PREFACE

1

I have been told often enough, and always with an expression of great surprise, that all my writings, from the *Birth of Tragedy** to the most recently published *Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*,† have something that distinguishes them and unites them together: they all of them, I have been given to understand, contain snares and nets for unwary birds and in effect a persistent invitation to the overturning of habitual evaluations and valued habits. What? *Everything* only – human, all too human? It is with this sigh that one emerges from my writings, not without a kind of reserve and mistrust even in regard to morality, not a little tempted and emboldened, indeed, for once to play the advocate of the worst things: as though they have perhaps been only the worst slandered? My writings have been called a schooling in suspicion, even more in contempt, but fortunately also in courage, indeed in audacity. And in fact I myself do not believe that anyone has ever before looked into the world with an equally profound degree of suspicion, and not merely as an occasional devil's advocate, but, to speak theologically, just as much as an enemy and indicter of God; and anyone who could divine something of the consequences that lie in that profound suspiciousness, something of the fears and frosts of the isolation to which that unconditional *disparity of view* condemns him who is infected with it, will also understand how often, in an effort to recover from myself, as it were to induce a temporary self-forgetting, I have sought shelter in this or that – in some piece of admiration or enmity or scientificality or frivolity or stupidity; and why, where I could not find what I *needed*, I had artificially to enforce, falsify and invent a suitable fiction for myself (– and what else have poets ever done? and to what end does art exist in the world at all?). What I again and again needed most for my cure and self-restoration, however, was the belief that I was *not* thus isolated, not alone in *seeing* as I did – an enchanted surmising of relatedness and identity in eye and desires, a reposing in a trust of friendship, a blindness in concert with another without suspicion or question-marks, a pleasure in foregrounds, surfaces, things close and closest, in everything possessing colour, skin and apparitionality. Perhaps in this regard I might be reproached with having employed a certain amount of 'art', a certain amount of false-coinage: for

* *Birth of Tragedy:* Nietzsche's first published book (1872)

† *Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future:* the subtitle of *Beyond Good and Evil*, published in 1886

example, that I knowingly-willfully closed my eyes before Schopenhauer's* blind will to morality at a time when I was already sufficiently clearsighted about morality; likewise that I deceived myself over Richard Wagner's† incurable romanticism, as though it were a beginning and not an end; likewise over the Greeks, likewise over the Germans and their future – and perhaps a whole long list could be made of such likewises? – Supposing, however, that all this were true and that I was reproached with it with good reason, what do *you* know, what *could* you know, of how much cunning in self-preservation, how much reason and higher safeguarding, is contained in such self-deception – or of how much falsity I shall *require* if I am to continue to permit myself the luxury of *my* truthfulness? . . . Enough, I am still living; and life is, after all, not a product of morality: it *wants* deception, it *lives* on deception . . . but there you are, I am already off again, am I not, and doing what I have always done, old immoralist and bird-catcher that I am – speaking unmorally, extramorally, 'beyond good and evil'? –

2

–Thus when I needed to I once also *invented* for myself the 'free spirits' to whom this melancholy-valiant book with the title *Human, All Too Human* is dedicated: 'free spirits' of this kind do not exist, did not exist – but, as I have said, I had need of them at that time if I was to keep in good spirits while surrounded by ills (sickness, solitude, unfamiliar places, *acedia*, inactivity): as brave companions and familiars with whom one can laugh and chatter when one feels like laughing and chattering, and whom one can send to the Devil when they become tedious – as compensation for the friends I lacked. That free spirits of this kind *could* one day exist, that our Europe *will* have such active and audacious fellows among its sons of tomorrow and the next day, physically present and palpable and not, as in my case, merely phantoms and hermit's phantasmagoria: *I* should wish to be the last to doubt it. I see them already *coming*, slowly, slowly; and perhaps I shall do something to speed their coming if I describe in advance under what vicissitudes, upon what paths, I *see* them coming? – –

3

One may conjecture that a spirit in whom the type 'free spirit' will one day become ripe and sweet to the point of perfection has had its decisive experience in a *great liberation* and that previously it was all the more a fettered spirit and seemed to be chained for ever to its pillar and corner. What fetters the fastest? What bonds are all but unbreakable? In the case of men of a high and select kind they will be their duties: that reverence proper to youth, that reserve and delicacy before all that is honoured and

