

11.2 | *Wealth and Poverty*

This is by far the richest section in this chapter, not only in the range and variety of the passages quoted, but also in the number and character of the authors who contribute to the discussion of its basic themes. As contrasted with the subjects covered in those sections to follow that tend to be more narrowly economic, the discussion of wealth and poverty involves broad psychological, moral, and political considerations as well as strictly economic ones.

Those who ask whether any limit can be placed on the production and acquisition of wealth by an individual or a society find themselves confronted with the apparently limitless reach of human desires. But, acknowledging this fact, they also recognize the harmful effects, both upon the individual and upon society, of setting no limits to the accumulation of wealth. Almost without exception, the great moralists from Plato, Aristotle, and the Roman Stoics to Aquinas, Locke, and Rousseau condemn the insatiable lust for external possessions, but they differ on the question of the indispensability of a modicum of wealth as one of the conditions of earthly happiness. They are also concerned with the obligations of the individual, in justice and in charity, to avoid injuring others by impoverishing them or by letting their poverty go unrelieved. On these subjects, the Old and the New Testament, the poets, the novelists, and the historians also speak with intensity and eloquence.

On the other hand, poverty itself is praised as well as deplored, not involuntary destitution, but the voluntary poverty that is a virtuous way of life. We find diverse expressions of this point of view in the ancient Stoics, in the Sacred Scriptures, in the Christian theologians, and in modern writers like Thoreau, who voices a disdain for wealth-seeking and a dislike for the burden of possessions that are current in certain sections of our society today. Balanced against this, increasingly as we approach modern times, is the antiphonal voice that denounces the injustice of a vast inequality in the distribution of wealth, and that calls not merely for the relief of the poor but also for the elimination of poverty itself.

To all of this, the economists add their proposals of measures for increasing the wealth of nations and their arguments for and against the control of its production and distribution.

For the consideration of wealth and poverty in relation to the pursuit of happiness and the conduct of life, the reader is referred to Section 9.8 on HAPPINESS, and also Section 9.10 on VIRTUE AND VICE. Treatment of the religious aspect of wealth and poverty will be found in Section 20.8 on WORSHIP AND SERVICE, and also in Section 20.13 on SIN AND TEMPTATION. The problem of involuntary poverty or destitution raises questions more fully discussed in Section 12.2 on JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE and in Section 13.3 on EQUALITY.

¹ And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

- And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.
- And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:
- And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.
- And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.
II Samuel 12:1-7
- 2 The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.
Proverbs 10:15
- 3 The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.
Proverbs 14:20
- 4 He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.
Proverbs 28:20
- 5 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.
Ecclesiastes 5:12
- 6 *Swineherd*. Shyness is no asset to a beggar.
Homer, Odyssey, XVII, 352
- 7 Who bids his gather'd substance gradual grow
Shall see not livid hunger's face of woe.
No bosom pang attends the home-laid store,
But fraught with loss the food without thy door.
'Tis good to take from hoards, and pain to need
What is far from thee:—give the precept heed.
Hesiod, Works and Days
- 8 *Solon*. He who possesses great store of riches is no nearer happiness than he who has what suffices for his daily needs, unless it so hap that luck attend upon him, and so he continue in the enjoyment of all his good things to the end of life.
Herodotus, History, I, 32
- 9 'Tis said that gifts tempt even gods; and o'er men's minds gold holds more potent sway than countless words.
Euripides, Medea, 964
- 10 *Cyclops*. Money's the wise man's religion, little man.
The rest is mere bluff and purple patches.
Euripides, Cyclops, 316
- 11 *Farmer*. In times like these, when wishes soar but power fails,
I contemplate the steady comfort found in gold:
gold you can spend on guests; gold you can pay the doctor
when you get sick. But a small crumb of gold will buy
our daily bread, and when a man has eaten that, you cannot really tell the rich and poor apart.
Euripides, Electra, 426
- 12 *Pericles*. The real disgrace of poverty [lies] not in owing to the fact but in declining the struggle against it.
Thucydides, Peloponnesian War, II, 40
- 13 *Socrates*. I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul.
Plato, Apology, 30A
- 14 *Socrates*. May I ask, Cephalus, whether your fortune was for the most part inherited or acquired by you?
Cephalus. Acquired! Socrates; do you want to know how much I acquired? In the art of making money I have been midway between my father and grandfather: for my grandfather, whose name I bear, doubled and trebled the value of his patrimony, that which he inherited being much what I possess now; but my father Lysanias reduced the property below what it is at present: and I shall be satisfied if I leave to these my sons not less but a little more than I received.
That was why I asked you the question, I replied, because I see that you are indifferent about money, which is a characteristic rather of those who have inherited their fortunes than of those who have acquired them; the makers of fortunes have a second love of money as a creation of their own, resembling the affection of authors for their own poems, or of parents for their children, besides that natural love of it for the sake of use and profit which is common to them and all men. And hence they are very bad company, for they can talk about nothing but the praises of wealth.
That is true, he said.
Yes, that is very true, but may I ask another question?—What do you consider to be the greatest blessing which you have reaped from your wealth?
One, he said, of which I could not expect easily to convince others. For let me tell you, Socrates, that when a man thinks himself to be near death, fears and cares enter into his mind which he never had before; the tales of a world below and the punishment which is exacted there of deeds done here were once a laughing matter to him, but now he is tormented with the thought that they may

be true: either from the weakness of age, or because he is now drawing nearer to that other place, he has a clearer view of these things; suspicions and alarms crowd thickly upon him, and he begins to reflect and consider what wrongs he has done to others. And when he finds that the sum of his transgressions is great he will many a time like a child start up in his sleep for fear, and he is filled with dark forebodings. But to him who is conscious of no sin, sweet hope . . . is the kind nurse of his age. . . . The great blessing of riches, I do not say to every man, but to a good man, is, that he has had no occasion to deceive or to defraud others, either intentionally or unintentionally; and when he departs to the world below he is not in any apprehension about offerings due to the gods or debts which he owes to men. Now to this peace of mind the possession of wealth greatly contributes; and therefore I say, that, setting one thing against another, of the many advantages which wealth has to give, to a man of sense this is in my opinion the greatest.

Plato, *Republic*, I, 330A

- 15 *Socrates*. And now, Adeimantus, is our State matured and perfected?

Adeimantus. I think so.

Where, then, is justice, and where is injustice, and in what part of the State did they spring up?

Probably in the dealings of these citizens with one another. I cannot imagine that they are more likely to be found any where else.

I dare say that you are right in your suggestion, I said; we had better think the matter out, and not shrink from the enquiry.

Let us then consider, first of all, what will be their way of life, now that we have thus established them. Will they not produce corn, and wine, and clothes, and shoes, and build houses for themselves? And when they are housed, they will work, in summer, commonly, stripped and bare-foot, but in winter substantially clothed and shod. They will feed on barley-meal and flour of wheat, baking and kneading them, making noble cakes and loaves; these they will serve up on a mat of reeds or on clean leaves, themselves reclining the while upon beds strewn with yew or myrtle. And they and their children will feast, drinking of the wine which they have made, wearing garlands on their heads, and hymning the praises of the gods, in happy converse with one another. And they will take care that their families do not exceed their means; having an eye to poverty or war.

But, said Glaucon, interposing, you have not given them a relish to their meal.

True, I replied, I had forgotten; of course they must have a relish—salt, and olives, and cheese, and they will boil roots and herbs such as country people prepare; for a dessert we shall give them figs, and peas, and beans; and they will roast myrtle-berries and acorns at the fire, drinking in mod-

eration. And with such a diet they may be expected to live in peace and health to a good old age, and bequeath a similar life to their children after them.

Yes, Socrates, he said, and if you were providing for a city of pigs, how else would you feed the beasts?

But what would you have, Glaucon? I replied.

Why, he said, you should give them the ordinary conveniences of life. People who are to be comfortable are accustomed to lie on sofas, and dine off tables, and they should have sauces and sweets in the modern style.

Yes, I said, now I understand: the question which you would have me consider is, not only how a State, but how a luxurious State is created; and possibly there is no harm in this, for in such a State we shall be more likely to see how justice and injustice originate. In my opinion the true and healthy constitution of the State is the one which I have described.

Plato, *Republic*, II, 371B

- 16 *Socrates*. There seem to be two causes of the deterioration of the arts.

Adeimantus. What are they?

Wealth, I said, and poverty.

How do they act?

The process is as follows: When a potter becomes rich, will he, think you, any longer take the same pains with his art?

Certainly not.

He will grow more and more indolent and careless?

Very true.

And the result will be that he becomes a worse potter?

Yes; he greatly deteriorates.

But, on the other hand, if he has no money, and cannot provide himself with tools or instruments, he will not work equally well himself, nor will he teach his sons or apprentices to work equally well.

Certainly not.

Then, under the influence either of poverty or of wealth, workmen and their work are equally liable to degenerate?

This is evident.

Here, then, is a discovery of new evils, I said, against which the guardians will have to watch, or they will creep into the city unobserved.

What evils?

Wealth, I said, and poverty; the one is the parent of luxury and indolence, and the other of meanness and viciousness, and both of discontent.

