion is acknowledged to be proper and the faith to be orthodox. . . .

Now, just as in some cases public affection may be too intense, so private affection can sometimes be not intense enough. If a creature is self-neglectful and careless about danger, or if he has a very low intensity of some passion that is useful to preserve, sustain, or defend himself, this must certainly be regarded as *wrong* in relation to the design and end of •nature. •She herself reveals this in her known methods and established rules of operation. Her provisionary care and concern for the whole animal *must* at least be equal to her concern for a single part or organ. Now, we see that she has given to the different parts proper affections, suitable to their interests and security, so that they act in their own defence and for their own benefit and preservation, even without our awareness of what is going on. [The defensive shutting of eyes, Shaftesbury says, achieves something we couldn't do quickly enough if it were left to our decision. He continues:] So it would be a defect in any part of the organism if it lacked its own special set of self-preserving affections; and it surely wouldn't be a *lesser* defect—a lesser vice and imperfection—if the principal part (the soul or temperament) lacked *its* special affections, the ones that concern the good of the whole constitution.

So the affections towards private good become necessary and essential to goodness. For although no creature can be called 'good' or 'virtuous' merely because it has these affections, they are necessary (though not sufficient) for virtue. A creature that really doesn't have them is really lacking, to some extent, in goodness and natural rectitude, and can thus be regarded as vicious and defective.

So we may say of a creature, as a gentle reproof, that he is 'too good', when •his affection towards others is so warm and zealous as to carry too far or when •he goes too far not through too warm a passion of that sort but through an over-cool one of another sort, or through a lack of some self-passion to restrain him within due bounds.

Here's an objection that may occur to you:

> It may sometimes happen that the only cause of a creature's acting honestly and in moral proportion is **(i)** his having natural affections that are too strong (where the self-affections are over-much so) or **(ii)** his having self-affections that are defective or weak (where the natural affections are also weak) . That is because **(ii)** someone who is too regardless of ·risks to· his life, may with the smallest degree of natural affection do everything that could be expected from the intense social love or zealous friendship. And because **(i)** a creature who is excessively timid may do things that the most perfect courage could inspire, because he has an excessively high degree of natural affection.

The answer to this is that whenever we criticise any passion as 'too strong' or 'too weak' we ought to be saying this in relation to the constitution or economy of the individual or species that is in question. If a passion that leads to some right end is more serviceable and effective because it is strong—and if we are sure that its strength won't lead to any internal disturbance or any disproportion between itself and other affections—then the passion can't be condemned as vicious, however strong it is. ·The qualification about 'disproportion' is important·. If the creature's constitution can't support its having all the passions in equal proportion, so that only some passions are raised to this height while others can't be worked up to being on its level, then those strong passions—although they are of the better kind—can be called excessive. Being out of proportion to the other affections, and causing a bad balance in the over-all affective aspect of the creature, they must as a matter of course lead to inequality in the conduct, inclining the creature to act immorally.

I'll show in more detail what is meant by the 'economy of the passions', using examples from species that are below us. Consider creatures to whom nature hasn't given any power or means to defend themselves against violence, nor any way of making themselves formidable to any who injure or offend them; what they need is an extraordinary degree of fear, but little or no animosity (which might lead them to resist, or delay their escape). This strong passion of fear is their safety device: it serves them by keeping their senses on the alert and holding the spirits in readiness to give the start.

Thus, timidity and an habitual strong passion of fear may fit well into the economy of a particular creature, both with respect to himself and to the rest of his species. And courage may be contrary to his economy, and therefore vicious. Even within a single species nature arranges this differently for different sexes, ages, and growths. The tamer creatures of the grazing kind, who live in herds, are different from the wilder creatures who don't herd but rather live in pairs only, apart from company, as is natural and suitable for their life as predators. Yet even among the inoffensive herding kinds of animals, courage at a time of danger is distributed differently in proportion to their make [i.e. their physical constitution] and

strength. When the whole herd flees, the bull alone faces off against the invading predator and shows himself to be aware of his own make. Even the female of this ·grazing· kind is to some extent armed to resist violence, so as not to flee a common danger. As for a hind or doe or any other inoffensive and defenceless creature, it isn't in the least unnatural or vicious, when the enemy approaches, to desert their offspring and flee for safety. But as for creatures that can resist, and are armed offensively by nature—even if they are the poorest insect species, such as bees or wasps—it's natural to them to be roused with fury, and at the risk of their lives oppose any enemy or invader of their species. That's because knowledge of this passion in the creature deters potential predators. . . . And man is in this sense the most formidable of all creatures; because if a man thinks it would be right and would set a good example to do this, he may on his own or his country's behalf have revenge for harm done on anyone living; and by throwing away •his own life (if he is resolute enough for that) he is almost certain to be master of someone else's life, however strongly that person may be guarded. Examples of this nature have often served to restrain those in •power from using •it to the utmost extent. . . .

The situation of affections or passions in an animal's constitution is like that of the cords or strings in a musical instrument. Even if the strings are perfectly tuned to one another, if they are strained too much it is more than the instrument will bear: the lute or lyre is abused, and its effect is lost. On the other hand, if some of the strings are properly tightened while others are left a little slack, then the instrument is again in disorder and a bad performer. The various species of creatures are like different sorts of instruments. . . . Men—who are the most easily affected with pain or pleasure—need the strongest influence or force of other affections such as tenderness, love, sociableness, compassion, in order to preserve a proper balance and to maintain them in their duty,. . . .while others who are of a cooler blood or lower key don't need the same counter-weight, and aren't made by nature to feel so strongly those tender and endearing affections.

We could expect it to be agreeable to inquire in this way into the different tunings of the passions [Shaftesbury's phrase], the various mixtures by which men become so different from one another. For just as •the highest improvements of temperament are made in human kind, so also •the greatest corruptions and degeneracies are to be found in this race. In the other species of creatures around us, there is always found an exact proportionality, constancy and regularity in all their passions and affections:

- •no failure in the care of the offspring or of the society to which they belong,
- •no selling of their services to unworthy employers,
- •no intemperance or excess of any kind.

The smaller creatures like bees and ants who live in cities, so to speak, continue the same harmonious course of life and are never false to the affections that move them to operate towards their public good. Even predators who live the furthest out of society maintain a conduct towards one another that is just right for the good of their own species. Whereas man, despite the assistance of religion and the direction of laws, is often found to live in less conformity with nature, and is often made *more* barbarous and inhuman—by religion! Marks are set on men; distinctions are formed; opinions are decreed, under the severest penalties; antipathies are instilled, and aversions raised in men against the general run of their own species. So that it's hard to find in any region a human society that has humane laws. No wonder if in human societies it's so hard to find a man who lives naturally and as a man.

Having now shown what is meant by a passion's being too intense or not intense enough. . . ., I now come to the plainer and more essential part of vice—the only part that deserves to be considered as vicious—namely when

- •the public affections are weak or deficient,
- •the private and self-affections are too strong, or
- •affections arise that are not of either of those kinds, and don't tend even slightly to support either the public or the private system.

It's only when one of those is the case that a creature can be bad or vicious. So if I can prove that it is not really in a creature's interests to be viciously affected in any of those ways, and that it *is* in its interests *not* to be thus affected, that will amount to a proof that *it is in a creature's interests to be wholly good and virtuous*, because in a wholesome and sound state of his affections, such as I have described, he can't possibly be other than sound, good and virtuous in his behaviour.

So this is what I have to prove:

A. To have •the natural, kindly, or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good of the public is to have •the chief means and power of self-enjoyment, and that to lack them is certain misery and evil.

B. To have the private or self-affections too strong, not sufficiently subordinate to the kindly and natural affections, is also miserable.

C. To have the *unnatural* affections (i.e. ones that aren't based on the interests of •the species or public or •the private person or creature himself, is to be miserable in the highest degree.

·Those propositions will receive a section each; the second and third will start on pages 42 and 49 respectively.·

Part 2: Affections and happiness

Section 1: Natural affections

A. To be proved: to have the natural affections (such as are rooted in love, contentment, good will, and sympathy with the kind or species) is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment; and that to lack them is certain misery and evil. To get into this we should first ask: What *are* those items that we call 'pleasures' or 'satisfactions' from which happiness is generally computed? Well, they are commonly divided into satisfactions and pleasures of the body and satisfactions and pleasures of the mind.

Most people would agree that the satisfactions of the mind are the greatest, and here is evidence for that. Whenever the mind, having formed a high opinion of the value of some action or line of conduct,

> receives the strongest satisfaction of this sort and is worked up to the highest pitch or degree of passion towards the action,

at such a time it

> sets itself above all bodily pain as well as pleasure, and can't be diverted from its purpose by flattery or terror of any kind.