* Schopenhauer: Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), the philosopher, of whom Nietzsche was in his youth a disciple (see the essay, 'Schopenhauer as Educator' in the *Untimely Meditations*)

† Richard Wagner (1813–83), the composer and dramatist who was, like Schopenhauer, an object of the youthful Nietzsche's veneration (see the essay 'Richard Wagner in Bayreuth' in the *Untimely Meditations*)

revered from of old, that gratitude for the soil out of which they have grown, for the hand which led them, for the holy place where they learned to worship – their supreme moments themselves will fetter them the fastest, lay upon them the most enduring obligation. The great liberation comes for those who are thus fettered suddenly, like the shock of an earthquake: the youthful soul is all at once convulsed, torn loose, torn away – it itself does not know what is happening. A drive and impulse rules and masters it like a command; a will and desire awakens to go off, anywhere, at any cost; a vehement dangerous curiosity for an undiscovered world flames and flickers in all its senses. 'Better to die than to go on living *here*' – thus responds the imperious voice and temptation: and this 'here', this 'at home' is everything it had hitherto loved! A sudden terror and suspicion of what it loved, a lightning-bolt of contempt for what it called 'duty', a rebellious, arbitrary, volcanically erupting desire for travel, strange places, estrangements, coldness, soberness, frost, a hatred of love, perhaps a desecrating blow and glance *backwards* to where it formerly loved and worshipped, perhaps a hot blush of shame at what it has just done and at the same time an exultation *that* it has done it, a drunken, inwardly exultant shudder which betrays that a victory has been won – a victory? over what? over whom? an enigmatic, question-packed, questionable victory, but the *first* victory nonetheless: such bad and painful things are part of the history of the great liberation. It is at the same time a sickness that can destroy the man who has it, this first outbreak of strength and will to self-determination, to evaluating on one's own account, this will to *free* will: and how much sickness is expressed in the wild experiments and singularities through which the liberated prisoner now seeks to demonstrate his mastery over things! He prowls cruelly around with an unslaked lasciviousness; what he captures has to expiate the perilous tension of his pride; what excites him he tears apart. With a wicked laugh he turns round whatever he finds veiled and through some sense of shame or other spared and pampered: he puts to the test what these things look like *when* they are reversed. It is an act of willfulness, and pleasure in willfulness, if now he perhaps bestows his favour on that which has hitherto had a bad reputation – if, full of inquisitiveness and the desire to tempt and experiment, he creeps around the things most forbidden. Behind all his toiling and weaving – for he is restlessly and aimlessly on his way as if in a desert – stands the question-mark of a more and more perilous curiosity. 'Can *all* values not be turned round? and is good perhaps evil? and God only an invention and finesse of the Devil? Is everything perhaps in the last resort false? And if we are deceived, are we not for that very reason also deceivers? *must* we not be deceivers?' – such thoughts as these tempt him and lead him on, even further away, even further down. Solitude encircles and embraces him, ever more threatening, suffocating, heart-tightening, that terrible goddess and *mater saeva cupidinum** – but who today knows what *solitude* is? . . .

* *mater saeva cupidinum:* wild mother of the passions

4

From this morbid isolation, from the desert of these years of temptation and experiment, it is still a long road to that tremendous overflowing certainty and health which may not dispense even with wickedness, as a means and fish-hook of knowledge, to that *mature* freedom of spirit which is equally self-mastery and discipline of the heart and permits access to many and contradictory modes of thought – to that inner spaciousness and indulgence of superabundance which excludes the danger that the spirit may even on its own road perhaps lose itself and become infatuated and remain seated intoxicated in some corner or other, to that superfluity of formative, curative, moulding and restorative forces which is precisely the sign of *great* health, that superfluity which grants to the free spirit the dangerous privilege of living *experimentally* and of being allowed to offer itself to adventure: the master's privilege of the free spirit! In between there may lie long years of convalescence, years full of variegated, painfully magical transformations ruled and led along by a tenacious *will to health* which often ventures to clothe and disguise itself as health already achieved. There is a midway condition which a man of such a destiny will not be able to recall without emotion: it is characterized by a pale, subtle happiness of light and sunshine, a feeling of bird-like freedom, bird-like altitude, bird-like exuberance, and a third thing in which curiosity is united with a tender contempt. A 'free-spirit' – this cool expression does one good in every condition, it is almost warming. One lives no longer in the fetters of love and hatred, without yes, without no, near or far as one wishes, preferably slipping away, evading, fluttering off, gone again, again flying aloft; one is spoiled, as everyone is who has at some time seen a tremendous number of things *beneath* him – and one becomes the opposite of those who concern themselves with things which have nothing to do with them. Indeed, the free spirit henceforth has to do only with things – and how many things! – with which he is no longer *concerned* . . .

