PART III.

ON THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE EMOTIONS.

Most writers on the emotions and on human conduct seem to be treating rather of matters outside nature than of natural phenomena following nature's general laws. They appear to conceive man to be situated in nature as a kingdom within a kingdom; for they believe that he disturbs rather than follows nature's order, that he has absolute control over his actions, and that he is determined solely by himself. They attribute human infirmities and fickleness, not to the power of nature in general, but to some mysterious flaw in the nature of man, which accordingly they bemoan, deride, despise, or, as usually happens, abuse: he, who succeeds in hitting off the weakness of the human mind more eloquently or more acutely than his fellows is looked upon as a seer. Still there has been no lack of very excellent men (to whose toil and industry I confess myself much indebted), who have written many noteworthy things concerning the right way of life, and have given much sage advice to mankind. But no one, so far as I know, has defined the nature and strength of the emotions, and the power of the mind against them for their restraint.

I do not forget, that the illustrious Descartes, though he believed, that the mind has absolute power over its actions, strove to explain human emotions by their primary causes, and, at the same time, to point out a way, by which the mind might attain to absolute dominion over them. However, in my opinion, he accomplishes nothing beyond a display of the acuteness of his own great intellect, as I will show in the proper place. For the present I wish to revert to those, who would rather

abuse or deride human emotions than understand them. Such persons will doubtless think it strange that I should attempt to treat of human vice and folly geometrically, and should wish to set forth with rigid reasoning those matters which they cry out against as repugnant to reason, frivolous, absurd, and dreadful. However, such is my plan. Nothing comes to pass in nature, which can be set down to a flaw therein; for nature is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action; that is, nature's laws and ordinances, whereby all things come to pass and change from one form to another, are everywhere and always the same; so that there should be one and the same method of understanding the nature of all things whatsoever, namely, through nature's universal laws and rules. Thus the passions of hatred, anger, envy, and so on, considered in themselves, follow from this same necessity and efficacy of nature; they answer to certain definite causes, through which they are understood, and possess certain properties as worthy of being known as the properties of anything else, whereof the contemplation in itself affords us delight. I shall, therefore, treat of the nature and strength of the emotions according to the same method, as I employed heretofore in my investigations concerning God and the mind. I shall consider human actions and desires in exactly the same manner, as though I were concerned with lines, planes, and solids.

nature is always one and the same

(feeling, emotion, affect) cf. Bergson cf. Whitehead

"the contemplation in itself affords us delight" (cf. henosis)

as though I were concerned with lines, planes, and solids

Definitions.

I. By an ADEQUATE cause, I mean a cause through which its effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived. By an INADEQUATE or partial cause, I mean a cause through which, by itself, its effect cannot be understood.

II. I say that we ACT when anything takes place, either within us or externally to us, whereof we are the adequate cause; that is (by the foregoing definition) when through our nature something takes place within us or externally to us, which can through our nature alone be clearly and distinctly understood. On the other hand, I say that we are passive as regards something when that something

adequate cause

clearly and distinctly perceived

action and passivity

desubjectivization and extended agencies (through assemblages of causation through/to me yet beyond)

takes place within us, or follows from our nature externally, we being only the partial cause.

III. By EMOTION I mean the modifications of the body, whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications.

affectus (enactivistic idea-motion) [through-the-world] [process, assemblage]

N. B. If we can be the adequate cause of any of these modifications, I then call the emotion an activity, otherwise I call it a passion, or state wherein the mind is passive.

affect emotion activity passion

POSTULATES.

I. The human body can be affected in many ways, whereby its power of activity is increased or diminished, and also in other ways which do not render its power of activity either greater or less.

increased or diminished

power of activity

N. B. This postulate or axiom rests on Postulate i. and Lemmas v. and vii., which see after II. xiii.

labor

II. The human body can undergo many changes, and, nevertheless, retain the impressions or traces of objects (*cf.* II. Post. v.) and, consequently, the same images of things (see note II. xvii.).

retain the impressions or traces

(imbued/inscribed) historicity of affect

PROP. I. Our mind is in certain cases active, and in certain cases passive. In so far as it has adequate ideas it is necessarily active, and in so far as it has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily passive.