Plato, *Republic*, IV, 421B

- 17 The citizen must indeed be happy and good, and the legislator will seek to make him so; but very rich and very good at the same time he cannot be, not, at least, in the sense in which the many speak of riches. For they mean by "the rich" the few

who have the most valuable possessions, although the owner of them may quite well be a rogue. And if this is true, I can never assent to the doctrine that the rich man will be happy—he must be good as well as rich. And good in a high degree, and rich in a high degree at the same time, he cannot be.

Plato, *Laws*, V, 742B

- 18 The magnificent man is like an artist; for he can see what is fitting and spend large sums tastefully. . . . Now the expenses of the magnificent man are large and fitting. Such, therefore, are also his results; for thus there will be a great expenditure and one that is fitting to its result. Therefore the result should be worthy of the expense, and the expense should be worthy of the result, or should even exceed it. And the magnificent man will spend such sums for honour's sake; for this is common to the virtues. And further he will do so gladly and lavishly; for nice calculation is a niggardly thing. And he will consider how the result can be made most beautiful and most becoming rather than for how much it can be produced and how it can be produced most cheaply. It is necessary, then, that the magnificent man be also liberal. For the liberal man also will spend what he ought and as he ought; and it is in these matters that the greatness implied in the name of the magnificent man—his bigness, as it were—is manifested, since liberality is concerned with these matters; and at an equal expense he will produce a more magnificent work of art. For a possession and a work of art have not the same excellence. The most valuable possession is that which is worth most, for example gold, but the most valuable work of art is that which is great and beautiful (for the contemplation of such a work inspires admiration, and so does magnificence); and a work has an excellence—viz. magnificence—which involves magnitude. Magnificence is an attribute of expenditures of the kind which we call honourable, for example those connected with the gods—votive offerings, buildings, and sacrifices—and similarly with any form of religious worship, and all those that are proper objects of public-spirited ambition, as when people think they ought to equip a chorus or a trireme, or entertain the city, in a brilliant way. But in all cases . . . we have regard to the agent as well and ask who he is and what means he has; for the expenditure should be worthy of his means, and suit not only the result but also the producer. Hence a poor man cannot be magnificent, since he has not the means with which to spend large sums fittingly; and he who tries is a fool, since he spends beyond what can be expected of him and what is proper, but it is *right* expenditure that is virtuous.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1122^a34

- 19 Such . . . is the magnificent man; the man who

goes to excess and is vulgar exceeds . . . by spending beyond what is right. For on small objects of expenditure he spends much and displays a tasteless showiness; e.g. he gives a club dinner on the scale of a wedding banquet, and when he provides the chorus for a comedy he brings them on to stage in purple, as they do at Megara. And all such things he will do not for honour's sake but to show off his wealth, and because he thinks he is admired for these things, and where he ought to spend much he spends little and where little, much. The niggardly man on the other hand will fall short in everything, and after spending the greatest sums will spoil the beauty of the result for a trifle, and whatever he is doing he will hesitate and consider how he may spend least, and lament even that, and think he is doing everything on a bigger scale than he ought.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1123^a18

- 20 Happiness . . . must be some form of contemplation. But, being a man, one will also need external prosperity; for our nature is not self-sufficient for the purpose of contemplation, but our body also must be healthy and must have food and other attention. Still, we must not think that the man who is to be happy will need many things or great things . . . for self-sufficiency and action do not involve excess, and we can do noble acts without ruling earth and sea.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1178^b32

- 21 Some persons are led to believe that . . . the whole idea of their lives is that they ought either to increase their money without limit, or at any rate not to lose it. The origin of this disposition in men is that they are intent upon living only, and not upon living well; and, as their desires are unlimited, they also desire that the means of gratifying them should be without limit.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1257^b38

- 22 It would be well also to collect the scattered stories of the ways in which individuals have succeeded in amassing a fortune; for all this is useful to persons who value the art of getting wealth. There is the anecdote of Thales the Milesian and his financial device, which involves a principle of universal application, but is attributed to him on account of his reputation for wisdom. He was reproached for his poverty, which was supposed to show that philosophy was of no use. According to the story, he knew by his skill in the stars while it was yet winter that there would be a great harvest of olives in the coming year; so, having a little money, he gave deposits for the use of all the olive-presses in Chios and Miletus, which he hired at a low price because no one bid against him. When the harvest-time came, and many were wanted all at once and of a sudden, he let them out at any rate which he pleased, and made a quantity of money.

Thus he showed the world that philosophers can easily be rich if they like, but that their ambition is of another sort. He is supposed to have given a striking proof of his wisdom, but, as I was saying, his device for getting wealth is of universal application, and is nothing but the creation of a monopoly. It is an art often practised by cities when they are in want of money; they make a monopoly of provisions.

There was a man of Sicily, who, having money deposited with him, bought up all the iron from the iron mines; afterwards, when the merchants from their various markets came to buy, he was the only seller, and without much increasing the price he gained 200 per cent. Which when Dionysius heard, he told him that he might take away his money, but that he must not remain at Syracuse, for he thought that the man had discovered a way of making money which was injurious to his own interests. He made the same discovery as Thales; they both contrived to create a monopoly for themselves. And statesmen as well ought to know these things; for a state is often as much in want of money and of such devices for obtaining it as a household, or even more so; hence some public men devote themselves entirely to finance.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1259^a3

- 23 The true friend of the people should see that they be not too poor, for extreme poverty lowers the character of the democracy; measures therefore should be taken which will give them lasting prosperity; and as this is equally the interest of all classes, the proceeds of the public revenues should be accumulated and distributed among its poor, if possible, in such quantities as may enable them to purchase a little farm, or, at any rate, make a beginning in trade or husbandry. And if this benevolence cannot be extended to all, money should be distributed in turn according to tribes or other divisions, and in the meantime the rich should pay the fee for the attendance of the poor at the necessary assemblies; and should in return be excused from useless public services.

Aristotle, *Politics*, 1320^a33

- 24 The constituents of wealth are: plenty of coined money and territory; the ownership of numerous, large, and beautiful estates; also the ownership of numerous and beautiful implements, live stock, and slaves. All these kinds of property are our own, are secure, gentlemanly, and useful. The useful kinds are those that are productive, the gentlemanly kinds are those that provide enjoyment. By 'productive' I mean those from which we get our income; by 'enjoyable', those from which we get nothing worth mentioning except the use of them. The criterion of 'security' is the ownership of property in such places and under such conditions that the use of it is in our power; and it is 'our own' if it is in our own power to

dispose of it or keep it. By 'disposing of it' I mean giving it away or selling it. Wealth as a whole consists in using things rather than in owning them; it is really the activity—that is, the use—of property that constitutes wealth.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1361^a12

- 25 What is long established seems akin to what exists by nature; and therefore we feel more indignation at those possessing a given good if they have as a matter of fact only just got it and the prosperity it brings with it. The newly rich give more offence than those whose wealth is of long standing and inherited. The same is true of those who have office or power, plenty of friends, a fine family, etc. We feel the same when these advantages of theirs secure them others. For here again, the newly rich give us more offence by obtaining office through their riches than do those whose wealth is of long standing; and so in all other cases. The reason is that what the latter have is felt to be really their own, but what the others have is not; what appears to have been always what it is is regarded as real, and so the possessions of the newly rich do not seem to be really their own.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1387^a16

- 26 Wealthy men are insolent and arrogant; their possession of wealth affects their understanding; they feel as if they had every good thing that exists; wealth becomes a sort of standard of value for everything else, and therefore they imagine there is nothing it cannot buy. . . . In a word, the type of character produced by wealth is that of a prosperous fool.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1390^b33

- 27 Beware of an inordinate desire for wealth. Nothing is so revealing of narrowness and littleness of soul than love for money. Conversely, there is nothing more honorable or noble than indifference to money, if one doesn't have any; or than genuine altruism and well-doing if one does have it.

Cicero, *De Officiis*, I, 20

- 28 Without doubt, the highest privilege of wealth is the opportunity it affords for doing good, without giving up one's fortune.

