

show itself so much to begin with, but which all the more powerfully gnaws the heart and has more dangerous effects. Those who have much goodness and much love are most subject to the first, for it does not proceed from a profound hatred, but from an instant aversion, which surprises them, because, being impelled to imagine that all things should go in the way which they judge to be best, so soon as it happens otherwise, they wonder and frequently are displeased, even although the matter does not affect them personally, because, having much affection, they interest themselves for those whom they love in the same way as for themselves. . . .

The other kind of anger in which hatred and sadness predominate, is not so apparent at first if it be not perhaps that it causes the face to grow pale; but its strength is little by little increased by the agitation of an ardent desire to avenge oneself excited in the blood, which, being mingled with the bile which is sent towards the heart from the lower part of the liver and spleen, excites there a very keen and ardent heat. And as it is the most generous souls who have most gratitude, it is those who have most pride, and who are most base and infirm, who most allow themselves to be carried

away by this kind of anger; for the injuries appear so much the greater as pride causes us to esteem ourselves more, and likewise the more esteem the good things which they remove; which last we value so much the more, as our soul is the more feeble and base, because they depend on others.

Descartes, *Passions of the Soul*, CCI-CCII

24 *Betty*. They are gone, sir, in great anger.
Petulant. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Congreve, *Way of the World*, I, ix

25 I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

Blake, *A Poison Tree*

26 If you strike a child, take care that you strike it in anger, even at the risk of maiming it for life. A blow in cold blood neither can nor should be forgiven.

Shaw, *Man and Superman*, Maxims for Revolutionists

4.4 | *Desire*

1 *Socrates*. In every one of us there are two guiding and ruling principles which lead us whither they will; one is the natural desire of pleasure, the other is an acquired opinion which aspires after the best; and these two are sometimes in harmony and then again at war, and sometimes the one, sometimes the other conquers. When opinion by the help of reason leads us to the best, the conquering principle is called temperance; but when desire, which is devoid of reason, rules in us and drags us to pleasure, that power of misrule is called excess. Now excess has many names, and many members, and many forms, and any of these forms when very marked gives a name, neither honourable nor creditable, to the bearer of the name. The desire of eating, for example,

which gets the better of the higher reason and the other desires, is called gluttony, and he who is possessed by it is called a glutton; the tyrannical desire of drink, which inclines the possessor of the desire to drink, has a name which is only too obvious, and there can be as little doubt by what name any other appetite of the same family would be called;—it will be the name of that which happens to be dominant. And now I think that you will perceive the drift of my discourse; but as every spoken word is in a manner plainer than the unspoken, I had better say further that the irrational desire which overcomes the tendency of opinion towards right, and is led away to the enjoyment of beauty, and especially of personal beauty, by the desires which are her own kin-

dred—that supreme desire, I say, which by leading conquers and by the force of passion is reinforced, from this very force, receiving a name, is called love.

Plato, *Phaedrus*, 237B

- 2 *Socrates*. Might a man be thirsty, and yet unwilling to drink?

Yes, he [Glaucou] said, it constantly happens.

And in such a case what is one to say? Would you not say that there was something in the soul bidding a man to drink, and something else forbidding him, which is other and stronger than the principle which bids him?

I should say so.

And the forbidding principle is derived from reason, and that which bids and attracts proceeds from passion and disease?

Clearly.

Then we may fairly assume that they are two, and that they differ from one another; the one with which a man reasons, we may call the rational principle of the soul, the other, with which he loves and hungers and thirsts and feels the flutterings of any other desire, may be termed the irrational or appetitive, the ally of sundry pleasures and satisfactions?

Yes, he said, we may fairly assume them to be different.

Then let us finally determine that there are two principles existing in the soul. And what of passion, or spirit? Is it a third, or akin to one of the preceding?

I should be inclined to say—akin to desire.

Well, I said, there is a story which I remember to have heard, and in which I put faith. The story is, that Leontius, the son of Aglaion, coming up one day from the Piraeus, under the north wall on the outside, observed some dead bodies lying on the ground at the place of execution. He felt a desire to see them, and also a dread and abhorrence of them; for a time he struggled and covered his eyes, but at length the desire got the better of him; and forcing them open, he ran up to the dead bodies, saying, Look, ye wretches, take your fill of the fair sight.

I have heard the story myself, he said.