transformation work of the soul

active

passive

Proof.—In every human mind there are some adequate ideas, and some ideas that are fragmentary and confused (II. xl. note). Those ideas which are adequate in the mind are adequate also in God, inasmuch as he constitutes the essence of the mind (II. xl. Coroll.), and those which are inadequate in the mind are likewise (by the same Coroll.) adequate in God, not inasmuch as he contains in himself the essence of the given mind alone, but as he, at the same time, contains the minds of other things. Again, from any given idea some effect must necessarily follow (I. 36); of this effect God is the adequate cause (III. Def. i.) not inasmuch as he is infinite, but inasmuch as he is conceived as affected by the given idea (II. ix.). But of that effect whereof God is the cause, inasmuch as he is affected by an idea which is ade-

God constitutes the essence of the mind

adequate in God as he contains the minds of other things (at the same time)

"conceived as affected" proves God is always the adequate cause

what impact does a belief have? (William James on faith/jumping the gap with belief in survival)

(pragmatism)

the mind in question is the adequate cause

adequate in God by virtue of God's containing the minds of other things also

inadequate ideas are mentally passive

passive minds are liable to be acted on/through

body and thought do not interact but are the same

God is a thinking thing

God is the cause of all modes of thinking (-matter)

body cannot determine mind

that mind and body are one and the same thing

quate in a given mind, of that effect, I repeat, the mind in question is the adequate cause (II. xi. Coroll.). Therefore our mind, in so far as it has adequate ideas (III. Def. ii.), is in certain cases necessarily active; this was our first point. Again, whatsoever necessarily follows from the idea which is adequate in God, not by virtue of his possessing in himself the mind of one man only, but by virtue of his containing, together with the mind of that one man, the minds of other things also, of such an effect (II. xi. Coroll.) the mind of the given man is not an adequate, but only a partial cause; thus (III. Def. ii.) the mind, inasmuch as it has inadequate ideas, is in certain cases necessarily passive; this was our second point. Therefore our mind, etc. Q.E.D.

Corollary.—Hence it follows that the mind is more or less liable to be acted upon, in proportion as it possesses inadequate ideas, and contrariwise, is more or less active in proportion as it possesses adequate ideas.

PROP. II. Body cannot determine mind to think, neither can mind determine body to motion or rest or any state different from these, if such there be.

Proof.—All modes of thinking have for their cause God, by virtue of his being a thinking thing, and not by virtue of his being displayed under any other attribute (II. vi.). That, therefore, which determines the mind to thought is a mode of thought, and not a mode of extension; that is (II. Def. i.), it is not body. This was our first point. Again, the motion and rest of a body must arise from another body, which has also been determined to a state of motion or rest by a third body, and absolutely everything which takes place in a body must spring from God, in so far as he is regarded as affected by some mode of extension, and not by some mode of thought (II. vi.); that is, it cannot spring from the mind, which is a mode of thought. This was our second point. Therefore body cannot determine mind, etc. Q.E.D.

Note.—This is made more clear by what was said in the note to II. vii., namely, that mind and body are one and the same thing, conceived first under the attribute

of thought, secondly, under the attribute of extension. Thus it follows that the order or concatenation of things is identical, whether nature be conceived under the one attribute or the other; consequently the order of states of activity and passivity in our body is simultaneous in nature with the order of states of activity and passivity in the mind. The same conclusion is evident from the manner in which we proved II. xii.

Nevertheless, though such is the case, and though there be no further room for doubt, I can scarcely believe, until the fact is proved by experience, that men can be induced to consider the question calmly and fairly, so firmly are they conceived that it is merely at the bidding of the mind that the body is set in motion or at rest, or performs a variety of actions depending solely on the mind's will or the exercise of thought. However, no one has hitherto laid down the limits to the powers of the body, that is, no one has as yet been taught by experience what the body can accomplish solely by the laws of nature, in so far as she is regarded as extension. No one hitherto has gained such an accurate knowledge of the bodily mechanism, that he can explain all its functions; nor need I call attention to the fact that many actions are observed in the lower animals, which far transcend human sagacity, and that somnambulists do many things in their sleep, which they would not venture to do when awake: these instances are enough to show, that the body can by the sole laws of its nature do many things which the mind wonders at.