Cicero, *De Officiis*, II, 18

- 29 O happy, if he knew his happy state,
The swain, who, free from business and debate,
Receives his easy food from nature's hand,
And just returns of cultivated land!
No palace, with a lofty gate, he wants,
To admit the tides of early visitants,
With eager eyes devouring, as they pass,
The breathing figures of Corinthian brass.
No statues threaten, from high pedestals;
No Persian arras hides his homely walls,

- With antic vests, which, through their shady fold,
Betray the streaks of ill-dissembled gold:
He boasts no wool, whose native white is dyed
With purple poison of Assyrian pride;
No costly drugs of Araby defile,
With foreign scents, the sweetness of his oil:
But easy quiet, a secure retreat,
A harmless life that knows not how to cheat,
With home-bred plenty, the rich owner bless,
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.
Unvexed with quarrels, undisturbed with noise,
The country king his peaceful realm enjoys—
Cool grots, and living lakes, the flowery pride
Of meads, and streams that through the valley
glide,
And shady groves that easy sleep invite,
And after toilsome days, a soft repose at night.
Wild beasts of nature in his woods abound;
And youth, of labour patient, plough the ground,
Inured to hardship, and to homely fare.
Nor venerable age is wanting there,
In great examples to the youthful train;
Nor are the gods adored with rites profane.
- Virgil, *Georgics*, II
- 30 *Aeneas*. O sacred hunger of pernicious gold!
What bands of faith can impious lucre hold?
- Virgil, *Aeneid*, III
- 31 Neither sultry summer, nor winter, fire, ocean,
sword, can drive you from gain. You surmount
every obstacle, that no other man may be richer
than yourself.
- Horace, *Satires*, I, 1
- 32 Do you wonder that no one tenders you the affec-
tion which you do not merit, since you prefer your
money to everything else?
- Horace, *Satires*, I, 1
- 33 As riches grow, care follows, and a thirst
For more and more.
- Horace, *Odes*, III, 16
- 34 Poverty's inglorious load
Bids man unheard-of things endure and try;
While Virtue's solitary road
He deems too steep, and cowardly passes by.
- Horace, *Odes*, III, 24
- 35 It is not the man who has too little who is poor,
but the one who hankers after more. What differ-
ence does it make how much there is laid away in
a man's safe or in his barns, how many head of
stock he grazes or how much capital he puts out
at interest, if he is always after what is another's
and only counts what he has yet to get, never
what he has already. You ask what is the proper
limit to a person's wealth? First, having what is
essential, and second, having what is enough.
- Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 2
- 36 Imagine that you've piled up all that a veritable
host of rich men ever possessed, that fortune has
carried you far beyond the bounds of wealth so far
as any private individual is concerned, building
you a roof of gold and clothing you in royal pur-
ple, conducting you to such a height of opulence
and luxury that you hide the earth with marble
floors—putting you in a position not merely to
own, but to walk all over treasures—throw in
sculptures, paintings, all that has been produced
at tremendous pains by all the arts to satisfy ex-
travagance: all these things will only induce in
you a craving for even bigger things. Natural de-
sires are limited; those which spring from false
opinions have nowhere to stop, for falsity has no
point of termination.
- Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 16
- 37 For no one is worthy of a god unless he has paid
no heed to riches. I am not, mind you, against
your possessing them, but I want to ensure that
you possess them without tremors; and this you
will only achieve in one way, by convincing your-
self that you can live a happy life even without
them, and by always regarding them as being on
the point of vanishing.
- Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 18
- 38 No man can serve two masters: for either he will
hate the one, and love the other; or else he will
hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot
serve God and mam-mon.
- Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for
your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink;
nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not
the life more than meat, and the body than rai-
ment?
- Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not,
neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet
your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not
much better than they?
- Which of you by taking thought can add one
cubit unto his stature?
- And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider
the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not,
neither do they spin:
- And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in
all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
- Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the
field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into
the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye
of little faith?
- Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall
we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal
shall we be clothed?
- (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:)
for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have
need of all these things.
- But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his
righteousness; and all these things shall be added
unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matthew 6:24-34

- 39 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

Matthew 19:21-25

- 40 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Mark 10:25

- 41 And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Luke 21:1-4

- 42 The poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

John 12:8

- 43 There was now no more means of purchasing foreign goods and small wares [in Sparta]; merchants sent no shiploads into Laconian ports; no rhetoric-master, no itinerant fortune-teller, no harlot-monger, or gold or silversmith, engraver, or jeweller, set foot in a country which had no money; so that luxury, deprived little by little of that which fed and fomented it, wasted to nothing and died away of itself. For the rich had no advantage here over the poor, as their wealth and abundance had no road to come abroad by but were shut up at home doing nothing.

Plutarch, *Lycurgus*

- 44 There are many to be seen that make a good or a bad use of riches, but it is difficult, comparatively, to meet with one who supports poverty in a noble spirit; those only should be ashamed of it who incurred it against their wills.

Plutarch, *Aristides*

- 45 Poverty is dishonourable not in itself, but when it is a proof of laziness, intemperance, luxury, and carelessness; whereas in a person that is temperate, industrious, just, and valiant, and who uses all his virtues for the public good, it shows a great and lofty mind. For he has no time for great matters who concerns himself with petty ones; nor can he relieve many needs of others, who himself has many needs of his own. What most of all enables a man to serve the public is not wealth, but content and independence; which, requiring no superfluity at home, distracts not the mind from the common good.

Plutarch, *Aristides and Marcus Cato Compared*

- 46 If you're poor, you're a joke, on each and every occasion.

What a laugh, if your cloak is dirty or torn, if your toga

Seems a little bit soiled, if your shoe has a crack in the leather,

Or if more than one patch attests to more than one mending!

Poverty's greatest curse, much worse than the fact of it, is that

It makes men objects of mirth, ridiculed, humbled, embarrassed.

'Out of the front-row seats!' they cry when you're out of money,

Yield your place to the sons of some pimp, the spawn of some cathouse,

Some slick auctioneer's brat, or the louts some trainer has fathered

Or the well-groomed boys whose sire is a gladiator.

Such is the law of place, decreed by the nitwitted Otho:

All the best seats are reserved for the classes who have the most money.

Who can marry a girl if he has less money than she does?

What poor man is an heir, or can hope to be? Which of them ever

Rates a political job, even the meanest and lowest?

Long before now, all poor Roman descendants of Romans

Ought to have marched out of town in one determined migration.

Men do not easily rise whose poverty hinders their merit.

Juvenal, *Satire III*

- 47 Receive wealth or prosperity without arrogance; and be ready to let it go.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, VIII, 33

- 48 Let us suppose a case of two men; for each individual man, like one letter in a language, is as it were the element of a city or kingdom, however far-spreading in its occupation of the earth. Of

these two men let us suppose that one is poor, or rather of middling circumstances; the other very rich. But the rich man is anxious with fears, pinning with discontent, burning with covetousness, never secure, always uneasy, panting from the perpetual strife of his enemies, adding to his patrimony indeed by these miseries to an immense degree, and by these additions also heaping up most bitter cares. But that other man of moderate wealth is contented with a small and compact estate, most dear to his own family, enjoying the sweetest peace with his kindred neighbours and friends, in piety religious, benignant in mind, healthy in body, in life frugal, in manners chaste, in conscience secure. I know not whether anyone can be such a fool, that he dare hesitate which to prefer.

Augustine, *City of God*, IV, 3

49 It is not earthly riches which make us or our sons happy; for they must either be lost by us in our lifetime, or be possessed when we are dead, by whom we know not, or perhaps by whom we would not.

Augustine, *City of God*, V, 18

50 It is impossible for man's happiness to consist in wealth. For wealth is two-fold . . . natural and artificial. Natural wealth is that which serves man as a remedy for his natural wants, such as food, drink, clothing, conveyances, dwellings, and things of this kind, while artificial wealth is that which is not a direct help to nature, as money, but is invented by the art of man for the convenience of exchange and as a measure of things saleable.

Now it is evident that man's happiness cannot consist in natural wealth. For wealth of this kind is sought as a support of human nature; consequently it cannot be man's last end, but rather is ordered to man as to its end. Therefore in the order of nature, all such things are below man, and made for him. . . .

And as to artificial wealth, it is not sought save for the sake of natural wealth, since man would not seek it except that by its means he procures for himself the necessaries of life. Consequently much less does it have the character of the last end. Therefore it is impossible for happiness, which is the last end of man, to consist in wealth.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 2, 1

51 Covetousness, as denoting a special sin, is called the root of all sins, in likeness to the root of a tree, in furnishing sustenance to the whole tree. For we see that by riches man acquires the means of committing any sin whatever, and of sating his desire for any sin whatever, since money helps man to obtain all manner of temporal goods. . . . So that in this sense desire for riches is the root of all sins.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 84, 1

52 The privation of one's possessions, or poverty, is a means of perfection, since by doing away with riches we remove certain obstacles to charity; and these are chiefly three. The first is the cares which riches bring with them. . . . The second is the love of riches, which increases with the possession of wealth. . . . The third is vainglory or elation which results from riches.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 188, 7

53 So long as external things are sought or possessed only in a small quantity, and as much as is required for a mere livelihood, such care does not hinder one much, and consequently is not inconsistent with the perfection of Christian life. . . . Yet the possession of much wealth increases the weight of care, which is a great distraction to man's mind and hinders him from giving himself wholly to God's service.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, 188, 7

54 And when you me reproach for poverty,
The High God, in Whom we believe, say I,
In voluntary poverty lived His life.
And surely every man, or maid, or wife
May understand that Jesus, Heaven's King,
Would not have chosen vileness of living.
Glad poverty's an honest thing, that's plain,
Which Seneca and other clerks maintain.
Whoso will be content with poverty,
I hold him rich, though not a shirt has he.
And he that covets much is a poor wight,
For he would gain what's all beyond his might
But he that has not, nor desires to have,
Is rich, although you hold him but a knave.

True poverty, it sings right naturally;

Juvenal gaily says of poverty:

'The poor man, when he walks along the way,

Before the robbers he may sing and play.