5

A step further in convalescence: and the free spirit again draws near to life – slowly, to be sure, almost reluctantly, almost mistrustfully. It again grows warmer around him, yellower, as it were; feeling and feeling for others acquire depth, warm breezes of all kind blow across him. It seems to him as if his eyes are only now open to what is *close at hand*. He is astonished and sits silent: where *had* he been? These close and closest things: how changed they seem! what bloom and magic they have acquired! He looks back gratefully – grateful to his wandering, to his hardness and self-alienation, to his viewing of far distances and bird-like flights in cold heights. What a good thing he had not always stayed 'at home', stayed 'under his own roof' like a delicate apathetic loafer! He had been *beside* himself: no doubt of that. Only now does he see himself – and what surprises he experiences as he does so! What unprecedented shudders!

What happiness even in the weariness, the old sickness, the relapses of the convalescent! How he loves to sit sadly still, to spin out patience, to lie in the sun! Who understands as he does the happiness that comes in winter, the spots of sunlight on the wall! They are the most grateful animals in the world, also the most modest, these convalescents and lizards again half turned towards life: – there are some among them who allow no day to pass without hanging a little song of praise on the hem of its departing robe. And, to speak seriously: to become sick in the manner of these free spirits, to remain sick for a long time and then, slowly, slowly, to become healthy, by which I mean 'healthier', is a fundamental *cure* for all pessimism (the cancerous sore and inveterate vice, as is well known, of old idealists and inveterate liars). There is wisdom, practical wisdom, in for a long time prescribing even health for oneself only in small doses. –

6

At that time it may finally happen that, under the sudden illumination of a still stressful, still changeable health, the free, ever freer spirit begins to unveil the riddle of that great liberation which had until then waited dark, questionable, almost untouchable in his memory. If he has for long hardly dared to ask himself: 'why so apart? so alone? renouncing everything I once reverenced? renouncing reverence itself? why this hardness, this suspiciousness, this hatred for your own virtues?' – now he dares to ask it aloud and hears in reply something like an answer. 'You shall become master over yourself, master also over your virtues. Formerly *they* were your masters; but they must be only your instruments beside other instruments. You shall get control over your For and Against and learn how to display first one and then the other in accordance with your higher goal. You shall learn to grasp the sense of perspective in every value judgement – the displacement, distortion and merely apparent teleology of horizons and whatever else pertains to perspectivism; also the quantum of stupidity that resides in antitheses of values and the whole intellectual loss which every For, every Against costs us. You shall learn to grasp the *necessary* injustice in every For and Against, injustice as inseparable from life, life itself as *conditioned* by the sense of perspective and its injustice. You shall above all see with your own eyes where injustice is always at its greatest: where life has developed at its smallest, narrowest, neediest, most incipient and yet cannot avoid taking *itself* as the goal and measure of things and for the sake of its own preservation secretly and meanly and ceaselessly crumbling away and calling into question the higher, greater, richer – you shall see with your own eyes the problem of *order of rank*, and how power and right and spaciousness of perspective grow into the heights together. You shall' – enough: from now on the free spirit *knows* what 'you shall' he has obeyed, and he also knows what he now *can*, what only now he – *may* do . . .