Again, no one knows how or by what means the mind moves the body, nor how many various degrees of motion it can impart to the body, nor how quickly it can move it. Thus, when men say that this or that physical action has its origin in the mind, which latter has dominion over the body, they are using words without meaning, or are confessing in specious phraseology that they are ignorant of the cause of the said action, and do not wonder at it.

But, they will say, whether we know or do not know the means whereby the mind acts on the body, we have,

the order or concatenation of things

bodily affect is simultaneous in order with order of mental affect

empiricism — until the fact is proved by experience"

what a body can do

taught by experience"

somnambulists — sleepwalkers

no one knows how or by what means/power

the mind does not have power over the body

experience

at any rate, experience of the fact that unless the human mind is in a fit state to think, the body remains inert. Moreover, we have experience, that the mind alone can determine whether we speak or are silent, and a variety of similar states which, accordingly, we say depend on the mind's decree. But, as to the first point, I ask such objectors, whether experience does not also teach, that if the body be inactive the mind is simultaneously unfitted for thinking? For when the body is at rest in sleep, the mind simultaneously is in a state of torpor also, and has no power of thinking, such as it possesses when the body is awake. Again, I think everyone's experience will confirm the statement, that the mind is not at all times equally fit for thinking on a given subject, but according as the body is more or less fitted for being stimulated by the image of this or that object, so also is the mind more or less fitted for contemplating the said object.

torpor

the mind is not at all times equally fit for thinking on a given subject

But, it will be urged, it is impossible that solely from the laws of nature considered as extended substance, we should be able to deduce the causes of buildings, pictures, and things of that kind, which are produced only by human art; nor would the human body, unless it were determined and led by the mind, be capable of building a single temple. However, I have just pointed out that the objectors cannot fix the limits of the body's power, or say what can be concluded from a consideration of its sole nature, whereas they have experience of many things being accomplished solely by the laws of nature, which they would never have believed possible except under the direction of mind: such are the actions performed by somnambulists while asleep, and wondered at by their performers when awake. I would further call attention to the mechanism of the human body which far surpasses in complexity all that has been put together by human art, not to repeat what I have already shown, namely, that from nature, under whatever attribute she be considered, infinite results follow. As for the second objection, I submit that the world would be much happier, if men were as fully able to keep silence as they

buildings, pictures

human art

a single temple

somnambulists

are to speak. Experience abundantly shows that men can govern anything more easily than their tongues, and restrain anything more easily than their appetites; whence it comes about that many believe, that we are only free in respect to objects which we moderately desire, because our desire for such can easily be controlled by the thought of something else frequently remembered, but that we are by no means free in respect to what we seek with violent emotion, for our desire cannot then be allayed with the remembrance of anything else. However, unless such persons had proved by experience that we do many things which we afterward repent of, and again that we often, when assailed by contrary emotions, see the better and follow the worse, there would be nothing to prevent their believing that we are free in all things. Thus an infant believes that of its own free will it desires milk, an angry child believes that it freely desires vengeance, a timid child believes that it freely desires to run away; further, a drunken man believes that he utters from the free decision of his mind words which, when he is sober, he would willingly have withheld: thus, too, a delirious man, a garrulous woman, a child, and others of like complexion, believe that they speak from the free decision of their mind, when they are in reality unable to restrain their impulse to talk. Experience teaches us no less clearly than reason, that men believe themselves to be free, simply because they are conscious of their actions, and unconscious of the causes whereby those actions are determined; and, further, it is plain that the dictates of the mind are but another name for the appetites, and therefore vary according to the varying state of the body. Every one shapes his actions according to his emotion, those who are assailed by conflicting emotions know not what they wish; those who are not attacked by any emotion are readily swayed this way or that. All these considerations clearly show that a mental decision and a bodily appetite, or determined state, are simultaneous, or rather are one and the same thing, which we call decision when it is regarded under and explained through the attribute of thought, and a