Poverty's odious good, and, as I guess,

It is a stimulant to busyness;

A great improver, too, of sapience

In him that takes it all with due patience.

Poverty's this, though it seem misery—

Its quality may none dispute, say I.

Poverty often; when a man is low,

Makes him his God and even himself to know.

And poverty's an eye-glass, seems to me,

Through which a man his loyal friends may see.

Since you've received no injury from me,

Then why reproach me for my poverty.'

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*:

Wife of Bath's Tale

55 The matter, form, effect, and goal of riches are worthless. That's why our Lord God generally gives riches to crude asses to whom he doesn't give anything else.

Luther, *Table Talk*, 5559

56 *Pantagruel*. Those of a mean spirit and shallow ca-

- capacity have not the skill to spend much in a short time.
Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, III, 2
- 57 *The Bastard*. Why rail I on this Commodity?
But for because he hath not woo'd me yet:
Not that I have the power to clutch my hand,
When his fair angels would salute my palm;
But for my hand, as unattempted yet,
Like a poor beggar, raileth on the rich.
Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail
And say there is no sin but to be rich;
And being rich, my virtue then shall be
To say there is no vice but beggary.
Since kings break faith upon Commodity,
Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee.
Shakespeare, *King John*, II, i, 587
- 58 *Hamlet*. Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning.
Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, ii, 65
- 59 *Anne Page*. O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd
faults
Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a-year!
Shakespeare, *Merry Wives
of Windsor*, III, iv, 32
- 60 *Iago*. Poor and content is rich and rich enough,
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
Shakespeare, *Othello*, III, iii, 172
- 61 *Goneril*. Hear me, my lord.
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?
Regan. What need one?
Lear. O, reason not the need. Our basest beg-
gars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous.
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life's as cheap as beast's. Thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous
wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.
Shakespeare, *Lear*, II, iv, 263
- 62 *Kent*. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease.
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.
[*To the Fool*] In, boy; go first. You houseless pov-
erty—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.
Fool goes in.
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
- Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend
you
From reasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
Shakespeare, *Lear*, III, iv, 22
- 63 *Timon*. [To the gold] O thou sweet king-killer, and
dear divorce
'Twi't natural son and sire! thou bright defiler
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!
Thou ever young, fresh, loved, and delicate
wooer,
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
That lies in Dian's lap! thou visible god,
That solder'st close impossibilities,
And makest them kiss! that speak'st with every
tongue,
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!
Think, thy slave man rebels, and by thy virtue
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts
May have the world in empire!
Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, IV, iii, 382
- 64 Riches are for spending, and spending for honour
and good actions.
Bacon, *Of Expense*
- 65 I cannot call Riches better than the baggage of
virtue. The Roman word is better, *impedimenta*.
For as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to
virtue. It cannot be spared nor left behind, but it
hindereth the march; yea and the care of it some-
times loseth or disturbeth the victory.
Bacon, *Of Riches*
- 66 The ways to enrich are many, and most of them
foul.
Bacon, *Of Riches*
- 67 He that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly
grow to great riches: and he that puts all upon
adventures, doth oftentimes break and come to
poverty: it is good therefore to guard adventures
with certainties that may uphold losses.
Bacon, *Of Riches*
- 68 Believe not much them that seem to despise rich-
es; for they despise them that despair of them;
and none worse, when they come to them.
Bacon, *Of Riches*
- 69 Be not penny-wise; riches have wings, and some-
times they fly away of themselves, sometimes they
must be set flying to bring in more.
Bacon, *Of Riches*
- 70 *Mammon*, the least erected Spirit that fell
From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and
thoughts

Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trod'n Gold,
Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands
Rifl'd the bowels of their mother Earth
For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound
And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best
Deserve the pretious bane.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 679

- 71 *Satan*. Great acts require great means of enterprise,

Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A Carpenter thy Father known, thy self
Bred up in poverty and streights at home;
Lost in a Desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
To greatness? when Authority deriv'st,
What Followers, what Retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy Multitude,
Longer then thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings Honour, Friends, Conquest, and
Realms;

What rais'd *Antipater* the *Edomite*,
And his Son *Herod* plac'd on *Juda's* Throne;
(Thy throne) but gold that got him puissant
friends?

Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get Riches first, get Wealth, and Treasure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me,
Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While Virtue, Valour, Wisdom sit in want.

To whom thus Jesus patiently reply'd;
Yet Wealth without these three is impotent,
To gain dominion or to keep it gain'd.

Milton, *Paradise Regained*, II, 412

- 72 To assist every one who is needy far surpasses the strength or profit of a private person, for the wealth of a private person is altogether insufficient to supply such wants. Besides, the power of any one man is too limited for him to be able to unite every one with himself in friendship. The care, therefore, of the poor is incumbent on the whole of society and concerns only the general profit.

Spinoza, *Ethics*, IV, Appendix XVII

- 73 My master was yet wholly at a loss to understand what motives could incite this race of lawyers to perplex, disquiet, and weary themselves by engaging in a confederacy of injustice, merely for the sake of injuring their fellow-animals; neither could he comprehend what I meant in saying they did it for *hire*. Whereupon I was at much pains to

describe to him the use of *money*, the materials it was made of, and the value of the metals: that, when a Yahoo had got a great store of this precious substance, he was able to purchase whatever he had a mind to; the finest cloathing, the noblest houses, great tracts of land, the most costly meats and drinks; and have his choice of the most beautiful females. Therefore since *money* alone, was able to perform all these feats, our Yahoos thought, they could never have enough of it to spend or to save, as they found themselves inclined from their natural bent either to profusion or avarice. That, the rich man enjoyed the fruit of the poor man's labour, and the latter were a thousand to one in proportion to the former. That, the bulk of our people was forced to live miserably, by labouring every day for small wages, to make a few live plentifully.

Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, IV, 6

- 74 In all well-instituted Commonwealths, Care has been taken to limit Men's Possessions; which is done for many Reasons, and among the rest, for one which perhaps is not often considered, That when Bounds are set to Men's Desires, after they have acquired as much as the Laws will permit them, their private Interest is at an End, and they have nothing to do but to take care of the Publick.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

- 75 I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included.

Swift, *A Modest Proposal*

- 76 Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts on what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it, and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

Swift, *A Modest Proposal*

- 77 The wisest man is the likeliest to possess all worldly blessings in an eminent degree; for as that moderation which wisdom prescribes is the surest way to useful wealth, so can it alone qualify us to taste many pleasures. The wise man gratifies every ap-

petite and every passion, while the fool sacrifices all the rest to pall and satiate one.

Fielding, *Tom Jones*, VI, 3

- 78 Matters are so constituted that "nothing out of nothing" is not a truer maxim in physics than in politics; and every man who is greatly destitute of money is on that account entirely excluded from all means of acquiring it.

Fielding, *Tom Jones*, VII, 2

- 79 What is the poor pride arising from a magnificent house, a numerous equipage, a splendid table, and from all the other advantages or appearances of fortune, compared to the warm, solid content, the swelling satisfaction, the thrilling transports, and the exulting triumphs, which a good mind enjoys, in the contemplation of a generous, virtuous, noble, benevolent action?

Fielding, *Tom Jones*, XII, 10

- 80 Where young ladies bring great fortunes themselves, they have some right to insist on spending what is their own; and on that account I have heard the gentlemen say, a man has sometimes a better bargain with a poor wife, than with a rich one.

Fielding, *Tom Jones*, XIII, 6

- 81 There are two sorts of poor; those who are rendered such by the severity of government: these are, indeed, incapable of performing almost any great action, because their indigence is a consequence of their slavery. Others are poor, only because they either despise or know not the conveniences of life; and these are capable of accomplishing great things, because their poverty constitutes a part of their liberty.

Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XX, 3

- 82 When the nation is poor, private poverty springs from the general calamity, and is, if I may so express myself, the general calamity itself. All the hospitals in the world cannot cure this private poverty; on the contrary, the spirit of indolence, which it constantly inspires, increases the general, and consequently the private, misery.

Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XXIII, 29

- 83 Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to These the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their Tomb no Trophies raise,
Where thro' the long-drawn isle and fretted vault

The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry sooth the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless
breast

The little Tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard*

- 84 If by luxury one understands everything that is beyond the necessary, luxury is a natural consequence of the progress of the human species; and to reason consequently every enemy of luxury should believe with Rousseau that the state of happiness and virtue for man is that, not of the savage, but of the orang-outang. One feels that it would be absurd to regard as an evil the comforts which all men would enjoy: also, does one not generally give the name of luxury to the superfluities which only a small number of individuals can enjoy. In this sense, luxury is a necessary consequence of property, without which no society can subsist, and of a great inequality between fortunes which is the consequence, not of the right of property, but of bad laws. Moralists should address

their sermons to the legislators, and not to individuals, because it is in the order of possible things that a virtuous and enlightened man may have the power to make reasonable laws, and it is not in human nature for all the rich men of a country to renounce through virtue procuring for themselves for money the enjoyments of pleasure or vanity.

Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*: Luxury

- 85 Before the invention of signs to represent riches, wealth could hardly consist in anything but lands and cattle, the only real possessions men can have. But, when inheritances so increased in number and extent as to occupy the whole of the land, and to border on one another, one man could aggrandise himself only at the expense of another; at the same time the supernumeraries, who had been too weak or too indolent to make such acquisitions, and had grown poor without sustaining any loss, because, while they saw everything change around them, they remained still the same, were obliged to receive their subsistence, or steal it, from the rich; and this soon bred, according to their different characters, dominion and slavery, or violence and rapine. The wealthy, on their part, had no sooner begun to taste the pleasure of command, than they disdained all others, and, using their old slaves to acquire new, thought of nothing but subduing and enslaving their neighbours; like ravenous wolves, which, having once tasted human flesh, despise every other food and thenceforth seek only men to devour.
- Thus, as the most powerful or the most miserable considered their might or misery as a kind of right to the possessions of others, equivalent, in their opinion, to that of property, the destruction of equality was attended by the most terrible disorders. Usurpations by the rich, robbery by the poor, and the unbridled passions of both, suppressed the cries of natural compassion and the still feeble voice of justice, and filled men with avarice, ambition and vice.
- Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality*, II
- 86 Destitute of valid reasons to justify and sufficient strength to defend himself, able to crush individuals with ease, but easily crushed himself by a troop of bandits, one against all, and incapable, on account of mutual jealousy, of joining with his equals against numerous enemies united by the common hope of plunder, the rich man, thus urged by necessity, conceived at length the profoundest plan that ever entered the mind of man: this was to employ in his favour the forces of those who attacked him, to make allies of his adversaries, to inspire them with different maxims, and to give them other institutions as favourable to himself as the law of nature was unfavourable.
- Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality*, II
- 87 Luxury, which cannot be prevented among men who are tenacious of their own convenience and of the respect paid them by others, soon completes the evil society had begun, and, under the pretence of giving bread to the poor, whom it should never have made such, impoverishes all the rest, and sooner or later depopulates the State. Luxury is a remedy much worse than the disease it sets up to cure; or rather it is in itself the greatest of all evils, for every State, great or small: for, in order to maintain all the servants and vagabonds it creates, it brings oppression and ruin on the citizen and the labourer; it is like those scorching winds, which, covering the trees and plants with devouring insects, deprive useful animals of their subsistence and spread famine and death wherever they blow.
- Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality*, Appendix
- 88 The losses of the poor are much harder to repair than those of the rich, and . . . the difficulty of acquisition is always greater in proportion as there is more need for it. "Nothing comes out of nothing," is as true of life as in physics: money is the seed of money, and the first guinea is sometimes more difficult to acquire than the second million.
- Rousseau, *Political Economy*
- 89 It is one of the misfortunes of the rich to be cheated on all sides; what wonder they think ill of mankind! It is riches that corrupt men, and the rich are rightly the first to feel the defects of the only tool they know. Everything is ill-done for them, except what they do themselves, and they do next to nothing.
- Rousseau, *Emile*, I
- 90 In the prospect of poverty there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach; a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honor, and the labors without reward.
- Johnson, *Rambler No. 53*
- 91 Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the ca-

capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm error, and harden stupidity.

Johnson, *Rambler No. 58*

- 92 Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest: they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

Johnson, *Rasselas*, XXV

- 93 Has Heav'n reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert yet unclaim'd by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is ev'rywhere confess'd,
Slow rises worth, by poverty depress'd:
But here more slow, where all are slaves to gold,
Where looks are merchandise, and smiles are sold;
Where won by bribes, by flatteries implor'd,
The groom retails the favours of his lord.

Johnson, *London*, 169

- 94 Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided.

Johnson, *Letter to James Boswell (June 3, 1782)*

- 95 Your economy, I suppose, begins now to be settled; your expences are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor: whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness; it certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

Johnson, *Letter to James Boswell (Dec. 7, 1782)*

- 96 Johnson. In civilized society, external advantages make us more respected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (July 20, 1763)*

- 97 Johnson. When I was running about this town a very poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the same time, very sorry to be poor. . . . All the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, shew it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune.

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (July 20, 1763)*

- 98 Johnson. (to Edwards,) "From your having prac-

tised the law long, Sir, I presume you must be rich." Edwards. "No, Sir; I got a good deal of money; but I had a number of poor relations to whom I gave a great part of it." Johnson. "Sir, you have been rich in the most valuable sense of the word." Edwards. "But I shall not die rich." Johnson. "Nay, sure, Sir, it is better to *live* rich than to *die* rich."

Boswell, *Life of Johnson (Apr. 17, 1778)*

- 99 Though the wealth of a country should be very great, yet if it has been long stationary, we must not expect to find the wages of labour very high in it. The funds destined for the payment of wages, the revenue and stock of its inhabitants, may be of the greatest extent; but if they have continued for several centuries of the same, or very nearly of the same extent, the number of labourers employed every year could easily supply, and even more than supply, the number wanted the following year. There could seldom be any scarcity of hands, nor could the masters be obliged to bid against one another in order to get them. The hands, on the contrary, would, in this case, naturally multiply beyond their employment. There would be a constant scarcity of employment, and the labourers would be obliged to bid against one another in order to get it. If in such a country the wages of labour had ever been more than sufficient to maintain the labourer, and to enable him to bring up a family, the competition of the labourers and the interest of the masters would soon reduce them to this lowest rate which is consistent with common humanity.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 8

- 100 The liberal reward of labour . . . as it is the necessary effect, so it is the natural symptom of increasing national wealth. The scanty maintenance of the labouring poor, on the other hand, is the natural symptom that things are at a stand, and their starving condition that they are going fast backwards.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 8

- 101 Is . . . improvement in the circumstances of the lower ranks of the people to be regarded as an advantage or as an inconveniency to the society? The answer seems at first sight abundantly plain. Servants, labourers, and workmen of different kinds, make up the far greater part of every great political society. But what improves the circumstances of the greater part can never be regarded as an inconveniency to the whole. No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable. It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe, and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 8

102 The whole annual produce of the land and labour of every country, or what comes to the same thing, the whole price of that annual produce, naturally divides itself . . . into three parts; the rent of land, the wages of labour, and the profits of stock; and constitutes a revenue to three different orders of people; to those who live by rent, to those who live by wages, and to those who live by profit. These are the three great, original, and constituent orders of every civilised society, from whose revenue that of every other order is ultimately derived.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, I, 11

103 In all countries where there is tolerable security, every man of common understanding will endeavour to employ whatever stock he can command in procuring either present enjoyment or future profit. If it is employed in procuring present enjoyment, it is a stock reserved for immediate consumption. If it is employed in procuring future profit, it must procure this profit either by staying with him, or by going from him. In the one case it is fixed, in the other it is a circulating capital. A man must be perfectly crazy who, where there is tolerable security, does not employ all the stock which he commands, whether it be his own or borrowed of other people, in some one or other of those three ways.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II, 1

104 Capitals are increased by parsimony, and diminished by prodigality and misconduct.

Whatever a person saves from his revenue he adds to his capital, and either employs it himself in maintaining an additional number of productive hands, or enables some other person to do so, by lending it to him for an interest, that is, for a share of the profits. As the capital of an individual can be increased only by what he saves from his annual revenue or his annual gains, so the capital of a society, which is the same with that of all the individuals who compose it, can be increased only in the same manner.

Parsimony, and not industry, is the immediate cause of the increase of capital. Industry, indeed, provides the subject which parsimony accumulates. But whatever industry might acquire, if parsimony did not save and store up, the capital would never be the greater.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II, 3

105 The revenue of an individual may be spent either in things which are consumed immediately, and in which one day's expense can neither alleviate nor support that of another, or it may be spent in things more durable, which can therefore be accumulated, and in which every day's expense may, as he chooses, either alleviate or support and heighten the effect of that of the following day. A man of fortune, for example, may either spend his

revenue in a profuse and sumptuous table, and in maintaining a great number of menial servants, and a multitude of dogs and horses; or contenting himself with a frugal table and few attendants, he may lay out the greater part of it in adorning his house or his country villa, in useful or ornamental buildings, in useful or ornamental furniture, in collecting books, statues, pictures; or in things more frivolous, jewels, baubles, ingenious trinkets of different kinds; or, what is most trifling of all, in amassing a great wardrobe of fine clothes, like the favourite and minister of a great prince who died a few years ago. Were two men of equal fortune to spend their revenue, the one chiefly in the one way, the other in the other, the magnificence of the person whose expense had been chiefly in durable commodities, would be continually increasing, every day's expense contributing something to support and heighten the effect of that of the following day: that of the other, on the contrary, would be no greater at the end of the period than at the beginning. The former, too, would, at the end of the period, be the richer man of the two. He would have a stock of goods of some kind or other, which, though it might not be worth all that it cost, would always be worth something. No trace or vestige of the expense of the latter would remain, and the effects of ten or twenty years profusion would be as completely annihilated as if they had never existed.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II, 3