7

This is how the free spirit elucidates to himself that enigma of liberation, and inasmuch as he generalizes his own case ends by adjudicating on what he has experienced thus. 'What has happened to me', he says to himself, 'must happen to everyone in whom a *task* wants to become incarnate and "come into the world".' The secret force and necessity of this task will rule among and in the individual facets of his destiny like an unconscious pregnancy – long before he has caught sight of this task itself or knows its name. Our vocation commands and disposes of us even when we do not yet know it; it is the future that regulates our today. Given it is *the problem of order of rank* of which we may say it is *our* problem, we free spirits: it is only now, at the midday of our life, that we understand what preparations, bypaths, experiments, temptations, disguises the problem had need of before it was *allowed* to rise up before us, and how we first had to experience the most manifold and contradictory states of joy and distress in soul and body, as adventurers and circumnavigators of that inner world called 'man', as surveyors and guagers of that 'higher' and 'one upon the other' that is likewise called 'man' – penetrating everywhere, almost without fear, disdaining nothing, losing nothing, asking everything, cleansing everything of what is chance and accident in it and as it were thoroughly sifting it – until at last we had the right to say, we free spirits: 'Here – a *new* problem! Here a long ladder upon whose rungs we ourselves have sat and climbed – which we ourselves have at some time *been*! Here a higher, a deeper, a beneath-us, a tremendous long ordering, an order of rank, which we *see:* here – *our* problem!' – –

8

– No psychologist or reader of signs will have a moment's difficulty in recognizing to what stage in the evolution just described the present book belongs (or has been *placed* –). But where today are there psychologists? In France, certainly; perhaps in Russia; definitely not in Germany. There is no lack of reasons as to why the Germans of today could even regard this fact as redounding to their honour: an ill fate for one who in this matter is by nature and attainment un-German! This *German* book, which has known how to find its readers in a wide circle of lands and peoples – it has been on its way for about ten years – and must be capable of some kind of music and flute-player's art by which even coy foreign ears are seduced to listen – it is precisely in Germany that this book has been read most carelessly and *heard* the worst: why is that? – 'It demands too much', has been the reply, 'it addresses itself to people who are not oppressed by uncouth duties, it wants refined and experienced senses, it needs superfluity, superfluity of time, of clarity in heart and sky, of *otium** in the most audacious sense: – all of them good things that we Ger-

* *otium:* leisure, idleness; in Catullus' usage, it denotes a vice or condition of *ennui.*

mans of today do not have and therefore also cannot give'. – After so courteous a reply my philosophy advises me to keep silent and to ask no more questions; especially as in certain cases, as the saying has it, one *remains* a philosopher only by – keeping silent.

Nice
Spring 1886

1
OF FIRST AND LAST THINGS

1

Chemistry of concepts and sensations. – Almost all the problems of philosophy once again pose the same form of question as they did two thousand years ago: how can something originate in its opposite, for example rationality in irrationality, the sentient in the dead, logic in unlogic, disinterested contemplation in covetous desire, living for others in egoism, truth in error? Metaphysical philosophy has hitherto surmounted this difficulty by denying that the one originates in the other and assuming for the more highly valued thing a miraculous source in the very kernel and being of the 'thing in itself'.* Historical philosophy, on the other hand, which can no longer be separated from natural science, the youngest of all philosophical methods, has discovered in individual cases (and this will probably be the result in every case) that there are no opposites, except in the customary exaggeration of popular or metaphysical interpretations, and that a mistake in reasoning lies at the bottom of this antithesis: according to this explanation there exists, strictly speaking, neither an unegoistic action nor completely disinterested contemplation; both are only sublimations, in which the basic element seems almost to have dispersed and reveals itself only under the most painstaking observation. All we require, and what can be given us only now the individual sciences have attained their present level, is a *chemistry* of the moral, religious and aesthetic conceptions and sensations, likewise of all the agitations we experience within ourselves in cultural and social intercourse, and indeed even when we are alone: what if this chemistry would end up by revealing that in this domain too the most glorious colours are derived from base, indeed from despised materials? Will there be many who desire to pursue such researches? Mankind likes to put questions of origins and beginnings out of its mind: must one not be almost inhuman to detect in oneself a contrary inclination? –

2

Family failing of philosophers. – All philosophers have the common failing of starting out from man as he is now and thinking they can reach their goal through an analysis of him. They involuntarily think of 'man' as an *aeterna veritas*,† as something that remains constant in the midst of all flux, as a sure measure of things. Everything the philosopher has

* thing-in-itself: Kant's term for objects as they are independently of our knowledge of them, contrasted (see section 10) with 'appearances', objects considered as conforming to our modes of knowing them

† *aeterna veritas*: something everlastingly true

declared about man is, however, at bottom no more than a testimony as to the man of a *very limited* period of time. Lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers; many, without being aware of it, even take the most recent manifestation of man, such as has arisen under the impress of certain religions, even certain political events, as the fixed form from which one has to start out. They will not learn that man has become, that the faculty of cognition has become; while some of them would have it that the whole world is spun out of this faculty of cognition. Now, everything *essential* in the development of mankind took place in primeval times, long before the four thousand years we more or less know about; during these years mankind may well not have altered very much. But the philosopher here sees 'instincts' in man as he now is and assumes that these belong to the unalterable facts of mankind and to that extent could provide a key to the understanding of the world in general: the whole of teleology is constructed by speaking of the man of the last four millennia as of an *eternal* man towards whom all things in the world have had a natural relationship from the time he began. But everything has become: there are *no eternal facts*, just as there are no absolute truths. Consequently what is needed from now on is *historical philosophizing*, and with it the virtue of modesty.