The moral of the tale is, that anger at times goes to war with desire, as though they were two distinct things.

Yes; that is the meaning, he said.

And are there not many other cases in which we observe that when a man's desires violently prevail over his reason, he reviles himself, and is angry at the violence within him, and that in this struggle, which is like the struggle of factions in a State, his spirit is on the side of his reason—but for the passionate or spirited element to take part with the desires when reason decides that she should not be opposed, is a sort of thing which I believe that you never observed occurring in your-

self, nor, as I should imagine, in any one else?

Plato, *Republic*, IV, 439A

- 3 *Athenian Stranger*. The class of men is small—they must have been rarely gifted by nature, and trained by education—who, when assailed by wants and desires, are able to hold out and observe moderation, and when they might make a great deal of money are sober in their wishes, and prefer a moderate to a large gain. But the mass of mankind are the very opposite: their desires are unbounded, and when they might gain in moderation they prefer gains without limit.

Plato, *Laws*, XI, 918B

- 4 These two at all events appear to be sources of movement: appetite and mind (if one may venture to regard imagination as a kind of thinking; for many men follow their imaginations contrary to knowledge, and in all animals other than man there is no thinking or calculation but only imagination).

Both of these then are capable of originating local movement, mind and appetite: (1) mind, that is, which calculates means to an end, i.e. mind practical (it differs from mind speculative in the character of its end); while (2) appetite is in every form of it relative to an end: for that which is the object of appetite is the stimulant of mind practical; and that which is last in the process of thinking is the beginning of the action. It follows that there is a justification for regarding these two as the sources of movement, i.e. appetite and practical thought; for the object of appetite starts a movement and as a result of that thought gives rise to movement, the object of appetite being to it a source of stimulation. So too when imagination originates movement, it necessarily involves appetite.

That which moves therefore is a single faculty and the faculty of appetite; for if there had been two sources of movement—mind and appetite—they would have produced movement in virtue of some common character. As it is, mind is never found producing movement without appetite (for wish is a form of appetite; and when movement is produced according to calculation it is also according to wish), but appetite can originate movement contrary to calculation, for desire is a form of appetite.

Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 433^a8

- 5 The primary objects of desire and of thought are the same. For the apparent good is the object of appetite, and the real good is the primary object of rational wish. But desire is consequent on opinion rather than opinion on desire; for the thinking is the starting-point.

Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1072^a27

- 6 The avarice of mankind is insatiable; at one time two obols was pay enough; but now, when this sum has become customary, men always want more and more without end; for it is of the nature of desire not to be satisfied, and most men live only for the gratification of it.
Aristotle, *Politics*, 1267^a42
- 7 That which *all* desire is good, as we have said; and so, the more a thing is desired, the better it is.
Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1365^a1
- 8 Whilst what we crave is wanting, it seems to transcend all the rest; then, when it has been gotten, we crave something else, and ever does the same thirst of life possess us, as we gape for it open-mouthed.
Lucretius, *Nature of Things*, III
- 9 To you everything appears small that you possess: to me all that I have appears great. Your desire is insatiable: mine is satisfied. To (children) who put their hand into a narrow-necked earthen vessel and bring out figs and nuts, this happens; if they fill the hand, they cannot take it out, and then they cry. Drop a few of them and you will draw things out. And do you part with your desires; do not desire many things and you will have what you want.
Epictetus, *Discourses*, III, 9
- 10 There is no profit from the things which are valued and eagerly sought to those who have obtained them; and to those who have not yet obtained them there is an imagination that when these things are come, all that is good will come with them; then, when they are come, the feverish feeling is the same, the tossing to and fro is the same, the satiety, the desire of things which are not present; for freedom is acquired not by the full possession of the things which are desired, but by removing the desire.
Epictetus, *Discourses*, IV, 1
- 11 Remember that you must behave as at a banquet. Is anything brought round to you? Put out your hand and take a moderate share. Does it pass by you? Do not stop it. Is it not yet come? Do not yearn in desire toward it, but wait till it reaches you. So with regard to children, wife, office, riches; and you will some time or other be worthy to feast with the gods. And if you do not so much as take the things which are set before you, but are able even to forego them, then you will not only be worthy to feast with the gods, but to rule with them also.
Epictetus, *Encheiridion*, XV
- 12 Theophrastus, in his comparison of bad acts—
- such a comparison as one would make in accordance with the common notions of mankind—says, like a true philosopher, that the offences which are committed through desire are more blameable than those which are committed through anger. For he who is excited by anger seems to turn away from reason with a certain pain and unconscious contraction; but he who offends through desire, being overpowered by pleasure, seems to be in a manner more intemperate and more womanish in his offences. Rightly then, and in a way worthy of philosophy, he said that the offence which is committed with pleasure is more blameable than that which is committed with pain; and on the whole the one is more like a person who has been first wronged and through pain is compelled to be angry; but the other is moved by his own impulse to do wrong, being carried towards doing something by desire.
Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, II, 10
- 13 All things in their own way are inclined by appetite towards good, but in different ways. Some are inclined to good by their natural inclination, without knowledge, as plants and inanimate bodies. Such inclination towards good is called a natural appetite. Others, again, are inclined towards good, but with some knowledge: not that they know the aspect of goodness, but that they know some particular good; as the sense, which knows the sweet, the white, and so on. The inclination which follows this knowledge is called a sensitive appetite. Other things, again, have an inclination towards good, but with a knowledge whereby they know the aspect of good itself; this is proper to the intellect. This is most perfectly inclined towards good; not, indeed, as if it were merely guided by another towards good, like things devoid of knowledge, nor towards some particular good only, as things which have only sensitive knowledge, but as inclined towards good universal in itself. Such inclination is termed will.
Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 59, 1
- 14 Between two foods, distant and appetising in like measure, death by starvation would ensue ere a free man put either to his teeth.
So would a lamb stand still between two cravings of fierce wolves, in equipoise of dread; so would a dog stand still between two hinds.
Dante, *Paradiso*, IV, 1
- 15 Desires are either natural and necessary, like eating and drinking; or natural and not necessary, like intercourse with females; or neither natural nor necessary. Of this last type are nearly all those of men; they are all superfluous and artificial. For it is marvelous how little Nature needs to be content, how little she has left us to desire. The dressings of our cooking have nothing to do with her

ordaining. The Stoics say that a man could stay alive on one olive a day. The delicacy of our wines is no part of her teaching, nor the embellishments that we add to our amorous appetites. . . .

These extraneous desires, which ignorance of the good and a false opinion have insinuated into us, are in such great number that they drive out almost all the natural ones; neither more nor less than if there were such a great number of foreigners in a city that they put out the natural inhabitants, or extinguished their ancient authority and power, completely usurping it and taking possession of it.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12,
Apology for Raymond Sebond

- 16 That passion which they say is produced by idleness in the hearts of young men, although it makes its way with leisure and a measured step, very evidently shows, to those who have tried to oppose its strength, the power of that conversion and alteration that our judgment suffers.

I attempted at one time to keep myself tensed to withstand it and beat it down: for I am so far from being one of those who invite vices, that I do not even follow them, unless they drag me away. I would feel it come to life, grow, and increase in spite of my resistance, and finally seize me, alive and watching, and possess me, to such an extent that, as from drunkenness, the picture of things began to seem to me other than usual. I would see the advantages of the object of my desire visibly expanding and growing, and increasing and swelling from the breath of my imagination; the difficulties of my undertaking growing easy and smooth, my reason and my conscience withdrawing. But, this fire having vanished all in an instant like a flash of lightning, I would see my soul regain another kind of sight, another state, and another judgment; the difficulties of the retreat would seem to me great and invincible, and the same things would appear in a light and aspect very different from that in which the heat of desire had presented them to me.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 12,
Apology for Raymond Sebond

- 17 It is an amusing conception to imagine a mind exactly balanced between two equal desires. For it is indubitable that it will never decide, since inclination and choice imply inequality in value; and if we were placed between the bottle and the ham with an equal appetite for drinking and for eating, there would doubtless be no solution but to die of thirst and of hunger.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 14, How Our Mind

- 18 *Salarino*. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont

To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gratiano. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast

With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, II, vi, 5

- 19 *Troilus*. This is the monstrosity in love, lady, that the will is infinite and the execution confined, that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit.

Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, III, ii, 87

- 20 The passion of desire is an agitation of the soul caused by the spirits which dispose it to wish for the future the things which it represents to itself as agreeable. Thus we do not only desire the presence of the absent good, but also the conservation of the present, and further, the absence of evil, both of that which we already have, and of that which we believe we might experience in time to come.