Thus we see Indians, barbarians, wrong-doers, and even the most appalling villains •accept all kinds of hardship and •defy torture and death—all for the sake of a particular gang or society, or through some cherished notion of honour or gallantry, revenge, or gratitude. Contrast that with a person who is immersed in bodily enjoyment, surrounded with everything that can allure or charm the senses, when something goes amiss inside him: the moment he has the thought of some internal ailment or disorder. . . .enjoyment instantly ceases, the pleasure of the senses is at an end. . . . ·From here to page 38 I shall be discussing mental pleasure; at that point, below the asterisks, I'll switch to bodily ones·.

Granted, then, that the mind's pleasures are superior to the body's, it follows that

> *Whatever can create in a thinking being a constant flowing series of mental enjoyments or pleasures of the mind does more for his happiness than anything that can create in him a similar series of sensual enjoyments, i.e. pleasures of the body.* [Shaftesbury's italics]

Now the mental enjoyments are either **(i)** the natural affections themselves in their immediate operation or **(ii)** wholly the effects of such affections.

If that is right, it follows that a rational creature's settled natural affections, being the only means to his having a constant series of mental enjoyments, are the only means to his having certain and solid happiness. ·To reach that conclusion I have needed only the premise '**(i)** or **(ii)**', so that a proof of either one would suffice; but I choose to defend both·.

(i) The first task is to show how greatly the natural affections are in themselves the highest pleasures and enjoyments. There's not much need to prove this to anyone who has ever known the mind's condition when there is a lively affection of love, gratitude, generosity, pity, helpfulness, or whatever else is of a social or friendly sort. Anyone who has *any* knowledge of human nature is aware of what pleasure the mind experiences when it is touched in this generous [see Glossary] way. The difference we find between solitude and company, between ordinary company and that of friends; the connection of almost all our pleasures to mutual converse, and their dependence on society either present or imagined—all these are evidence for my thesis.

How much better the social pleasures are than any others can be known by visible tokens and effects. The outward features, the marks and signs that accompany this sort of joy, are expressive of a more intense, clear, and undisturbed pleasure than those that accompany the satisfaction of thirst, hunger, and other strong appetites. But the superiority of the social pleasures can be even better known from the actual prevalence and ascendency of this sort of affection over all others. Wherever it presents itself with any advantage, it silences. . . .every other motion [see Glossary] of pleasure. No mere joy of the senses can be a match for it. Anyone in a position to judge regarding both kinds of pleasure will always give the preference to the social kind. But to be able to judge both one must have a sense of each. An honest man can indeed judge regarding sensual pleasure, and knows its utmost force. His temperance—his moderation in his use of appetites—doesn't reduce his taste for them or dull his senses; on the contrary, it makes them more intense and clear. But an immoral and profligate man can't be accepted as a good judge of social pleasure, because his nature makes him a stranger to it.

[Then a paragraph about fairly bad people who have good affections, but of low intensity and rare appearances. If the intensity were raised enough, Shaftesbury says, *then* those people would discover what they have been missing, and would reform.]

Thus the charm of kind affection is superior to all other pleasures, because it has the power to draw one away from every other appetite or inclination. Consider one example out of thousands that could be given: in a person's love for his offspring, the charm operates so strongly on •his temperament that in the midst of other temptations •it is susceptible to this passion alone—the master-pleasure and conqueror of the others.

Anyone who knows anything of mathematics has found that in exercising his mind on the discoveries he makes there, though they are merely of speculative [see Glossary] truths, he receives a pleasure and delight superior to that of the senses. When we thoroughly investigate this contemplative delight we'll find that it doesn't have any relation to the person's private interests. . . . The admiration, joy, or love turns wholly on what is exterior and foreign to ourselves. . . . It results solely from the love of truth, proportion, order, and symmetry in things outside us; so it ought really to be classified as a *natural* affection. Having no object within range of the private system, it must either be •regarded as superfluous and unnatural (as having no tendency towards the advantage or good of anything in nature) or •be judged to be what it truly is, namely *a natural joy in the contemplation of the numbers, and the harmony, proportion, and concord that supports the universal nature and is essential in the constitution and form of every particular species*. [On page 27 'natural affection' was defined in terms of 'the good of the public', but now Shaftesbury is using the phrase as a catch-all for any affection that isn't in the 'self-' or 'unnatural' categories.]

But this speculative pleasure, however considerable and valuable it may be, and however much better than any motion of the mere senses, must yet be far surpassed by virtuous motions and the exercise of benignity and goodness. Where *those* occur, there is both •a most delightful affection of the soul and •a pleasing assent and approval of the mind to what is *done* in this good disposition. . . .

In the passion of love between the sexes, where along with •the vulgar affection there is also •an ingredient of kind and friendly affection, the feeling of •the latter is really superior to •the former. Why? Because through this affection, and for the sake of the beloved person, the greatest hardships have been accepted and even death itself voluntarily embraced, with no prospect of compensation. ·*No* expectation of reward? None!· For *where* could such recompense be expected to occur? Not here in this world, surely, for death puts an end to everything. And not hereafter in some other world, for who ever thought of providing a heaven or future recompense for the suffering virtue of lovers?

Something else in favour of the natural affections: it's not only when joy and sprightliness are mixed in with them that they bring a real enjoyment better than that of the sensual kind. The very disturbances involved in natural affection, though you might think they are wholly contrary to pleasure, actually produce a contentment and satisfaction greater than the pleasures of satisfied senses. And when a series of tender and kind affections can be carried on—even through fears, horrors, sorrows and griefs—the emotion of the soul is still agreeable. We continue to get pleasure from •virtue, even when viewed in this melancholy way. •Her beauty supports itself under a cloud and in the midst of surrounding calamities. When by mere illusion, as in a ·theatrical· tragedy, passions of this kind are skilfully aroused in us, we prefer this entertainment to any other of equal duration. We discover for ourselves that

- •moving our passions in this mournful way,
- •engaging them on behalf of merit and worth, and
- •exercising whatever social affection and human sympathy we have,

is of the highest delight; and provides a greater enjoyment (of the thought-and-sentiment kind) than anything of the senses-and-common-appetite kind can do. And this shows us *how much the mental enjoyments **are** actually the natural affections themselves*.

(ii) [That numeral refers to the i-ii passage on page 31.] The next task is to explain how the mental enjoyments **come from** the natural affections as their natural effects. The first point to note is this: the mental-pleasure effects of love or kind affection are *an enjoyment of good through*

- ***(a)*** *receiving it by reflection, so to speak, or by sharing in the good of others; and*
- ***(b)*** *a pleasing awareness of the actual love, deserved esteem or approval of others ·towards oneself·.*

How considerable a part of happiness arises from **(a)** will be easily grasped by anyone who isn't exceedingly bad-natured! Think many pleasures there are in sharing contentment and delight with others, receiving it in fellowship and company, and gathering it from •the pleased and happy states of those around us, from •reports of such happinesses, from •the faces, gestures, voices and sounds of creatures whose signs of joy and contentment we can recognize even if the creatures aren't human. . . .

As for the other effect of social love, namely **(b)** the awareness of deserved kindness or esteem, it's not hard to perceive how large a part this plays in mental pleasure, constituting the chief enjoyment and happiness of people who are in the narrowest sense voluptuous [= 'given to enjoying sensual pleasure']. It is so natural for the most selfish of us to be continually getting some sort of satisfaction from our character, and pleasing ourselves with the fantasy of deserved admiration and esteem! Even if it really is just fantasy, we try to believe that it's true, and we do our best to flatter ourselves with the thought of merit of some kind, and the conviction that we deserve well from at least a few people who happen to know us better and more intimately.

What tyrant—what robber or flagrant violator of the laws of society—doesn't have a companion or particular set of companions. . . .with whom he gladly shares his good, in whose welfare he delights, and whose joy and satisfaction he makes his own? What person in the world is there who isn't affected by the flattery or kindness of those who are on familiar terms with him? Almost all our actions are connected in some way with this soothing hope and expectation of friendship. It goes through our whole lives and is mixed in even with most of our vices. [He cites vanity, ambition, luxury [see Glossary], unchaste love, 'and many other disorders of our life'.] If pleasure were measured in the same way as other things usually are, it could properly be said that more than nine tenths of life's enjoyments come from these two branches—namely **(a)** community, i.e. sharing in the pleasures of others, and **(b)** the belief that one deserves to be treated well by others. . . .

Because natural affection or social love can be perfect or imperfect, so can the contentment and happiness depending on it. Effects mirror their causes.

Don't think that

> A lower intensity of natural affection, i.e. an imperfect partial concern of this sort, can make up for the lack of a complete, sincere, and truly moral one;

that is, don't think that

> A small tincture of social inclination is sufficient to satisfy the goal of pleasure in society, and can give us the enjoyment of participation and community that is so essential to our happiness.

If you are tempted to go that way, ·I have two points that should hold you back·.