106 The expense . . . that is laid out in durable commodities gives maintenance, commonly, to a greater number of people than that which is employed in the most profuse hospitality. Of two or three hundredweight of provisions, which may sometimes be served up at a great festival, one half, perhaps, is thrown to the dunghill, and there is always a great deal wasted and abused. But if the expense of this entertainment had been employed in setting to work masons, carpenters, upholsterers, mechanics, etc., a quantity of provisions, of equal value, would have been distributed among a still greater number of people who would have bought them in pennyworths and pound weights, and not have lost or thrown away a single ounce of them. In the one way, besides, this expense maintains productive, in the other unproductive hands. In the one way, therefore, it increases, in the other, it does not increase, the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II, 3

107 To attempt to increase the wealth of any country, either by introducing or by detaining in it an unnecessary quantity of gold and silver, is as absurd as it would be to attempt to increase the good cheer of private families by obliging them to keep

an unnecessary number of kitchen utensils. As the expense of purchasing those unnecessary utensils would diminish instead of increasing either the quantity of goodness of the family provisions, so the expense of purchasing an unnecessary quantity of gold and silver must, in every country, as necessarily diminish the wealth which feeds, clothes, and lodges, which maintains and employs the people. Gold and silver, whether in the shape of coin or of plate, are utensils, it must be remembered, as much as the furniture of the kitchen. Increase the use for them, increase the consumable commodities which are to be circulated, managed, and prepared by means of them, and you will infallibly increase the quantity; but if you attempt, by extraordinary means, to increase the quantity, you will as infallibly diminish the use and even the quantity too, which in those metals can never be greater than what the use requires. Were they ever to be accumulated beyond this quantity, their transportation is so easy, and the loss which attends their lying idle and unemployed so great, that no law could prevent their being immediately sent out of the country.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, IV, 1

- 108 The produce of industry is what it adds to the subject or materials upon which it is employed. In proportion as the value of this produce is great or small, so will likewise be the profits of the employer. But it is only for the sake of profit that any man employs a capital in the support of industry; and he will always, therefore, endeavour to employ it in the support of that industry of which the produce is likely to be of the greatest value, or to exchange for the greatest quantity either of money or of other goods.

But the annual revenue of every society is always precisely equal to the exchangeable value of the whole annual produce of its industry, or rather is precisely the same thing with that exchangeable value. As every individual, therefore, endeavours as much as he can both to employ his capital in the support of domestic industry, and so to direct that industry that its produce may be of the greatest value; every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security; and by directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society than it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much

good done by those who affected to trade for the public good.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, IV, 2

- 109 The natural effort of every individual to better his own condition, when suffered to exert itself with freedom and security, is so powerful a principle that it is alone, and without any assistance, not only capable of carrying on the society to wealth and prosperity, but of surmounting a hundred impertinent obstructions with which the folly of human laws too often incumbers its operations; though the effect of these obstructions is always more or less either to encroach upon its freedom, or to diminish its security.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, IV, 5

- 110 Every system which endeavours, either by extraordinary encouragements to draw towards a particular species of industry a greater share of the capital of the society that what would naturally go to it, or, by extraordinary restraints, force from a particular species of industry some share of the capital which would otherwise be employed in it, is in reality subversive of the great purpose which it means to promote. It retards, instead of accelerating, the progress of the society towards real wealth and greatness; and diminishes, instead of increasing, the real value of the annual produce of its land and labour.

All systems either of preference or of restraint, therefore, being thus completely taken away, the obvious and simple system of natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord. Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man, or order of men. The sovereign is completely discharged from a duty, in the attempting to perform which he must always be exposed to innumerable delusions, and for the proper performance of which no human wisdom or knowledge could ever be sufficient; the duty of superintending the industry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of the society. According to the system of natural liberty, the sovereign has only three duties to attend to; three duties of great importance, indeed, but plain and intelligible to common understandings: first, the duty of protecting the society from violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals, to erect and maintain; because the profit could never repay the expense to any indi-

vidual or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, IV, 9

- 111 The rich, in particular, are necessarily interested to support that order of things which can alone secure them in the possession of their own advantages. Men of inferior wealth combine to defend those of superior wealth in the possession of their property, in order that men of superior wealth may combine to defend them in the possession of theirs.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, V, 1

- 112 Thirst, hunger, and nakedness are positive evils: but wealth is relative; and a prince, who would be rich in a private station, may be exposed by the increase of his wants to all the anxiety and bitterness of poverty.

Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, LXI

- 113 I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes.

Gibbon, *Autobiography*

- 114 Among the *voluntary* modes of raising . . . contributions, *lotteries* ought not to be allowed, because they increase the number of those who are poor, and involve danger to the public property. It may be asked whether the relief of the poor ought to be administered out of *current contributions*, so that every age should maintain its own poor; or whether this were better done by means of *permanent funds* and charitable institutions, such as widows' homes, hospitals, etc.? And if the former method is the better, it may also be considered whether the means necessary are to be raised by a legal assessment rather than by begging, which is generally nigh akin to robbing. The former method must in reality be regarded as the only one that is conformable to the right of the state, which cannot withdraw its connection from any one who has to live. For a legal current provision does not make the profession of poverty a means of gain for the indolent, as is to be feared is the case with pious foundations when they grow with the number of the poor; nor can it be charged with being an unjust or unrighteous burden imposed by the government on the people.

Kant, *Science of Right*, 49

- 115 It may at first appear strange, but I believe it is true, that I cannot by means of money raise a poor man and enable him to live much better than he did before, without proportionably depressing others in the same class. If I retrench the quantity of food consumed in my house, and give him what I have cut off, I then benefit him, with-

out depressing any but myself and family, who, perhaps, may be well able to bear it. If I turn up a piece of uncultivated land and give him the produce, I then benefit both him and all the members of the society, because what he before consumed is thrown into the common stock, and probably some of the new produce with it. But if I only give him money, supposing the produce of the country to remain the same, I give him a title to a larger share of that produce than formerly, which share he cannot receive without diminishing the shares of others. It is evident that this effect, in individual instances, must be so small as to be totally imperceptible; but still it must exist, as many other effects do which, like some of the insects that people the air, elude our grosser perceptions.

Malthus, *Population*, V

- 116 Hard as it may appear in individual instances, dependent poverty ought to be held disgraceful. Such a stimulus seems to be absolutely necessary to promote the happiness of the great mass of mankind, and every general attempt to weaken this stimulus, however benevolent its apparent intention, will always defeat its own purpose. If men are induced to marry from a prospect of parish provision, with little or no chance of maintaining their families in independence, they are not only unjustly tempted to bring unhappiness and dependence upon themselves and children, but they are tempted, without knowing it, to injure all in the same class with themselves. A laborer who marries without being able to support a family may in some respects be considered as an enemy to all his fellow-laborers.

Malthus, *Population*, V

- 117 The poor still have the needs common to civil society, and yet since society has withdrawn from them the natural means of acquisition and broken the bond of the family—in the wider sense of the clan—their poverty leaves them more or less deprived of all the advantages of society, of the opportunity of acquiring skill or education of any kind, as well as of the administration of justice, the public health services, and often even of the consolations of religion, and so forth. The public authority takes the place of the family where the poor are concerned in respect not only of their immediate want but also of laziness of disposition, malignity, and the other vices which arise out of their plight and their sense of wrong.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 241

- 118 When the standard of living of a large mass of people falls below a certain subsistence level . . . and when there is a consequent loss of the sense of right and wrong, of honesty and the self-respect which makes a man insist on maintaining himself by his own work and effort, the result is the creation of a rabble of paupers. At the same time this

brings with it, at the other end of the social scale, conditions which greatly facilitate the concentration of disproportionate wealth in a few hands.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 244

- 119 Poverty in itself does not make men into a rabble; a rabble is created only when there is joined to poverty a disposition of mind, an inner indignation against the rich, against society, against the government, etc. A further consequence of this attitude is that through their dependence on chance men become frivolous and idle, like the Neapolitan *lazzaroni* for example. In this way there is born in the rabble the evil of lacking self-respect enough to secure subsistence by its own labour and yet at the same time of claiming to receive subsistence as its right. Against nature man can claim no right, but once society is established, poverty immediately takes the form of a wrong done to one class by another. The important question of how poverty is to be abolished is one of the most disturbing problems which agitate modern society.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*,
Additions, Par. 244

- 120 It is difficult, if not impossible, to define the limits which reason should impose on the desire for wealth; for there is no absolute or definite amount of wealth which will satisfy a man. The amount is always relative, that is to say, just so much as will maintain the proportion between what he wants and what he gets; for to measure a man's happiness only by what he gets, and not also by what he expects to get, is as futile as to try to express a fraction which shall have a numerator but no denominator. A man never feels the loss of things which it never occurs to him to ask for; he is just as happy without them; whilst another, who may have a hundred times as much, feels miserable because he has not got the one thing he wants. In fact, here too, every man has an horizon of his own, and he will expect as much as he thinks it is possible for him to get.

Schopenhauer, *Property*

- 121 The man who has been born into a position of wealth comes to look upon it as something without which he could no more live than he could live without air; he guards it as he does his very life; and so he is generally a lover of order, prudent and economical. But the man who has been born into a poor position looks upon it as the natural one, and if by any chance he comes in for a fortune, he regards it as a superfluity, something to be enjoyed or wasted, because, if it comes to an end, he can get on just as well as before, with one anxiety the less.