experience abundantly shows

freedom and desire

unless such persons had proved by experience

infant

milk

angry child

vengeance

timid child

running away

drunken man

delirious man

garrulous woman

empiricism

unable to restrain their impulse

experience teaches us no less clearly than reason

conscious of actions, unconscious of causes from external spacetime

conflicting emotions (excess)

not attacked by any emotion (deficiency)

decision

"a mental decision and a bodily appetite, or determined state, are simultaneous, or rather are one and the same thing"

conditioned state, when it is regarded under the attribute of extension, and deduced from the laws of motion and rest. This will appear yet more plainly in the sequel. For the present I wish to call attention to another point, namely, that we cannot act by the decision of the mind, unless we have a remembrance of having done so. For instance, we cannot say a word without remembering that we have done so. Again, it is not within the free power of the mind to remember or forget a thing at will. Therefore the freedom of the mind must in any case be limited to the power of uttering or not uttering something which it remembers. But when we dream that we speak, we believe that we speak from a free decision of the mind, yet we do not speak, or, if we do, it is by a spontaneous motion of the body. Again, we dream that we are concealing something, and we seem to act from the same decision of the mind as that, whereby we keep silence when awake concerning something we know. Lastly, we dream that from the free decision of our mind we do something, which we should not dare to do when awake.

Now I should like to know whether there be in the mind two sorts of decisions, one sort illusive, and the other sort free? If our folly does not carry us so far as this, we must necessarily admit, that the decision of the mind which is believed to be free, is not distinguishable from the imagination or memory, and is nothing more than the affirmation, which an idea, by virtue of being an idea, necessarily involves (II. xlix.). Wherefore these decisions of the mind arise in the mind by the same necessity, as the ideas of things actually existing. Therefore, those who believe, that they speak or keep silence or act in any way from the free decision of their mind, do but dream with their eyes open.

PROP. III. The activities of the mind arise solely from adequate ideas; the passive states of the mind depend solely on inadequate ideas.

Proof.—The first element, which constitutes the essence of the mind, is nothing else but the idea of the actually existent body (II. xi. and xiii.), which (II. xv.) is compounded of many other ideas, whereof some are adequate

conditioned state

the sequel

remembering forgetting

(an idea, truth etc.) concealing in a dream from being uttered 'aloud'

two sorts of decisions

(imagination as the memory of images/impressions)

(a belief in the power of) free decision is dreaming with one's eyes open

the first element constitutive of the essence of the mind is the idea of the actually existing body

isomorphic

phenomenology

Buddhism

taurus

and some inadequate (II. xxix. Coroll., II. xxxviii Coroll.). Whatsoever therefore follows from the nature of mind, and has mind for its proximate cause, through which it must be understood, must necessarily follow either from an adequate or from an inadequate idea. But in so far as the mind (III. i.) has inadequate ideas, it is necessarily passive: wherefore the activities of the mind follow solely from adequate ideas, and accordingly the mind is only passive in so far as it has inadequate ideas. Q.E.D.

Note.—Thus we see, that passive states, are not attributed to the mind, except in so far as it contains something involving negation, or in so far as it is regarded as a part of nature which cannot be clearly and distinctly perceived through itself without other parts: I could thus show, that passive states are attributed to individual things in the same way that they are attributed to the mind, and that they cannot otherwise be perceived, but my purpose is solely to treat of the human mind.

passive states (negation) cannot be clearly and distinctly perceived on their own ("through itself without other parts)

PROP. IV. Nothing can be destroyed, except by a cause external to itself.

Proof.—This proposition is self-evident, for the definition of anything affirms the essence of that thing, but does not negative it; in other words, it postulates the essence of the thing, but does not take it away. So long therefore as we regard only the thing itself, without taking into account external causes, we shall not be able to find in it anything which could destroy it. Q.E.D.

"but does not negative it"

PROP. V. Things are naturally contrary, that is, cannot exist in the same object, in so far as one is capable of destroying the other.

Proof.—If they could agree together or coexist in the same object, there would then be in the said object something which could destroy it; but this, by the foregoing proposition, is absurd; therefore things, etc. Q.E.D.