(a) Firstly: Partial •affection or •social love, without concern for a complete society or whole, is in itself an inconsistency which implies an absolute contradiction. . . . If it really is an affection of the natural sort, and ·is imperfect only in being· applied to some *part* of society or species and not to the species or society itself, there can't be a coherent account of ·what is going on in· it, any more than there can of the most odd, capricious, or mood-dependent passion that may arise. So the person who is conscious of ·having· this affection can't be conscious of any merit or worth on the account of it. And the persons on whom this capricious affection has chanced to fall can't be at all confident of its continuance or force. It has no foundation in reason, so it must be easily removable or alterable without reason. Now, the variableness of a passion that depends solely on whim and mood, and undergoes frequent switches from hatred to love, aversion to inclination, *must*

- •create continual disturbance and disgust,
- •dilute what is immediately enjoyed in the way of friendship and society, and eventually
- •extinguish, in a way, the very inclination towards friendship and human commerce.

[That is presumably Shaftesbury's reason for the charge of 'contradiction'.] In contrast with that, an entire affection (which is the source of the word 'integrity') is •answerable ·only· to itself, •appropriate, and •rational, which makes it unbreakable, solid, and durable. [The rest of this paragraph departs more than usual from Shaftesbury's formulations; but that's just to cope with an unduly complex sentence; the meaning is not changed.] •If someone has a social affection towards some but not all—an affection that has no rule or order—every time he thinks about this it will look bad to him, and thus lessen his enjoyment. If someone has a complete or perfect social affection, his awareness of behaving well towards mankind in general will give him good thoughts about each friendly affection in particular, and will raise his enjoyment of friendship even higher. [Shaftesbury calls the incomplete social affection 'partiality or vicious friendship', and the complete one 'integrity.']

(b) Secondly: just as partial affection can yield only a brief thin enjoyment of the pleasures of sympathy or sharing feelings with others, so also it can't provide much enjoyment from the other principal branch of human happiness, namely awareness of having and deserving the esteem of others. What could this esteem be based on? There can't be much merit when the affection is so precarious and uncertain. How can anyone *trust* a mere casual inclination or whimsical liking? Who can depend on a friendship founded on no moral rule but capriciously assigned to some one person or small part of mankind, to the exclusion of the rest of the society?

Also, it seems impossible for someone who esteems or loves on any basis other than that of virtue to place his affection on anyone that he esteem or love for long. It will be hard for him find among his so beloved friends any in whom he can heartily rejoice or whose reciprocal love or esteem he can sincerely prize and enjoy. And there can't be anything lasting about the pleasures that are gathered from self-flattery and the false conviction that one is esteemed and loved by others—others who are incapable of any real esteem or love. So we see how much the men of narrow or partial affection must be losers in this way, and necessarily fall short in this second principal part of mental enjoyment.

On the other side, entire affection has all the opposite advantages. It is equal, constant, accountable to itself, always satisfactory and pleasing. It draws applause and love from the best men and—except when self-interest comes into it—from the very worst men also. We can fairly say of it that it carries with it an awareness of deserved love and approval from all society, and from all thinking creatures. . . .

The satisfaction that accompanies entire affection is full and noble, in proportion to its final object, which contains all perfection. . . . To have this entire affection or integrity of mind is to live according to •nature and •the dictates and rules of supreme wisdom. This is morality, justice, piety, and natural religion.

This argument may strike you as too scholastically stated, and as using terms and phrases that aren't in common use. So I'll try to restate it in plainer terms.

* * * * *

Think hard about the pleasures that you get either •in private retirement, contemplation, study, and converse with yourself or •in fun, jollity, and entertainment with others; and you'll find that these pleasures are wholly based •on an easy temperament that is free of harshness, bitterness, or distaste, and •on a mind or reason that is well composed, quiet, easy within itself, and such as doesn't shrink from inspecting itself. And this kind of mind, this kind of temperament. . . .*must* be a result of natural and good affections.

As regards the temperament, look at it this way. There is no state of outward prosperity or flowing fortune where inclination and desire are always satisfied, fancy and mood always pleased. Almost *hourly* there are obstacles or disappointments for the appetite—external events of some kind, or something from within, to block the free run of the indulged affections. They can't always be satisfied by mere indulgence! And when a life is guided solely by whims, there are plenty of causes of their being thwarted or upset. We know that very ordinary cases of

- •weariness, uneasiness, and defect of disposition in the soundest body,
- •interruptions in the flow of the bodily fluids or spirits in the healthiest people, and
- •accidental mishaps that occur in every constitution,

are often sufficient to create uneasiness and dislike. And this ·uneasiness· must in time become habitual, where there's nothing to oppose its progress and block it from prevailing on the temperament. Now, the only sound opposite to such badness of temperament is natural and kind affection. For whenever the mind, after looking in on itself, •decides to suppress this disturbance that has already arisen in the temperament, and •sets about this reforming work vigorously and in good earnest, the only way it can succeed is by introducing into the affectionate part ·of the mind· some gentle feeling of the social and friendly kind, some enlivening motion [see Glossary] of kindness, fellowship, satisfaction, or love to soothe and convert that contrary motion of impatience and discontent.

You might say that in the present case religious affection or devotion is a sufficient and proper remedy. I reply that it might be, depending on what *kind* of religious affection. If it's of the pleasant and cheerful kind, it is an affection of the natural sort that I am talking about. If it's of the dismal or fearful kind—if it brings along with it any affection opposite to manhood, generosity, courage, or freedom of thought—it can't possibly be any help, and the 'remedy' will undoubtedly turn out to be worse than the disease. ·When we are trying to improve a temperament that has gone sour·, the severest •reflections on our duty and •thoughts about what we are commanded to do by authority and under penalties won't *at all* serve to calm us. The more dismal our thoughts are on such a subject, the worse our temperament will be, and the readier to reveal itself as harsh and judgmental. The person may have reasons—of compulsion or fear or whatever—to *behave* differently from that, and perhaps even to *say* things that aren't harsh etc. But there won't have been any basic change. The face may be adjusted but the heart will be the same. . . .

You may want to object:

> 'Although in melancholy circumstances a sour mood may prevail, when a person is outwardly prosperous and at the height of good fortune, it's not likely that anything will occur that would thus sour the temperament in the way you have suggested.'

I reply that the more indulged and pampered a person's state is, the *more* likely it is to be disturbed by every disappointment or smallest trouble. And if in the most indulged state of will and mood it is easiest to raise provocations, and the passions of anger, offence, and enmity are the highest, then there's all the more need for input from social affection, to preserve the temperament from running into savageness and inhumanity. For proof of this, look at tyrants and most unlimited potentates.

[Shaftesbury now devotes most of a page to the following point. Any creature that *reasons* must also *reflect*, i.e. look in on himself. Various bad frames of mind also cause this kind of reflection, which is pretty well inevitable for all of us. For someone who has 'thrown off natural affection', the view he gets of himself in this 'home survey' is bound to be 'grievous'.]

There are two things that a rational creature, ·looking into himself·, must find horribly offensive and grievous: **(a)** The awareness of an unjust action or ·course of· behaviour that he knows to be naturally odious and ill-deserving. **(b)** ·The awareness of· a foolish action or ·course of· behaviour which he knows to be prejudicial to his own interest or happiness. ·I shall come to **(b)** on page 37·.

(a) It is only the former of these that is properly called 'conscience', whether in a moral or a religious sense. You don't need conscience to have awe and terror of the deity! No-one is regarded as more conscientious because of his fear of evil spirits, conjurations, enchantments, or whatever may come from an unjust, capricious, or devilish nature. To •fear God in any way except as a consequence of some blameworthy act of which one is guilty is •to fear a devilish nature, not a divine one. [Shaftesbury then repeats the point in application to 'the fear of hell'.]

Thus, religious conscience presupposes moral or natural conscience. Religious conscience may be understood to carry with it the fear of divine punishment, but its *force* comes from awareness of having committed some morally ugly and odious act in the presence of God, to whom natural veneration is due. In such a presence, the shame of villainy or vice must have its force, independently of any further thought God's magisterial role and his handing out of particular rewards or punishments in a future state.

I have already said that no creature can maliciously and intentionally act wrongly without being aware at the same time that he deserves punishment. [In the original, Shaftesbury's writes that someone who 'does ill' is aware that he 'deserves ill'.] And in this respect every sensible creature can be said to have a conscience. For it will always be true of everyone that *they fear and expect from everyone whatever they know they deserve from everyone*; and so suspicions and bad thoughts must arise, with terror both of men and of God. But besides this every rational creature must also have a further conscience, namely his awareness of the ugliness of his wrong and unnatural actions and a consequent shame or regret concerning them.

Perhaps there isn't—perhaps there *can't* be—any creature who isn't upset by the consciousness of villainy, who isn't moved or affected by the thought of something wicked that he has done. If there is such a one, it's obvious that he must be absolutely indifferent towards moral good or evil. And you'll agree that he can't be capable of natural affection; in which case he also can't be capable of any social pleasure or

mental enjoyment (I showed this earlier); but on the contrary, he must be subject to all sorts of horrible, unnatural, and bad affections. Thus, to lack conscience, i.e. a natural sense of the odiousness of crime and injustice, is to be most of all miserable in life; but if a person has a conscience—i.e. a sense of the sort I have been discussing—anything that he does that's in conflict with it *must*. . . .be continually shameful, grievous and offensive.