Descartes, *Passions of the Soul*, LXXXVI

- 21 That which men desire they are also said to love, and to hate those things for which they have aversion. So that desire and love are the same thing; save that by *desire*, we always signify the absence of the object; by *love*, most commonly the presence of the same. So also by *aversion*, we signify the absence; and by *hate*, the presence of the object.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, 6

- 22 Continual success in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continual prospering, is that men call *felicity*; I mean the felicity of this life. For there is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind, while we live here; because life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire, nor without fear, no more than without sense.

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, 6

- 23 *Elmira*. The declaration is extremely gallant, but, to say the truth, it is a good deal surprising. Methinks you ought to have fortified your mind better, and to have reasoned a little upon a design of this nature. A devotee as you are, whom every one speaks of as—

Tartuffe. Ah! being a devotee does not make me the less a man; and when one comes to view your celestial charms, the heart surrenders, and reasons no more. I know, that such language from me,

seems somewhat strange; but, madam, after all, I am not an angel, and should you condemn the declaration I make, you must lay the blame upon your attractive charms.

Molière, *Tartuffe*, III, iii

24 We do not desire a thing because we adjudge it to be good, but, on the contrary, we call it good because we desire it, and consequently everything to which we are averse we call evil. Each person, therefore, according to his affect judges or estimates what is good and what is evil, what is better and what is worse, and what is the best and what is the worst. Thus the covetous man thinks plenty of money to be the best thing and poverty the worst. The ambitious man desires nothing like glory, and on the other hand dreads nothing like shame. To the envious person, again, nothing is more pleasant than the misfortune of another, and nothing more disagreeable than the prosperity of another. And so each person according to his affect judges a thing to be good or evil, useful or useless.

Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, Prop. 39, Schol.

25 *Desire* is the essence itself of man insofar as it is conceived as determined to any action by any one of his affections.

Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, Prop. 59, Def. 1

26 That desire is a state of uneasiness, every one who reflects on himself will quickly find. Who is there that has not felt in desire what the wise man says of hope, (which is not much different from it), that it being “deferred makes the heart sick”; and that still proportionable to the greatness of the desire, which sometimes raises the uneasiness to that pitch, that it makes people cry out, “Give me children,” give me the thing desired, “or I die.” Life itself, and all its enjoyments, is a burden cannot be borne under the lasting and unremoved pressure of such an uneasiness.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. II, XXI, 32

27 The Stoical Scheme of supplying our Wants, by lopping off our Desires, is like cutting off our Feet when we want Shoes.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

28 Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison.

Johnson, *Letter to James Boswell* (Dec. 8, 1763)

29 The desire of food is limited in every man by the narrow capacity of the human stomach; but the desire of the conveniences and ornaments of building, dress, equipage, and household furni-

ture, seems to have no limit or certain boundary.

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

30 The desire of a man for a woman is not directed at her because she is a human being, but because she is a woman. That she is a human being is of no concern to him.

Kant, *Lecture at Königsberg* (1775)

31 Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.

Blake, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, 10

32 The evening arrived; the boys took their places. The master, in his cook’s uniform, stationed himself at the copper; his pauper assistants ranged themselves behind him; the gruel was served out; and a long grace was said over the short commons. The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered each other, and winked at Oliver, while his next neighbors nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand, said: somewhat alarmed at his own temerity:

“Please, sir, I want some more.”

The master was a fat, healthy man; but he turned very pale. He gazed in stupefied astonishment on the small rebel for some seconds, and then clung for support to the copper. The assistants were paralysed with wonder; the boys with fear.

“What!” said the master at length, in a faint voice.

“Please, sir,” replied Oliver, “I want some more.”

The master aimed a blow at Oliver’s head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arms; and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, II

33 Ah, Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Remold it nearer to the Heart’s Desire!

FitzGerald, *Rubáiyát*, XCIX

34 *Mendoza*. There are two tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart’s desire. The other is to gain it.

Shaw, *Man and Superman*, IV

35 *Lady*. Haven’t you noticed that people always exaggerate the value of the things they haven’t got? The poor think they need nothing but riches to be quite happy and good. Everybody worships truth, purity, unselfishness, for the same reason: because they have no experience of them. Oh, if they only knew!

Shaw, *The Man of Destiny*