PROP. VI. Everything, in so far as it is in itself, endeavors to persist in its own being.

endeavors to persist in its own being

Proof.—Individual things are modes whereby the attributes of God are expressed in a given determinate manner (I. xxv. Coroll.), that is (I. xxxiv.), they are things which express in a given determinate manner the power

whereby the attributes of God are expressed

A Life (Deleuze)

conatus

endeavor, the actual essence

either alone or with other things

assemblages

the given essence

indefinite time

cannot define duration

existence now still cannot destroy existence later

of God, whereby God is and acts; now no thing contains in itself anything whereby it can be destroyed, or which can take away its existence (III. iv.); but contrariwise it is opposed to all that could take away its existence (III. v.). Therefore, in so far as it can, and in so far as it is in itself, it endeavors to persist in its own being. Q.E.D.

PROP. VII. The endeavor, wherewith everything endeavors to persist in its own being, is nothing else but the actual essence of the thing in question.

Proof.—From the given essence of anything certain consequences necessarily follow (I. xxxvi.), nor have things any power save such as necessarily follows from their nature as determined (I. xxix.); wherefore the power of any given thing, or the endeavor whereby, either alone or with other things, it acts, or endeavors to act, that is (III. vi.), the power or endeavor, wherewith it endeavors to persist in its own being, is nothing else but the given or actual essence of the thing in question. Q.E.D. the endeavor

PROP. VIII. The endeavor, whereby a thing endeavors to persist in its being, involves no finite time, but an indefinite time.

Proof.—If it involved a limited time, which should determine the duration of the thing, it would then follow solely from that power whereby the thing exists, that the thing could not exist beyond the limits of that time, but that it must be destroyed; but this (III. iv.) is absurd. Wherefore the endeavor wherewith a thing exists involves no definite time; but, contrariwise, since (III. iv.) it will, by the same power whereby it already exists, always continue to exist, unless it be destroyed by some external cause, this endeavor involves an indefinite time.

PROP. IX. The mind, both in so far as it has clear and distinct ideas, and also in so far as it has confused ideas, endeavors to persist in its being for an indefinite period, and of this endeavor it is conscious.

Proof.—The essence of the mind is constituted by adequate and inadequate ideas (III. iii.); therefore (III. vii.), both in so far as it possesses the former, and in so far as

it possesses the latter, it endeavors to persist in its own being, and that for an indefinite time (III. viii.). Now as the mind (II. xxiii.) is necessarily conscious of itself through the ideas of the modifications of the body, the mind is therefore (III. vii.) concious of its own endeavor.

apperception of the self through ideas of modifications of the body

Note.— This endeavor, when referred solely to the mind, is called WILL, when referred to the mind and body in conjunction it is called APPETITE; it is, in fact, nothing else but man's essence, from the nature of which necessarily follow all those results which tend to its preservation; and which man has thus been determined to perform.

will

appetite

Further, between appetite and desire there is no difference, except that the term desire is generally applied to men, in so far as they are conscious of their appetite, and may accordingly be thus defined: DESIRE IS APPETITE WITH CONSCIOUSNESS THEREOF. It is thus plain from what has been said, that in no case do we strive for, wish for, long for, or desire anything, because we deem it to be good, but on the other hand we deem a thing to be good, because we strive for it, wish for it, long for it, or desire it.

desire

desire as edge/energy for the endeavor/living

enactivistic knowing of goodness

PROP. X. An idea, which excludes the existence of our body, cannot be postulated in our mind, but is contrary thereto.

Proof.— Whatsoever can destroy our body, cannot be postulated therein (III. v.). Therefore, neither can the idea of such a thing occur in God, in so far as he has the idea of our body (II. ix. Coroll.); that is (II. xi.xiii.), the idea of that thing cannot be postulated as in our mind, but contrariwise, since (II. xi. xiii.,) the first element, that constitutes the essence of the mind, is the idea of the human body as actually existing, it follows that the first and chief endeavor of our mind is the endeavor to affirm the existence of our body; thus, an idea, which negatives the existence of our body, is contrary to our mind, etc. Q.E.D.

PROP. XI. Whatsoever increases or diminishes, helps or hinders the power of activity in our body, the idea thereof increases or diminishes, helps or hinders the power of thought in our mind.

augmenting affections

power of activity

power of thought