A man who in a passion happens to kill [Shaftesbury's phrase] his companion relents immediately when he sees what he has done. His vengefulness changes into pity, and his hatred is turned against himself; this comes about merely through the power of the object, ·i.e. it is caused by the sight of his victim's dead body·. Because of this event he suffers agonies;. . . .and he has constant bad memories and an unpleasant state of awareness ·of what he has done·. If on the other hand he doesn't relent or suffer any real concern or shame, then either

- he has no sense of the ugliness of crime and injustice, no natural affection, and thus no happiness or peace within, or
- any sense of moral worth or goodness that he has must be of a confused and contradictory kind.

In the latter case, he must pursue an inconsistent notion, idolize some false species of virtue, honouring irrational and absurd conduct as noble, gallant, or worthy. It's easy to imagine how tormenting this must be to him, because such a phantom as this ·false virtue· can't be fixed into any certain form, can't be held steady in one shape. [Shaftesbury calls it a 'Proteus of honour'; Proteus was a minor Greek god who could and did frequently change his shape.] The pursuit of it can only be vexatious and confusing. As I have shown, real virtue is the *only* thing that can possibly be proportionate to esteem, approval, or good conscience. Someone who has learned, from false religion or prevailing custom, to esteem or admire as virtuous anything that isn't really so must fall into one of two categories:

(i) Because of the inconsistency of such esteem, and the perpetual immoralities it leads to, he eventually loses all conscience and is therefore miserable in the worst way; or

(ii) He retains some conscience, but it's of a kind that is never satisfactory and can never bring contentment.

It is impossible that a cruel fanatic or bigot, a persecutor, a murderer, a hired thug, a pirate, or any lesser villain—someone who is false to the society of mankind in general, and contradicts natural affection—should have any fixed principle at all, any real standard or scale by which to regulate his esteem, or any solid reason for approving of any one moral act. So. . . .the more he relates to any morally bad and vicious action by loving or admiring it as great and glorious, the more contradiction and self-disapproval he must incur. That's because there's nothing more certain than this: *No natural affection can be contradicted, and no unnatural one can be advanced, without doing some harm to all the person's natural affections, so that the encouragement of unnatural affections causes a growth in inner ugliness.* From this it follows that the more a person's mind is dominated by a false principle of honour, a false religion, or a superstition, the more there is to make him unhappy when he looks into himself. . . . ·This complete **(a)**, which began on page 36·.

(b) Now for the other part of conscience, namely the memory of something that one did unreasonably and foolishly, against one's own interests or happiness. . . . [Shaftesbury's handling of this is pretty hard to follow. The gist of it is that this 'other part of conscience' kicks in whenever someone knows that he has acted wrongly. Even if he doesn't care about wrongness as such (so that the first part of conscience

is silent) he has to see his wrong conduct as unreasonable, foolish, contrary to his interests. Even if he keeps God out of his thoughts, he 'must suffer a very sensible loss in the friendship, trust, and confidence of other men'. In short, when someone has acted in a morally wrong way,] there must be disturbance from conscience of this sort, namely from a sense of what has been done imprudently and contrary to the person's real interest and advantage.

From all this we can easily see how greatly our happiness depends on natural and good affections. •The chief happiness comes from mental pleasures; and •the chief mental pleasures are, as I have said, based on natural affection; so it follows that •to have the natural affections is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment, the highest possession and happiness of life.

* * * * *

·Back on page 30 I distinguished mental pleasures from bodily ones, and since then I have been dealing with the former. It's time now to face up to bodily pleasures·. Now, as to the pleasures of the body, and the satisfactions belonging to mere sense, it's obvious that they can't possibly have their effect or provide any pleasure worth having unless that is mediated by social and natural affections.

For some people *living well* is merely *eating and drinking well*. When we adopt their way of speaking and say that that these people who are supposed to live well are 'living fast', we're carelessly conceding too much to them. As if the •fastest livers were those who took the most trouble to enjoy the •least of life! ·The *least*? Yes·, for if my account of happiness is right, life's greatest enjoyments are of a sort that these men pass over in their haste.

. . . .The high idea of voluptuous living that men of pleasure have owes a great deal to shows of elegance, a certain competitiveness, and a concern to *excel* in this sumptuous art of living. If from the voluptuous scene you removed the table, the company, the uniformed servants, the services, and the rest of the management, there would remain hardly any pleasure worth having, even in the opinion of the most debauched themselves.

The very notion of a *debauch* (which is a dash into whatever can be imagined of pleasure and voluptuousness) carries with it a plain reference to society or fellowship. If the excess were committed in isolation from any society or fellowship, it might be called a 'surfeit' or 'an excess of eating and drinking' but it would hardly qualify as a debauch. And someone who abuses himself in this way is often called a 'sot', but never a 'debauchee'. Courtesans, and even the commonest of women who live by prostitution, know very well how necessary it is that everyone they entertain with their beauty should believe that there are satisfactions on both sides, and that pleasures are given as well as received. If this idea of the situation were wholly taken away, the remaining pleasure would seem almost worthless, even to men of the grosser sort.

Who can enjoy anything thoroughly, or for long, when he is alone, completely separate—even in his thoughts—from everything belonging to society? Who wouldn't in these conditions quickly find any sensual indulgence cloying? Who wouldn't soon start disliking his pleasure, however exquisite it was, until he found some way to impart it, making it truly pleasant to him by sharing it with at least one other person? Let men imagine what they please; let them suppose themselves to •be extremely selfish or to • have an intense desire to follow the dictates of the narrow principle by which they try to bring nature under restraint: nature will still break out, using agonies, upsets, and illness to make perfectly clear the bad consequence of such violence, the absurdity of such a tactic, and the punishment that

belongs to such a monstrous and horrible endeavour. [This use of 'violence' reflects Aristotle's distinction between 'natural motion' and 'violent motion', where 'violent' simply means 'not natural'. When a stone falls to the earth, that is natural; when you throw it upwards, that is violent. Shaftesbury is saying here that the desire for society, the desire to share, is profoundly natural, so that anything going against it—such as the attempt to live a life of solitary selfishness—is violent.]

So it's not only the pleasures of the mind that depend on natural affection. The pleasures of the body depend on it too, in that when natural affection is lacking, those pleasures don't just lose their force but are in a way converted into dislike and disgust. The sensations that should naturally provide contentment and delight instead provide discontent and sourness, and make the person weary and restless. We can see this in the perpetual inconstancy, the love of change, that is so conspicuous in those who have nothing communicative or friendly in their pleasures. . . . Those who passionately pursue pleasure are setting themselves up for satiety, perpetual disgust, and feverishness of desire. It's those who work to regulate their passions who have the best enjoyment of pleasure. It's absolutely impossible for anything sensual to please or provide contentment if it doesn't depend on something friendly or social, something combined with and linked to kind or natural affection.

* * * * *

Before I conclude this section on social or natural affection, I'll offer a general view of it, and put it—once for all—onto the scales, to test •what kind of balance it helps to make within ·the person who has it·, and •what the consequence may be of its deficiency or light weight.

Everyone knows that without action, motion, and employment, the body becomes feeble and oppressed; the food it absorbs turns into disease; the ·animal· spirits, not having external work to do, help to consume the parts within; and nature preys on herself, so to speak. In the same way the sensing and living part·of the person·, the soul or mind, lacking *its* proper and natural exercise, is burdened and diseased. Its thoughts and passions, being unnaturally withheld from their appropriate objects, turn against ·the mind· itself, and create the highest impatience and bad humour.

In lower animals and other creatures that don't have the use of reason and reflection (at least not in the way men do) it is so ordered in nature that their daily search for food and their attention to the business of their livelihood or the affairs of their species take up almost all their time, and they find full employment for their passions. . . . If one of these creatures is taken out of his natural laborious state and placed where he can satisfy all his appetites and wants with no trouble at all, we can see that as his circumstances grow thus luxuriant so do his temperament and passions. If he comes to have his needs met at a cheaper and easier rate than nature intended for him, he is made to pay dearly for them by losing his natural good disposition and the orderliness of his species.

I don't have to support this by citing examples. Anyone who has the least knowledge of natural history, or has been an observer of the various breeds of creatures and their ways of life and propagation, will easily understand this difference of orderliness between wild and tame members of the same species. The tame ones acquire new habits, and deviate from their basic nature. They even lose the common instinct—the ordinary ingenuity—of their species, and they can't get it back while they continue in this pampered state; but when they are returned to taking care of themselves out in the world, they regain the natural affection and intelligence of their species. They learn to form tighter groups, and grow more concerned for their offspring. They provide against the

seasons, and make the most of every natural advantage for the support and maintenance of their species against foreign and hostile species. Thus, as they become busy they become regular and good. They lose their bad temper and vice along with their idleness and ease.