Schopenhauer, *Property*

- 122 As regards our own welfare, there are only two

ways in which we can use wealth. We can either spend it in ostentatious pomp, and feed on the cheap respect which our imaginary glory will bring us from the infatuated crowd; or, by avoiding all expenditure that will do us no good, we can let our wealth grow, so that we may have a bulwark against misfortune and want that shall be stronger and better every day.

Schopenhauer, *Wisdom of Life: Aphorisms*

- 123 In democratic countries, however opulent a man is supposed to be, he is almost always discontented with his fortune because he finds that he is less rich than his father was, and he fears that his sons will be less rich than himself. Most rich men in democracies are therefore constantly haunted by the desire of obtaining wealth, and they naturally turn their attention to trade and manufactures, which appear to offer the readiest and most efficient means of success. In this respect they share the instincts of the poor without feeling the same necessities; say, rather, they feel the most imperious of all necessities, that of not sinking in the world.

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*,
Vol. II, II, 19

- 124 Men living in democratic times have many passions, but most of their passions either end in the love of riches or proceed from it. The cause of this is not that their souls are narrower, but that the importance of money is really greater at such times. When all the members of a community are independent of or indifferent to each other, the co-operation of each of them can be obtained only by paying for it: this infinitely multiplies the purposes to which wealth may be applied and increases its value. When the reverence that belonged to what is old has vanished, birth, condition, and profession no longer distinguish men, or scarcely distinguish them; hardly anything but money remains to create strongly marked differences between them and to raise some of them above the common level. The distinction originating in wealth is increased by the disappearance or diminution of all other distinctions. Among aristocratic nations money reaches only to a few points on the vast circle of man's desires; in democracies it seems to lead to all.

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*,
Vol. II, III, 17

- 125 Brotherhood is Brotherhood or Death, but money always will buy money's worth; in the wreck of human dubitations, this remains indubitable, that Pleasure is pleasant. Aristocracy of Feudal Parchment has passed away with a mighty rushing; and now, by a natural course, we arrive at Aristocracy of the Moneybag. . . . Apparently a still baser sort of Aristocracy? An infinitely baser; the basest yet known.

Carlyle, *French Revolution*, IX, 7

- 126 To be rich is to have a ticket of admission to the master-works and chief men of each race.
Emerson, *Wealth*
- 127 The world is his who has money to go over it.
Emerson, *Wealth*
- 128 The pulpit and the press have many common-places denouncing the thirst for wealth; but if men should take these moralists at their word and leave off aiming to be rich, the moralists would rush to rekindle at all hazards this love of power in the people, lest civilization should be undone.
Emerson, *Wealth*
- 129 Debt, grinding debt, whose iron face the widow, the orphan, and the sons of genius fear and hate—debt, which consumes so much time, which so cripples and disheartens a great spirit with cares that seem so base, is a preceptor whose lessons cannot be foregone, and is needed most by those who suffer from it most.
Emerson, *Nature*, V
- 130 Ah! if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches!
Emerson, *Nature*
- 131 "My other piece of advice, Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, "you know. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—and, in short, you are forever floored. As I am!"
Dickens, *David Copperfield*, XII
- 132 Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. With respect to luxuries and comforts, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meagre life than the poor. The ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian, and Greek, were a class than which none has been poorer in outward riches, none so rich in inward. We know not much about them. It is remarkable that *we* know so much of them as we do. The same is true of the more modern reformers and benefactors of their race. None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage ground of what *we* should call voluntary poverty. Of a life of luxury the fruit is luxury, whether in agriculture, or commerce, or literature, or art. There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers. Yet it is admirable to profess because it was once admirable to live.
Thoreau, *Walden*: Economy
- 133 However mean your life is, meet it and live it; do not shun it and call it hard names. It is not so bad as you are. It looks poorest when you are richest. The faultfinder will find faults even in paradise. Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poor-house. The setting sun is reflected from the windows of the almshouse as brightly as from the rich man's abode; the snow melts before its door as early in the spring. I do not see but a quiet mind may live as contentedly there, and have as cheering thoughts, as in a palace. The town's poor seem to me often to live the most independent lives of any. Maybe they are simply great enough to receive without misgiving. Most think that they are above being supported by the town; but it oftener happens that they are not above supporting themselves by dishonest means, which should be more disreputable. Cultivate poverty like a garden herb, like sage. Do not trouble yourself much to get new things, whether clothes or friends. Turn the old; return to them. Things do not change; we change. Sell your clothes and keep your thoughts. God will see that you do not want society. If I were confined to a corner of a garret all my days, like a spider, the world would be just as large to me while I had my thoughts about me. The philosopher said: 'From an army of three divisions one can take away its general, and put it in disorder; from the man the most abject and vulgar one cannot take away his thought.' Do not seek so anxiously to be developed, to subject yourself to many influences to be played on; it is all dissipation. Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly lights. The shadows of poverty and meanness gather around us, 'and lo! creation widens to our view.' We are often reminded that if there were bestowed on us the wealth of Cræsus, our aims must still be the same, and our means essentially the same. Moreover, if you are restricted in your range by poverty, if you cannot buy books and newspapers, for instance, you are but confined to the most significant and vital experiences; you are compelled to deal with the material which yields the most sugar and the most starch. It is life near the bone where it is sweetest. You are defended from being a trifler. No man loses ever on a lower level by magnanimity on a higher. Superfluous wealth can buy superfluities only. Money is not required to buy one necessary of the soul.
Thoreau, *Walden*: Conclusion
- 134 All ought to refrain from marriage who cannot avoid abject poverty for their children; for poverty is not only a great evil, but tends to its own increase by leading to recklessness in marriage.
Darwin, *Descent of Man*, III, 21
- 135 That some should be rich, shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to

industry and enterprize.

Lincoln, *Reply to N.Y. Workingmen's . . . Association* (Mar. 21, 1864)

- 136 Use-values become a reality only by use or consumption; they also constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, I, 1
- 137 The product appropriated by the capitalist is a use-value, as yarn, for example, or boots. But, although boots are, in one sense, the basis of all social progress, and our capitalist is a decided "progressist," yet he does not manufacture boots for their own sake. Use-value is, by no means, the thing [which one values for its own sake] in the production of commodities. Use-values are only produced by capitalists, because, and in so far as, they are the material substratum, the depositories of exchange-value. Our capitalist has two objects in view: in the first place, he wants to produce a use-value that has a value in exchange, that is to say, an article destined to be sold, a commodity; and secondly, he desires to produce a commodity whose value shall be greater than the sum of the values of the commodities used in its production, that is, of the means of production and the labour power, that he purchased with his good money in the open market. His aim is to produce not only a use-value, but a commodity also; not only use-value, but value; not only value, but at the same time surplus value.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, III, 7
- 138 The folly is now patent of the economic wisdom that preaches to the labourers the accommodation of their number to the requirements of capital. The mechanism of capitalist production and accumulation constantly effects this adjustment. The first word of this adaptation is the creation of a relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army. Its last word is the misery of constantly extending strata of the active army of labour, and the dead weight of pauperism.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, VII, 25
- 139 Accumulation of wealth at one pole is . . . at the same time accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation, at the opposite pole, i.e., on the side of the class that produces its own product in the form of capital.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, VII, 25
- 140 The intimate connection between the pangs of hunger of the most industrious layers of the working class, and the extravagant consumption, coarse or refined, of the rich, for which capitalist accumulation is the basis, reveals itself only when the economic laws are known. It is otherwise with the "housing of the poor." Every unprejudiced observer sees that the greater the centralization of the means of production, the greater is the corresponding heaping together of the labourers within a given space; that therefore, the swifter capitalistic accumulation, the more miserable are the dwellings of the working people. "Improvements" of towns, accompanying the increase of wealth, by the demolition of badly built quarters, the erection of palaces for banks, warehouses, etc., the widening of streets for business traffic, for the carriages of luxury, and for the introduction of tramways, etc., drive away the poor into even worse and more crowded hiding-places.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, VII, 25
- 141 The Irish famine of 1846 killed more than a million people, but it killed poor devils only. To the wealth of the country it did not the slightest damage.
Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, VII, 25
- 142 In order to oppress a class certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern labourer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth.
Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, I
- 143 It is argued that whoever does the best he can, deserves equally well, and ought not in justice to be put in a position of inferiority for no fault of his own; that superior abilities have already advantages more than enough, in the admiration they excite, the personal influence they command, and the internal sources of satisfaction attending them, without adding to these a superior share of the world's goods; and that society is bound in justice rather to make compensation to the less favoured, for this unmerited inequality of advantages, than to aggravate it. On the contrary side it is contended, that society receives more from the more efficient labourer; that his services being more useful, society owes him a larger return for them; that a greater share of the joint result is actually his work, and not to allow his claim to it is a kind of robbery; that if he is only to receive as much as others, he can only be justly required to produce as much, and to give a smaller amount of time and exertion, proportioned to his superior efficiency.
Mill, *Utilitarianism*, V
- 144 It is essential to the idea of wealth to be suscepti-

ble of accumulation: things which cannot, after being produced, be kept for some time before being used, are never, I think, regarded as wealth, since however much of them may be produced and enjoyed, the person benefited by them is no richer, is nowise improved in circumstances.

Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*,
Bk. I, III, 3

- 145 Neither now nor in former ages have the nations possessing the best climate and soil, been either the richest or the most powerful; but (in so far as regards the mass of the people) generally among the poorest, though, in the midst of poverty, probably on the whole the most enjoying. Human life in those countries can be supported on so little, that the poor seldom suffer from anxiety, and in climates in which mere existence is a pleasure, the luxury which they prefer is that of repose.

Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*,
Bk. I, VII, 3

- 146 Even in a progressive state of capital, in old countries, a conscientious or prudential restraint on population is indispensable, to prevent the increase of numbers from outstripping the increase of capital, and the condition of the classes who are at the bottom of society from being deteriorated. Where there is not, in the people, or in some very large proportion of them, a resolute resistance to this deterioration—a determination to preserve an established standard of comfort—the condition of the poorest class sinks, even in a progressive state, to the lowest point which they will consent to endure.

Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*,
Bk. IV, VI, 1

- 147 Whereas it has long been known and declared that the poor have no right to the property of the rich, I wish it also to be known and declared that the rich have no right to the property of the poor.

Ruskin, *Unto This Last*, III, 54

- 148 There is no wealth but life. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others.

Ruskin, *Unto This Last*, IV, 77

- 149 Never did people believe anything more firmly, than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery,

but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines.

Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, I

- 150 *Father Zossima*. I don't deny that there is sin in the peasants too. And the fire of corruption is spreading visibly, hourly, working from above downwards. The spirit of isolation is coming upon the people too. Money-lenders and devourers of the commune are rising up. Already the merchant grows more and more eager for rank, and strives to show himself cultured though he has not a trace of culture, and to this end meanly despises his old traditions, and is even ashamed of the faith of his fathers. He visits princes, though he is only a peasant corrupted. The peasants are rotting in drunkenness and cannot shake off the habit. And what cruelty to their wives, to their children even! All from drunkenness! I've seen in the factories children of nine years old, frail, rickety, bent and already depraved. The stuffy workshop, the din of machinery, work all day long, the vile language and the drink, the drink—is that what a little child's heart needs? He needs sunshine, childish play, good examples all about him, and at least a little love.

Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov*, Pt. II, VI, 3

- 151 *Father Zossima*. I've been struck all my life in our great people by their dignity, their true and seemingly dignity. I've seen it myself, I can testify to it, I've seen it and marvelled at it, I've seen it in spite of the degraded sins and poverty-stricken appearance of our peasantry. They are not servile, and even after two centuries of serfdom they are free in manner and bearing, yet without insolence, and not revengeful and not envious. "You are rich and noble, you are clever and talented, well, be so, God bless you. I respect you, but I know that I too am a man. By the very fact that I respect you without envy I prove my dignity as a man."

Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov*, Pt. II, VI, 3

- 152 If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man.

Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*, XVI

- 153 The parts of our wealth most intimately ours are those which are saturated with our labor. There are few men who would not feel personally annihilated if a life-long construction of their hands or brains—say an entomological collection or an extensive work in manuscript—were suddenly swept away. The miser feels similarly towards his gold, and although it is true that a part of our depression at the loss of possessions is due to our

feeling that we must now go without certain goods that we expected the possessions to bring in their train, yet in every case there remains, over and above this, a sense of the shrinkage of our personality, a partial conversion of ourselves to nothingness, which is a psychological phenomenon by itself. We are all at once assimilated to the tramps and poor devils whom we so despise, and at the same time removed farther than ever away from the happy sons of earth who lord it over land and sea and men in the full-blown lusthood that wealth and power can give, and before whom, stiffen ourselves as we will by appealing to anti-snobish first principles, we cannot escape an emotion, open or sneaking, of respect and dread.

William James, *Psychology*, X

- 154 Poverty indeed *is* the strenuous life,—without brass bands or uniforms or hysteric popular applause or lies or circumlocutions.

William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, XIV–XV

- 155 The praises of poverty need once more to be boldly sung. We have grown literally afraid to be poor. We despise anyone who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life. If he does not join the general scramble and pant with the money-making street, we deem him spiritless and lacking in ambition. We have lost the power even of imagining what the ancient idealization of poverty could have meant: the liberation from material attachments, the unbribed soul, the manlier indifference, the paying our way by what we are or do and not by what we have, the right to fling away our life at any moment irresponsibly—the more athletic trim, in short, the moral fighting shape.

William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, XIV–XV

- 156 In the millionaire Undershaft I have represented a man who has become intellectually and spiritually as well as practically conscious of the irresistible natural truth which we all abhor and repudiate: to wit, that the greatest of our evils, and the worst of our crimes is poverty, and that our first duty, to which every other consideration should be sacrificed, is not to be poor. "Poor but honest," "the respectable poor," and such phrases are as intolerable and as immoral as "drunken but amiable," "fraudulent but a good after-dinner speaker," "splendidly criminal," or the like. . . . The thoughtless wickedness with which we scatter sentences of imprisonment, torture in the solitary cell and on the plank bed, and flogging, on moral invalids and energetic rebels, is as nothing compared to the silly levity with which we tolerate poverty as if it were either a wholesome tonic for lazy people or else a virtue to be embraced as St Francis embraced it. If a man is indolent, let him

be poor. If he is drunken, let him be poor. If he is not a gentleman, let him be poor. If he is addicted to the fine arts or to pure science instead of to trade and finance, let him be poor. If he chooses to spend his urban eighteen shillings a week or his agricultural thirteen shillings a week on his beer and his family instead of saving it up for his old age, let him be poor. Let nothing be done for "the undeserving": let him be poor. Serve him right! Also—somewhat inconsistently—blessed are the poor!

Now what does this Let Him Be Poor mean? It means let him be weak. Let him be ignorant. Let him become a nucleus of disease. Let him be a standing exhibition and example of ugliness and dirt. Let him have rickety children. Let him be cheap and let him drag his fellows down to his own price by selling himself to do their work. Let his habitations turn our cities into poisonous congeries of slums. Let his daughters infect our young men with the diseases of the streets, and his sons revenge him by turning the nation's manhood into scrofula, cowardice, cruelty, hypocrisy, political imbecility, and all the other fruits of oppression and malnutrition. Let the undeserving become still less deserving; and let the deserving lay up for himself, not treasures in heaven, but horrors in hell upon earth. This being so, is it really wise to let him be poor?

Shaw, *Major Barbara*, Pref.

- 157 All capital . . . is nothing but spare subsistence. It is the superfluous part of a man's income—that which he is content not to consume, or can easily be persuaded to forego for the present for the sake of some future advantage. Thus capital has been called "the reward of abstinence"; and though the phrase has fallen into general ridicule through its absurd and hypocritical implication that the quantity of capital saved by any person is in direct proportion to their powers of virtuous self-denial, yet if we substitute "result" for "reward," and strip the word "abstinence" of its moral implication, we can accept the definition as practically true. Capital, then, is the result of abstinence. If a man wants a flour mill, he must save the cost of building it and fitting it up out of his income. If he wishes to maintain it, he must not spend on his immediate personal satisfaction all that it brings him in, but must set aside a certain sum annually to make good the wear and tear of the millstones and machinery. If he desires to enlarge the mill, to put in additional pairs of stones, to substitute steam power for water power, or to introduce the steel roller system method of grinding, he must abstain from consuming the cost of these things in personal expenditure. The accumulation and maintenance of capital is possible in no other way. Abstinence is the inevitable condition.

Shaw, *Capital and Wages*

158 Unfortunately, the poor man suffers much less from poverty than the community does, just as a man who never washes his clothes is unbearable to his neighbor though quite tolerable to himself. It is positively delightful to be naked in warm weather: we are forced to dress for the sake of our neighbors against our own inclinations. A destitute man depresses his neighbors, defiles his dwelling, becomes a centre of infection, depraves morals: is, in short, a scandal. We may take it then that a man will not be allowed to be poor, whatever other indulgence may be extended to him.

Shaw, *Redistribution of Income*

159 Why do we, in fact, almost all of us, desire to increase our incomes? It may seem, at first sight, as though material goods were what we desire. But, in fact, we desire these mainly in order to impress our neighbours. When a man moves into a larger house in a more genteel quarter, he re-

flects that "better" people will call on his wife, and some unprosperous cronies of former days can be dropped. When he sends his son to a good school or an expensive university, he consoles himself for the heavy fees by thoughts of the social kudos to be gained. In every big city, whether of Europe or of America, houses in some districts are more expensive than equally good houses in other districts, merely because they are more fashionable. One of the most powerful of all our passions is the desire to be admired and respected. As things stand, admiration and respect are given to the man who seems to be rich. This is the chief reason why people wish to be rich. The actual goods purchased by their money play quite a secondary part.

Russell, *Sceptical Essays*, VI

160 Wealth must justify itself in happiness.

Santayana, *Life of Reason*, II, 3