3

Estimation of unpretentious truths. – It is the mark of a higher culture to value the little unpretentious truths which have been discovered by means of rigorous method more highly than the errors handed down by metaphysical and artistic ages and men, which blind us and make us happy. At first the former are regarded with scorn, as though the two things could not possibly be accorded equal rights: they stand there so modest, simple, sober, so apparently discouraging, while the latter are so fair, splendid, intoxicating, perhaps indeed enrapturing. Yet that which has been attained by laborious struggle, the certain, enduring and thus of significance for any further development of knowledge is nonetheless the higher; to adhere to it is manly and demonstrates courage, simplicity and abstemiousness. Gradually not only the individual but all mankind will be raised to this manliness, when they have finally become accustomed to valuing viable, enduring knowledge more highly and lost all faith in inspiration and the acquisition of knowledge by miraculous means. – Worshippers of *form*, with their standards of the beautiful and sublime, will, to be sure, at first have good ground for mockery once estimation of unpretentious truths and the scientific spirit begins to dominate: but only because either their eye has not yet discovered the charm of the *simplest* form or because those raised in that spirit are as yet very far from being thoroughly permeated by it, so that they still thoughtlessly imitate old forms (and do so badly, as does everyone to whom a thing no longer matters very much). Formerly the spirit was not engaged in rigorous thinking, its serious occupation was the spinning out of forms and symbols. That has now changed; serious occupation with the symbolic

has become a mark of a lower culture. As our arts themselves grow ever more intellectual, our senses more spiritual, and as for example we now adjudge what is pleasant sounding quite differently from the way we did a hundred years ago: so the forms of our life will grow ever more *spiritual*, perhaps to the eye of earlier ages *uglier*, but only because it is incapable of seeing how the realm of inner, spiritual beauty is continually growing deeper and wider, and to what extent we may all now accord the eye of insight greater value than the fairest structure or the sublimest edifice.

4

Astrology and what is related to it. – It is probable that the objects of the religious, moral and aesthetic sensations belong only to the surface of things, while man likes to believe that here at least he is in touch with the world's heart; the reason he deludes himself is that these things produce in him such profound happiness and unhappiness, and thus he exhibits here the same pride as in the case of astrology. For astrology believes the starry firmament revolves around the fate of man; the moral man, however, supposes that what he has essentially at heart must also constitute the essence and heart of things.

5

Misunderstanding of the dream. – The man of the ages of barbarous primordial culture believed that in the dream he was getting to know a *second real world:* here is the origin of all metaphysics. Without the dream one would have had no occasion to divide the world into two. The dissection into soul and body is also connected with the oldest idea of the dream, likewise the postulation of a life of the soul,* thus the origin of all belief in spirits, and probably also of the belief in gods. 'The dead live on, *for* they appear to the living in dreams': that was the conclusion one formerly drew, throughout many millennia.

6

The spirit of science rules its parts, not the whole. – The separate *smallest* regions of science are treated purely objectively: the great universal sciences, on the other hand, viewed as a whole pose the question – a very unobjective question, to be sure – to what end? of what utility? On account of this regard for utility they are as a whole treated less impersonally than they are in their parts. And when it comes to philosophy, the summit of the entire scientific pyramid, we find the question as to the utility of knowledge as such involuntarily raised, and the unconscious intention of every philosophy is to ascribe to it the *highest* utility. That is why there is in all philosophies so much high-flying metaphysics and such a dread of the explanations offered by physics, which seem so modest and insignificant; for the significance of knowledge for life *has* to appear as great as it possibly can. Here lies the antagonism between the individual regions of science and philosophy. The latter wants, as art does, to bestow on life and action the greatest possible profundity and signifi-

* life of the soul: *Seelenscheinleib*, Nietzsche's coinage

cance; in the former one seeks knowledge and nothing further – and does in fact acquire it. There has hitherto been no philosopher in whose hands philosophy has not become an apologia for knowledge; on this point at least each of them is an optimist, inasmuch as he believes that knowledge must be in the highest degree useful. They are all tyrannized over by logic: and logic is by its nature optimism.