It happens with mankind that while some are confined to labour—confined by *necessity*—others are provided with an abundance of everything by the pains and labour of inferiors. Now, if among the superior and easy sort there isn't some sort of work they can do in place of the ordinary labour and toil that they are spared; if instead of •working at something that has a good and honest end in society (letters, sciences, arts, husbandry, public affairs, economy, or the like) they •thoroughly neglect of all duty or employment and settle into idleness and inactivity; this is bound to result in an extremely slack and dissolute state—it must produce a total disorder of the passions and break out in the strangest irregularities imaginable.

We see the enormous growth of luxury [see Glossary] in capital cities that have for many years been the seat of empire. We see how vice of every kind flourishes when numbers of men are maintained in lazy opulence. It's not like that with men who are taken up in honest and appropriate employment, and have been used to it from their youth. We see this in the •hardy remote provincials, the •inhabitants of smaller towns, and the •industrious sort of common people; where it's rare to meet with any instances of the irregularities that are known in courts and palaces and in the rich foundations of comfortable and pampered priests.

If. . . .it's true that •nature works by a sound order and regulation as much in the passions and affections as in the limbs and organs, and if we see that •she has constituted this inward part in such a way that

- •nothing is as essential to it as exercise, and
- •no exercise is as essential as that of social or natural affection,

it follows that when this affection is removed or weakened, the inner part ·of the person· is bound to suffer and be impaired. If idleness, indifference, or numbness of feeling is worked on as an art, or cultivated with the utmost care, the passions that are thus restrained will break out of their prison and in one way or another get their liberty and find full employment. They'll be sure to create for themselves unusual and unnatural exercises in which they are cut off from natural and good ones. In that way in place of orderly and natural affection new and unnatural affection must spring up, and all inner order and economy will be destroyed.

You would have to have a very imperfect idea of how nature orders things in the formation and structure of animals to imagine that such a great principle [see Glossary]—such a fundamental part—as natural affection could possibly be lost or damaged without any inner ruin or subversion of the temperament and frame of mind.

Anyone who knows *anything* about this moral [see Glossary] kind of architecture will find the inner structure so adjusted and the whole thing so precisely built that merely extending a single passion a little too far, or continuing it a little too long, can cause irrecoverable ruin and misery. He will find examples of this in ordinary cases of mental derangement, where the mind dwells too long on one subject (happy or sad) and sinks under the weight of it, showing how necessary it is to have a proper balance, and counterpoise in the affections. He will find that each sex in every species has its own special order and set [see Glossary] or suite of passions, suitable to the kind of life it leads and the different functions and capacities assigned to each. Just as the operations and effects are different, so also are the springs and causes in each

system. The inside work is fitted to the outward performance. So when habits or affections are dislodged, misplaced, or changed—where habits or affections belonging to one species are intermixed with those belonging to another—there is bound to be confusion and disturbance within.

We can easily see this by comparing the more perfect natures with the imperfect ones that are imperfect from their birth, having suffered violence within, in their earliest form, in the womb. We know how it is with monsters [see Glossary] such as are compounded of different species or different sexes. Well, those who are misshapen or distorted in an inner part are equally monsters. The ordinary animals appear unnatural and monstrous when they lose their proper instincts, forsake their species, neglect their offspring, and pervert the functions or capacities that nature has given them. How wretched it must be, therefore, for man—of all creatures—to lose the sense and feeling which is •proper for him as a man, and •suitable to his character and intellect! How unfortunate it must be for a creature whose dependence on society is greater than those of any other species to lose the natural affection by which he is prompted to the welfare and interest of his species and community! Man has such a large natural share of this affection that he is plainly less able than any other creature to bear solitude. Every man has naturally a degree of social affection that inclines him to seek the familiarity and friendship of his fellows. . . . Someone who. . . .is unsociable, and *voluntarily avoids* society or relations with the world, is bound to be gloomy and ill-natured. And someone who is *prevented from having* such relations—prevented by force or by circumstances—finds in his temperament the bad effects of this restraint. The inclination ·to seek society·, when suppressed, breeds discontent; whereas when it is set free to act with its full scope it provides a healing and enlivening joy. We can see this especially when after a time of solitude and long absence the heart is opened, the mind disburdened, and the secrets of the breast unfolded to a close friend.

Even more remarkable examples can be see in persons in the most elevated stations—even in princes, monarchs, and others whose condition seems to put them above ordinary human relationships and who adopt a sort of distant strangeness towards the rest of mankind. But they don't act in the same with all men. The wiser and better sort are indeed often held at a distance, as unfit for their intimacy or secret trust. But to compensate for this, intimacy is granted to others who, though they have the least merit and may be the most vile and contemptible of men, are sufficient to serve the purpose of an imaginary friendship, and can become official court 'favourites'. These are what the humanity of a great man—a king, for example—exercises itself upon. For these favourites we often see a king concerned and in pain; in these he easily confides; to these he can with pleasure communicate his power and greatness, be open, free, generous, confiding, and bountiful. . . . But where neither the love of mankind nor the passion for a favourite prevail, the tyrannical temperament is certain to show itself in its true colours, with all the bitterness, cruelty and mistrust that belong to the solitary and gloomy state of uncommunicative and unfriendly greatness. . . .

So we see how predominant natural affection is; how it is joined to us and implanted in our natures; how interwoven it is with our other passions; and how essential it is to the regular course of our affections, on which our happiness and self-enjoyment so immediately depend.

So I have demonstrated this: *To have the natural and good affections is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment*, *To lack such affections is certain misery and evil*.

Section 2. Self-affections

B. By having self-passions that are too intense or strong a creature becomes miserable.

To approach this in a methodical way I should first list the home-affections [Shaftesbury's term] that relate to the creature's private interests or individual economy, such as

(1) love of life,
(2) resentment of injury,
(3) pleasure in (or appetite towards) nourishment and the means of generation,
(4) desire for the conveniences by which we are well provided for and maintained,
(5) competitiveness or love of praise and honour,
(6) idleness or love of ease and rest.

These are the affections relating to the private system, and constituting what we call ·self·-interestedness or self-love.

When these affections are moderate—kept within certain limits—they are neither harmful to social life nor a hindrance to virtue. But in their extreme form they become

(1) cowardice,
(2) vengefulness,
(3) luxury [see Glossary] ·and lust·.
(4) avarice,
(5) vanity and ambition,
(6) sloth;

and in these forms they are acknowledged to be vicious and bad in relation to human society. How they are bad also in relation to the person who has them, and are to his own disadvantage as well as that of the public, we'll see as we examine them separately.

·(1) COWARDICE·

If any of these self-passions might, for the good and happiness of the creature whose passion it is, be opposed to natural affection and allowed to over-balance it, the desire for and love of life would be the best candidate. But it may be that no passion leads to more disorder and misery when it is unleashed.

We all know that life can sometimes be a misfortune and a misery. When a creature is reduced to such extremity, it's regarded as the greatest cruelty to enforce the continuance of his life. Although religion forbids each of us to be his own reliever, if by some fortunate accident death offers itself it is embraced as highly welcome. For this reason the deceased person's nearest friends and relatives often rejoice at the release of someone they entirely loved, even if he himself was so weak as turn down the chance of dying and do his utmost to prolong his own undesirable state.

Therefore, since

- life can often be a misfortune and a misery, and
- it naturally becomes so when it is prolonged to the infirmities of old age, and
- yet very often life is over-valued, and purchased at a cost that is certainly too high,

it obviously follows that the passion itself—the love of life, and dread of death—if it becomes too intense and throws off the balance in a creature's temperament, it will lead him directly against his own interests, turning him into his own greatest enemy and making him act accordingly.

But now suppose it is in some creature's interests to preserve his life by all courses and means, in any circumstances, at any cost. It will still be against his interests to have this passion in a high degree, because a very intense desire to live is not always conducive to survival. I needn't give examples, because it is common knowledge that excessive fear delivers one into danger instead of saving one from it. It's impossible for anyone to act sensibly and with presence of mind, even in preserving and defending himself, when he is strongly

pressed by such a passion. In all extraordinary emergencies, courage and resolution are what save us, while cowardice robs us of the means of safety. . . .

Even if the consequences of this passion were less harmful than I have described them as being, you have to admit that the passion itself is bound to be miserable—if it is misery to feel cowardice, and to be haunted by the spectres and horrors that are typical of the character of anyone who has a thorough dread of death. It's not only when dangers happen and risks are incurred that •this sort of fear oppresses and distracts. If •it ever so slightly gets the upper hand, it has no mercy even at the safest stillest hour of retreat and quiet. Every object prompts some thought that it can work on. It operates when it is least observed by others; and it enters at all times into the pleasantest parts of life, corrupting and poisoning all enjoyment and satisfaction. It's safe to say that many a life that has all the features that make it look happy would on closer and more inward inspection be found to be thoroughly miserable, simply through this passion ·of chronic fear of death·. But when we add to this the *low* behaviour that comes from such a passionate concern for living—when we consider how it drives us to actions that we can never view without dislike, and forces us gradually away from our natural conduct into still greater crookednesses and perplexity [Shaftesbury's phrase]—we see something that no-one, surely, is so dishonest as to deny, namely that life on those terms becomes a poor purchase, and is passed with little freedom or satisfaction. For how can this *not* be so when everything generous and worthy, and even. . . .happiness, is for life's sake abandoned and renounced?

So it seems evident that it's against a creature's interests and contrary to his happiness and good to have this affection of desire and love of life too intensely.

·(2) VENGEFULNESS·

There's another passion—very different from fear—which at a certain intensity-level is preservative to us and conduces to our safety. Just as fear is serviceable in prompting us to avoid danger, so this next one serves us by fortifying us against danger and enabling us to •repel injury and •resist violence when it is offered. It's true that. . . .in a wise and virtuous man whose affections are properly regulated such efforts towards action don't amount to passion or commotion, rightly so-called. A courageous man may be cautious without real fear; and a temperate man may resist or punish without anger. But in ordinary characters there's bound to be some mixture of the real passions themselves, though they can in the main allay and moderate one another. And so anger becomes, in a way, necessary. It's by this passion that one creature threatening violence to another is deterred from carrying it out, when he sees how the attempt affects the other, and knows by the signs that accompany this rising motion [see Glossary] that if he carries through with this it won't pass easily or with impunity. And it's also this passion which, after violence and hostility have occurred, arouses the victim in opposition, and helps him to return similar hostility and harm to the invader. ·Actually *help* him? Yes·, because as the victim's rage and despair increase he becomes still more terrible: being urged ·by his anger· to the greatest extremity, he finds a degree of strength and boldness that he has never before experienced, and that he wouldn't have *now* if it weren't for how highly he has been provoked.

So this affection, despite its immediate aim's being the harm or punishment of someone else, is clearly one of the ones that tend to the advantage of the self-system, the animal himself [Shaftesbury's phrase]; and it also contributes in other ways to the good and interests of the species. But you hardly need me to explain how damaging and self-destructive anger

is, if it's what commonly understand by 'anger'—a passion that is rash and violent in the instant of provocation, or one that imprints itself deeply and causes an eager pursuit of a planned revenge. It's no wonder that so much is done in mere revenge and under the pressure of deep resentment, given that the relief and satisfaction found in acting on that resentment is. . . .alleviates the most weighty and pressing sensation of misery. When this misery ·of the victim· is for a while removed or alleviated by his success in doing something bad to someone else, the result is the sense of a delicious ease, an overflowing of soft and pleasing sensation. Yet this is really no better than ·torture on· the rack. [The remainder of this paragraph will depart more than usual from Shaftesbury's original. As a precaution, the original—as given in the Cambridge U.P. edition of the work (1999)—is tacked on at the end of this document.] Anyone who has experienced racking pains knows how he has been affected by a sudden ending or interruption of the pain. Well, that effect is comparable with the rather disgraceful •delights that you can get from a poisonously vengeful disposition when it is given free rein: •they are merely repeated soothings of anger that is repeatedly renewed. That was about angry bursts of vengefulness. In some people the passion doesn't arise so suddenly, but once it has been aroused it isn't so easily quietened. Once the sleeping capacity for vengefulness has been aroused and worked up to its highest pitch, it won't die down until it achieves its end, and when that has been achieved it calms down and rests. The relief that this brings is all the more enjoyable because the preceding anguish was so long-lasting and bitter. Thus, either way—with vengefulness that is angrily explosive or vengefulness that is slower and deeper and more deliberate—the 'delights' come only from the cessation of something utterly nasty. . . .

There's no need for me to go through the bad effects that this passion can have on our minds, our bodies, our private condition, or the circumstances of our life. That would be tedious. These are topics of the moral sort that are commonly joined with religion, and treated so rhetorically and with such enforced repetition that people are apt to think they have heard more than enough of it. What I have said here may be enough to make it evident that to be subject to a passion of the kind under discussion here is actually to be very unhappy, and that the habit itself is a disease of the worst sort, from which misery is inseparable.

·(3) Luxury and lust·

Now, as for luxury [see Glossary] and what the world calls 'pleasure': if it were true (and I have proved that it isn't) that •the most considerable enjoyments were those merely of the senses, and if it were also true that •those sensual enjoyments lay in certain external things that could always supply a due and certain portion of pleasure depending on their degree and quality, it would then follow that •the sure way to get happiness would be to procure a good supply of the things to which happiness and pleasure were thus infallibly annexed. But however fashionably we may apply the notion of 'good living', it won't be found that our inner faculties can keep pace with these outward supplies of a luxuriant fortune. And if the natural disposition and aptness **from within** doesn't play its part, it will be in vain to exercise great skill in accumulating these ·pleasure-giving· things **from outside** .

Someone who has taken in so much of a substance x that he dislikes its taste and is nauseated by it may nevertheless have a constant a craving for x, an eagerness of stomach [Shaftesbury's phrase] for it. But this kind of appetite is false and unnatural—like thirst arising from a fever. . . . Now, the

plain satisfactions of the natural appetite are infinitely better than the indulgences of the most refined and elegant luxury. The luxurious themselves often perceive this. People brought up in the sumptuous way,

> using food to get in ahead of •appetite instead of letting •it happen and responding to it by eating food,

when some turn of events puts them onto a more natural course, or for a while (as on a journey or a day of sport) happened

> to experience the sweetness of a plain diet, recommended by due abstinence and exercise,

they have freely admitted that this gave them the highest satisfaction and delight that a table could possibly provide.

[Shaftesbury adds that people who have moved from a plain life to a luxurious one miss the plainness, regret losing it, and don't think much of luxury. This, he says, has often been noticed. He continues:] It's clear that the keenness of the natural sensations is lost when you put pressure on nature, force the appetite, and incite the senses. And even if through vice or bad habits the same objects of appetite are sought more eagerly every day, they give less satisfaction. The impatience of not having them may grow, but the pleasure of having them shrinks. The bouts of gloom and nausea that continually intervene are sensations of the worst and most hateful kind. Hardly anything is tasted that is wholly free of this nasty taste caused by a surfeited sense and a ruined appetite. So that instead of a constant and flowing delight provided by such a state of life, the very state itself is actually a sickness and infirmity, a corruption of pleasure, and destructive of every natural and agreeable sensation. That's how far it is from being true that in this licentious course we enjoy life best. . . .

As for the consequences of this kind of indulgence—how fatal to the body through diseases of many kinds, and to the mind through sottishness and stupidity—you don't need me to explain this.

The consequences for our interests are plain enough. Such a state of impotent and unrestrained desire increases our wants and thus increases our dependence on others. It becomes harder for our private circumstances, however affluent or easy they may be, to satisfy us. . . . The injuries we do ourselves by excess and impatience become apparent when, through an impotence of this sort and our lack of self-control, we do things that we ourselves declare to be destructive to us. . . . From what I have said here—indeed from a part of what I have said—it's easy to conclude that luxury, riot, and debauch are contrary to real interests and to the true enjoyment of life.

[This is where Shaftesbury starts to discuss what he has earlier called 'the passion of love between the sexes'. He does it in guarded language, and neither 'sex' nor 'lust' occurs anywhere in this section.] There's another luxury superior to the kind I have been discussing, and ·although I take it up here· it can scarcely be called a self-passion, since its sole end is the advantage and promotion (not of *the self* but) of *the species*. But ·it isn't a typical social affection either·: all the other social affections bring only **mental** pleasure, and are based on mere kindness and love; whereas this one has more added to it and brings a **sensual** pleasure. Nature has shown such concern and care for the support and continuation of the various species that they—the members of the species—are made to have a concern for the propagation of their kind, a concern driven by a certain •need and •necessity in their natures, Let us now consider whether it is in the interests of an animal to feel this need more intensely than is natural and ordinary.

. . . .For every other ·kind of· pleasure there's a level of appetite-intensity that can't be exceeded without harming

the creature, even harming his ability to experience pleasure. If you agree about that, you're likely to think that this other appetite—the one of the amorous kind—also has a certain limit or proper boundary. There are other sorts of ardent sensations. . . .which we find pleasant and acceptable while they stay within certain limits, but which become oppressive and intolerable as they increase. Laughter provoked by tickling grows an excessive pain even while retaining the same features of delight and pleasure. . . .

Anyone who is bred to a natural life, accustomed to honest industry and sobriety and not to anything immoderate or intemperate, is found to have his appetites and inclinations of this sort at command. And their moderation doesn't make them less able to deliver the pleasure or enjoyment of each kind. On the contrary, being more sound, healthy, and unharmed by excess and abuse, his appetites and inclinations must provide him with proportionate satisfaction. So if we go to experience for a comparison between these two—

(a) the sensations that go with the virtuous conduct of someone who lives a natural and regular life;

(b) the sensations that go with the vicious course of someone who is slack and dissolute;

comparing them just in respect of the sensual pleasure that each involves, leaving consequences out of it, there's no room for doubt that judgment would be given in favour of **(a)**.