7

The mischief-maker in science. – Philosophy separated itself from science when it posed the question: what kind of knowledge of the world and life is it through which man can live happiest? This took place in the Socratic schools: by having in view the objective of happiness one applied a ligature to the arteries of scientific research – and does so still today.

8

Pneumatological elucidation of nature. – Metaphysics elucidates the handwriting of nature as it were *pneumatologically,** as the church and its scholars formerly did the Bible. It requires a great deal of understanding to apply to nature the same kind of rigorous art of elucidation that philologists have now fashioned for all books: with the intention of comprehending what the text intends to say but without sensing, indeed presupposing, a *second* meaning. But as even with regard to books the bad art of elucidation has by no means been entirely overcome and one still continually encounters in the best educated circles remnants of allegorical and mystical interpretations: so it is also in respect to nature – where, indeed, it is even far worse.

9

Metaphysical world. – It is true, there could be a metaphysical world; the absolute possibility of it is hardly to be disputed. We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head; while the question nonetheless remains what of the world would still be there if one had cut it off. This is a purely scientific problem and one not very well calculated to bother people overmuch; but all that has hitherto made metaphysical assumptions *valuable, terrible, delightful* to them, all that has begotten these assumptions, is passion, error and self-deception; the worst of all methods of acquiring knowledge, not the best of all, have taught belief in them. When one has disclosed these methods as the foundation of all extant religions and metaphysical systems, one has refuted them! Then that possibility still remains over; but one can do absolutely nothing with it, not to speak of letting happiness, salvation and life depend on the gossamer of such a possibility. – For one could assert nothing at all of the metaphysical world except that it was a being-other, an inaccessible, incomprehensible being-other; it would be a thing with negative qualities. – Even if the existence of such a world were never so well demonstrated, it is certain that knowledge of it would be the most useless of all

* *pneumatologically*: pneumatology is the 'science' of spirits and spiritual beings

knowledge: more useless even than knowledge of the chemical composition of water must be to the sailor in danger of shipwreck.

10

Future innocuousness of metaphysics. – As soon as the origin of religion, art and morality is so described that it can be perfectly understood without the postulation of *metaphysical interference* at the commencement or in the course of their progress, the greater part of our interest in the purely theoretical problem of the 'thing in itself' and 'appearance' ceases to exist. For with religion, art and morality we do not touch upon the 'nature of the world in itself'; we are in the realm of ideas, no 'intuition' can take us any further. The question of how our conception of the world could differ so widely from the disclosed nature of the world will with perfect equanimity be relinquished to the physiology and history of the evolution of organisms and concepts.

11

Language as putative science. – The significance of language for the evolution of culture lies in this, that mankind set up in language a separate world beside the other world, a place it took to be so firmly set that, standing upon it, it could lift the rest of the world off its hinges and make itself master of it. To the extent that man has for long ages believed in the concepts and names of things as in *aeternae veritates* he has appropriated to himself that pride by which he raised himself above the animal: he really thought that in language he possessed knowledge of the world. The sculptor of language was not so modest as to believe that he was only giving things designations, he conceived rather that with words he was expressing supreme knowledge of things; language is, in fact, the first stage of the occupation with science. Here, too, it is the *belief that the truth has been found* out of which the mightiest sources of energy have flowed. A great deal later – only now – it dawns on men that in their belief in language they have propagated a tremendous error.* Happily, it is too late for the evolution of reason, which depends on this belief, to be again put back. – *Logic* too depends on presuppositions with which nothing in the real world corresponds, for example on the presupposition that there are identical things, that the same thing is identical at different points of time: but this science came into existence through the opposite belief (that such conditions do obtain in the real world). It is the same with *mathematics*, which would certainly not have come into existence if one had known from the beginning that there was in nature no exactly straight line, no real circle, no absolute magnitude.