As for the consequences of this vice with respect to the health and vigour of •the body: there's no need for me to go into that. The harm it does to •the mind, though less noticed, is greater. The holding back of all improvement, the wretched waste of time, the effeminacy, sloth, feebleness, the disorder and looseness of a thousand passions through such a slackening and enervating of the mind are all effects that will be obvious to the person if he looks into himself.

You don't need me to go on about the disadvantages of this intemperance in respect of the interests of the person himself, society, and the world, or about the advantages of a contrary sobriety and self-control. It's well known there can be no slavery greater than what comes from being governed by such a passion. It is the passion that •is least manageable by favour or concession, and •grabs the most when it is indulged. What it costs us in the modesty and nobility of our natures, and in the faith and honesty of our characters, is easy to grasp by anyone who will look into himself. And so we reach the conclusion that there is no passion whose extravagance and excess more certainly lead to disorder and unhappiness.

·(4) Avarice·

As for the passion that. . . .has for its aim the possession of wealth and what we call a 'settlement' or 'fortune' in the world: when this is moderate and not unreasonably intense, when it doesn't lead to any passionate pursuit, or raise any burning desire or appetite, it is perfectly compatible with virtue and is even suitable and beneficial to society. The *work* that this affection causes brings benefit to the public as well as the private system. But if it eventually grows into a real passion, the harm and damage it does to the public is not greater than what it does to the person himself. Such a person is actually a *self*-oppressor, and lies more heavily on himself than he can ever do on mankind.

You surely don't need me to explain how miserable it is to have a coveting or avaricious temperament. Everyone knows how small a portion of worldly goods is sufficient for a man's personal use and convenience, and how much his needs and wants might be reduced if he set himself to be frugal, and pursued temperance and a natural life with ·even· half the concentration, work and skill that are spent on ·pursuing·

sumptuousness and luxury! Well, if temperance really is so advantageous, and the practice as well as the consequences of it so pleasing and happy,. . . .there's little need for me to go through the miseries that come with covetous and eager desires for things that have no bounds or rule. ·No bounds or rule? Yes, because· they are out of nature, and beyond nature there can be no limits to desire. For where shall we stop, once we have passed this boundary? How shall we fix or ascertain something that is wholly unnatural and unreasonable?. . . .

That is why covetous and eager minds are so restless. . . . This condition doesn't bring any thorough or real satisfaction, but only a kind of insatiableness. There *can't* be any real enjoyment except in ·the satisfaction of· a natural and just appetite. 'What about the enjoyment of wealth and honours by a person who has coveted them?' That's not what we call 'enjoyment', when through covetousness or ambition the desire is still uppermost and can't ever be satisfied with its gains. But ·I needn't go on about this·: the vice of covetousness is already widely criticised. . . . In short: A covetous temperament, a miserable temperament—two names for the same thing!

·(5) Vanity and ambition·

There is equally widespread criticism of that other aspiring temperament—the one that exceeds honest emulation or love of praise, and even goes beyond the limits of vanity and conceit. This is the passion that breaks out into an enormous pride and ambition. Now, if we just think about

> the ease, happiness, and security that come with a modest disposition and quiet mind—the sort of mind that can easily bring itself under self-control, is fitted to every rank or position in society, and can adjust itself to any reasonable circumstances whatsoever—

we'll see right away that this is a most agreeable and winning character. And after we have done this, it won't be necessary for us to call to mind •the excellence and good of moderation, or •the harm and self-injury of immoderate desires and conceited foolish fantasies of personal advantage in such things as titles, honours, precedencies, fame, glory, or vulgar astonishment, admiration, and applause.

Another obvious point: just as desires of this kind intensify and become impetuous and out of our control, so also the corresponding aversions and fears grow strong and violent, so that the temperament becomes suspicious, jealous, fault-finding, subject to fears from all events, and unable to bear the least set-back or ordinary disappointment. And so we can conclude that all

- •rest and security about the future, and all
- •peace, contentedness and ease about the present,

is forfeited by the aspiring passions of this envious kind, and by having the appetites towards glory and outward appearance thus transported and out of control.

·(6) Sloth·

There is a certain temperament that is often treated as a kind of opposite of the ·two· eager and aspiring aims that I have been talking about. It doesn't really exclude either **(4)** covetousness or **(5)** ambition; but it does hinders their effects and keeps them from breaking out into open action. This passion soothes the mind and softens it into an excessive love of rest and idleness; so it makes vigorous attempts impracticable, and represents as insuperable the difficulties of a painful and laborious course towards wealth and honours. Now, although an inclination to ease and a love of moderate respite and rest from action is as natural and useful to us as the inclination we have towards sleep, still an excessive love of rest and a focused aversion to action

and employment must be a disease in the mind equal to that of lethargy in the body.

We can tell how necessary action and exercise are to the body from •the difference we find between the constitutions that are accustomed it and those that have nothing to do with it, and from •the difference between the bodily health and tone created by labour and due exercise and the bodily condition we see resulting from an indulged state of idleness and rest. And the lazy habit isn't ruinous only to the body. The languishing disease corrupts all the enjoyments of a vigorous and healthy sense, and carries its infection into the mind, where it spreads a worse contagion. ·Why worse?· Because the body may hold out for a while, but the mind in which this distemper is seated can't escape without an *immediate* affliction and disorder. The habit ·of idleness· creates a state of boredom and anxiety, which influences the whole temperament and converts •the unnatural rest into •an unhappy sort of activity, bad humour, and irritability. I have already said enough about this in discussing the lack of proper balance in the affections.

When the body has no labour or natural exercise, the ·animal· spirits being deprived of their proper employment turn against the constitution and find destructive work for themselves. Similarly when a soul or mind isn't exercised, and languishes because of its lack of proper action and employment, the thoughts and affections, being obstructed in their proper course and deprived of their natural energy, create disquiet and stir up a rancorous sharpness and tormenting irritation. This makes the temperament more impotent in passion, more incapable of real moderation, and like prepared fuel it catches fire from the least spark.

[Shaftesbury has a short paragraph about how a person's interests are harmed by sloth. He rightly says that 'all this is obvious'.]

* * * * *

So we have now considered the self-passions, and the consequences of their rising beyond a moderate degree ·of intensity·. We see these affections, though they are self-interesting, can often become contrary to our real interests. They betray us into most misfortunes, and into the worst kind of unhappiness, that of a profligate and abject character. As they become •imperious and •high, they lead to the creature's being correspondingly •mean and •low. [Those four adjectives are Shaftesbury's.] They are the source of what we call 'selfishness', and give rise to that sordid disposition of which I have already spoken. It seems that there couldn't be anything so miserable in itself or so wretched in its consequences as to be thus impotent in temperament, thus mastered by passion, and by means of it brought under the most servile subjection to the world.

It is obvious that as this selfishness increases in us, so must its natural accompaniment—a certain craftiness and acting skill in our conduct. In this way we lose the open straightforwardness of our natures, the ease and freedom of our minds; all trust and confidence lost; and suspicions, jealousies, and envies multiplied. . . . And the more we are thus cut off from society and our fellows, the more hostile we'll be towards the *uniting* passions that would bind us in strict alliance and friendship with others. On these terms we must, as a matter of course, try to silence and suppress our natural and good affections; because they would carry us to the good of society, against what we foolishly believe to be our private good and interest.

If these selfish passions, besides what other evil they lead to, are also the certain means of depriving us of •our natural affections, then—given what I showed earlier—they must be the certain means of depriving us of •the chief enjoyment of life, and arousing in us the horrible *unnatural* passions, and

the savageness of temperament that creates the greatest of miseries and the most wretched state of life. That last point is what I now have to explain.

Section 3: Unnatural affections.

C. The last passions that we have to examine are the ones that don't lead to a public or a private good, and don't bring any advantage to the species in general or to the creature in particular. I call these the •'unnatural affections', to distinguish them from the •'social' (or 'natural') affections ·and from the •'private' affections·.

(a) Of this kind is the unnatural and inhuman delight in beholding torments, and getting a special joy and pleasure from viewing distress, calamity, blood, massacre and destruction. This has been the dominant passion of many tyrants and barbarous nations; and some degree of it belongs to temperaments that have thrown off the courteousness of behaviour that retains in us a proper reverence for mankind and prevents the growth of harshness and brutality. Wherever civility or affable manners have any place, however small, this passion doesn't occur. It is in the nature of 'good breeding', as we call it, that even in the midst of many other corruptions it won't allow inhumanity or savage pleasure. To get cruel delight from an enemy's suffering may come from intense anger, vengefulness, fear, or some other extreme self-passion; but to delight in the torture and pain of other creatures even-handedly—natives or foreigners, human or of some other species, related to us or not, known or unknown—to feed on death (so to speak), and to be entertained with dying agonies, can't be explained in terms of self-interest or private good, but is wholly and absolutely unnatural, as well as being horrible and miserable.

(b) Another affection, nearly related to this, is a cheerful and frolicsome delight in what is harmful to others; a sort of wild mischievousness and pleasure in what is destructive; a passion that is usually encouraged in children instead of being restrained, so that it's no wonder that the effects of it are felt in the ·adult· world. . . . There is no foundation in nature for this passion, as I have explained.

(c) Malice, malignity, or ill-will that isn't based on any self-consideration, and doesn't come from anger or jealousy or anything else to provoke or cause such a desire of doing harm to someone else—this also is a passion of this ·unnatural· kind.

(d) Envy too, when it arises from another creature's prosperity or happiness that isn't in any way interfering with ours, is a passion of that same kind.

(e) There is also among these ·unnatural passions· a sort of hatred of mankind and society; a passion that has been known to be utterly dominant in some men, and has had its own special name given to it, namely 'misanthropy'. A large share of this belongs to people who have for years indulged themselves in a habitual gloom, or who through bad nature and bad upbringing have contracted such a reverse of friendliness and civil manners that to see or meet a stranger is offensive ·to them·. The very *look* of mankind is a disturbance to them, and they are sure always to hate at first sight. This type of disorder is sometimes to be found not merely in individuals but in nations, especially the more savage ones; it is a plain characteristic of uncivilized manners, and barbarity. It is the direct opposite of the noble affection that in an ancient language was called 'hospitality', i.e. extensive love of mankind and relief of strangers.

(f) We can include among the unnatural passions all those that come from superstition (I mentioned this before), and from the customs of barbarous countries: all of which are

too horrible and odious in themselves to need any proof of their being miserable.

(g) I could add to the list—e.g. •unnatural lusts for creatures of other species, and •perversions of amorous desire within our own species. But I needn't add anything here regarding these depravities of appetite, given what I have already said about the more natural passions.

It's only affections or passions like these that we can strictly call unnatural, bad, and having *no* tendency to favour any public or private good. There are others that do have *some* such tendency but are

- •so extravagantly demanding,
- •so beyond the common range of any ordinary self-passion, and
- •so utterly contrary and abhorrent to all social and natural affection,

that they are generally called 'unnatural' and 'monstrous', and can reasonably be regarded as so.

Among these we can count

- •enormous pride or ambition, arrogance and tyranny, that would willingly leave nothing outstanding or free of prosperous in the world;
- •anger that would sacrifice everything to itself;
- •vengefulness that will never be extinguished and will never be satisfied without the greatest cruelties;
- •deep-seated hostility that looks for opportunities to exert itself, and lays hold of the least subject, so that the weight of its malevolence often falls on creatures that are merely objects of pity and compassion.

Treachery and ingratitude are strictly speaking merely negative vices; they don't involve any real passions, and they aren't connected with any particular aversion or inclination. Their source is the lack or unsoundness or corruption of the affections in general. But when these vices become noticeable in someone's character, and arise in a way from inclination and choice; when they are so forward and active that they appear of their own accord with nothing significant calling for them; then it's clear that they are borrowing something from the mere unnatural passions, and are derived from malice, envy, and deep hostility.

It may be objected here that •these passions, though unnatural, still carry a sort of pleasure with them; and that •what is found in exercising pride, tyranny, revenge, malice, or cruelty *is* a pleasure and satisfaction, even if a barbarous one. [The gist of Shaftesbury's obscure response to this is that *that* kind of satisfaction is a relief from preceding misery—the misery of having some unnatural affection. He compares it with the temporary relief a victim may feel when his torture is stopped for a while. In defence of his thesis that it is miserable to have any unnatural passion, Shaftesbury says that a decent mild-natured man may sometimes have brief bouts of such a passion, and will see for himself how nasty this is; so think about what it would be like to have a more intense version of it, continuously! Shaftesbury then goes on about how unnatural affections harm •the social situation of the person who has them, and •do to his thoughts and feelings about his fellow-men. He sums up:]

Thus at last the mind becomes a wilderness where everything is laid waste, everything fair and good removed, and nothing left standing except what is savage and ugly. Now, if banishment from one's country, removal to a foreign place, or anything that looks like solitude or desertion, is so hard to endure, what must it be like to feel this inward banishment, this real estrangement from human interactions, and to be in this way in a desert and in the most horrible of solitudes, even when in the midst of society? What must it be like to live in this disagreement with everything, this irreconcilable opposition to the order and government of the universe?

So we find that the greatest of miseries accompanies the state that results from the loss of natural affection; and that to have those horrible, monstrous, and unnatural affections is to be miserable in the highest degree.

Conclusion

Thus I have tried to prove what I undertook to prove. And since in the common and accepted sense of 'vice' and 'badness' no-one can be vicious or bad except **(A)** by the deficiency or weakness of natural affections or **(B)** by the violence of the selfish affections or **(C)** by affections that are plainly unnatural, it must follow, that if each of these puts the creature into the most complete state of misery, to be wicked or vicious is to be miserable and unhappy. . . .

On the other side: the happiness and good of virtue has been proved from the contrary effect of other affections, ones that are fit with •nature and •the economy of the species or kind. We have totalled up all the particulars from which (as though by addition and subtraction) the main sum or general account ·or bottom line· of happiness is either augmented or diminished. And if there are no errors in the input in this system of moral arithmetic, this subject can be said to have ·results that have· as high a level of self-evidentness as results in arithmetic or geometry. However far we carry scepticism—even if we doubt everything •around us—we can't have doubts concerning what happens •within ourselves. Our passions and affections are known to us. *They* are certain, whatever the objects may be that they are employed on. It makes no difference to my argument what the situation is regarding these external objects; whether they are realities or mere illusions, whether we are awake or dreaming. For bad dreams will be just as disturbing. And a good dream—if that's all there is to life—will be easily and happily passed. In this dream of life, therefore, my demonstrations have the same force: our balance and economy hold good, and our obligation to virtue is in every respect the same.

Over-all, then, I don't think there is the least degree of uncertainty in what I have said about how greatly the mental pleasures are preferable to the sensual; and among the sensual pleasures, how •those that are accompanied by good affection and are under a temperate and right use are preferable to •those that aren't restrained in any way and aren't supported by anything social or affectionate.

And what I have said about the united structure and fabric of the mind, and about the passions that constitute the temperament or soul and are the immediate source of its happiness or misery, are equally evident. I have shown that •in this constitution the impairing of any one part must instantly tend to produce disorder and ruin in other parts and in the whole itself, through the necessary connection and balance of the affections; that •the passions that make men vicious are *themselves* a torment and disease; that •anything that is done in the knowledge that it is bad must come from a bad ·state of· consciousness; and that •to the extent that an act is bad it must impair and corrupt social enjoyment, and destroy both the capacity for kind affection and the consciousness of meriting any such affection. So that we can't •participate in joy or happiness with others or •receive satisfaction from the mutual kindness or imagined love of others—and those are basis for the greatest of all our pleasures.

If this is how things stand with moral delinquency, and if the state arising from this defection from nature is the most horrible, oppressive and miserable, we see that to yield or consent to anything bad or immoral is a breach of ·self·-interest and leads to the greatest evils; and that everything that is an improvement of virtue, or an establishment of right

affection and integrity is an advancement of ·self·-interest, and leads to the greatest and most solid happiness and enjoyment.

Thus the wisdom of what rules and is first and chief in nature [i.e. the wisdom of God] has made it be in everyone's private interest and good to work towards the general good, so that if a creature ceases to promote the public good he is to that extent letting himself down and ceasing to promote his own happiness and welfare. This makes him directly his own enemy. He can't be good or useful to himself in any way except continuing to be good to •society and to •the whole of which he is himself a part. So that virtue, a single quality—that is

- •the chief and most amiable [see Glossary] of all excellences and beauties,
- •the prop and ornament of human affairs;
- •something that upholds communities, maintains union, friendship, and harmony among men,
- •something by which countries as well as private families flourish and are happy, and
- •something the lack of which ruins and kills everything good-looking, conspicuous, great and worthy

—is beneficial to all society and to mankind in general, and turns out to be •equally a happiness and good for each individual creature, and •the only means to man's being happy.

And thus virtue is everyone's good, vice is everyone's evil.

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The difficult passage on page 44

For whoever has experienced racking pains can tell in what manner a sudden cessation or respite is used to affect him. From hence are those untoward delights of perverseness, forwardness and an envenomed malignant disposition acting at its liberty. For this is only a perpetual assuaging of anger perpetually renewed. In other characters, the passion arises not so suddenly or on slight causes, but being once moved is not so easily quieted. The dormant fury, revenge, being raised once and wrought up to her highest pitch, rests not till she attains her end and, that attained, is easy and reposes, making our succeeding relief and ease so much the more enjoyed as our preceding anguish and incumbent pain was of long duration and bitter sense. Certainly if among lovers and in the language of gallantry, the success of ardent love is called the assuaging of a pain, this other success may be far more justly termed so. However soft or flattering the former pain may be esteemed, this atter surely can be no pleasing one; nor can it be possibly esteemed other than sound and thorough wretchedness, a grating and disgustful feeling, without the least mixture of anything soft, gentle, or agreeable.