12

Dream and culture. – The function of the brain that sleep encroaches upon most is the memory: not that it ceases altogether – but it is reduced to a condition of imperfection such as in the primeval ages of mankind may have been normal by day and in waking. Confused and capricious as it is,

* Nietzsche had described this error in detail in *Truth and Falsehood in the Extra-Moral Sense* (1873).

it continually confuses one thing with another on the basis of the most fleeting similarities: but it was with the same confusion and capriciousness that the peoples composed their mythologies, and even today travellers observe how much the savage is inclined to forgetfulness, how his mind begins to reel and stumble after a brief exertion of the memory and he utters lies and nonsense out of mere enervation. But in dreams we all resemble this savage; failure to recognize correctly and erroneously supposing one thing to be the same as another is the ground of the false conclusions of which we are guilty in dreams; so that, when we clearly recall a dream, we are appalled to discover so much folly in ourselves. – The perfect clarity of all the images we see in dreams which is the precondition of our unquestioning belief in their reality again reminds us of conditions pertaining to earlier mankind, in whom hallucination was extraordinarily common and sometimes seized hold on whole communities, whole peoples at the same time. Thus: in sleep and dreams we repeat once again the curriculum of earlier mankind.*

13

Logic of the dream. – In sleep our nervous system is continually agitated by a multiplicity of inner events, almost all our organs are active, our blood circulates vigorously, the position of the sleeper presses on individual limbs, his bedcovers influence his sensibilities in various ways, his stomach digests and its motions disturb other organs, his intestines are active, the position of his head involves unusual muscular contortions, his feet, unshod and not pressing against the floor, produce an unfamiliar feeling, as does the difference in the way his whole body is clad – all this, through its unusualness and to a differing degree each day, excites the entire system up to the functioning of the brain; and so there are a hundred occasions for the mind to be involved in puzzlement and to look for *grounds* for this excitation: the dream is the *seeking and positing of the causes* of this excitement of the sensibilities, that is to say the supposed causes. If, for example, you tie two straps about your feet you may well dream that your feet are coiled round by snakes: this is first a hypothesis, then a belief, with an accompanying pictorial representation and the supposition: 'these snakes must be the *causa* of those sensations that I, the sleeper, feel' – thus the sleeper's mind judges. The immediate past he has thus inferred becomes through his aroused imagination the present to him. Everyone knows from experience how quickly a dreamer entwines with his dream a sound that strongly impinges upon him from without, the ringing of bells or the firing of cannon, for example; that is to say, he accounts for the sound in terms of the dream, so that he *believes* he experiences the cause of the sound first, then the sound itself. – But how does it come about that the dreamer's mind always blunders like this,

* In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, ch. VII (B), Freud writes: 'We can guess how much to the point is Nietzsche's assertion that in dreams "some primeval relic of humanity is at work which we can now scarcely reach any longer by a direct path"; and we may expect that the analysis of dreams will lead us to a knowledge of man's archaic heritage, of what is psychologically innate in him.'

when the same mind is accustomed to be so sober, cautious and so sceptical with regard to hypotheses while it is awake? – so that the first plausible hypothesis for explaining a sensation that occurs to him is at once accepted as the truth? (For in dreams we believe in the dream as though it were reality, that is to say we regard our hypothesis as completely proved.) – In my opinion, the conclusions man still draws in dreams to the present day for many millennia mankind also drew *when awake*: the first *causa* that entered the mind as an explanation of anything that required explaining satisfied it and was accounted truth. (According to travellers' tales savages still do this today.) In the dream this piece of primeval humanity continues to exercise itself, for it is the basis upon which higher rationality evolved and continues to evolve in every human being: the dream takes us back again to remote stages of human culture and provides us with a means of understanding them better. We now find dream-thinking* so easy because it is in precisely this imaginative and agreeable form of explanation by means of the first plausible idea that strikes us that we have been so well drilled over such enormous periods of human evolution. To this extent the dream is a relaxation for the brain, which has had enough of the strenuous demands in the way of thinking such as are imposed by our higher culture during the day. – A related occurrence which stands as portal and entrance-hall of the dream can actually be observed in full wakefulness. If we close our eyes, the brain produces a host of light-impressions and colours, probably as a kind of after-play and echo of those effects of light which crowd in upon it during the day. Now, however, the reason (in alliance with the imagination) at once assembles these in themselves formless colour-impressions into definite figures, shapes, landscapes, moving groups. What is actually occurring is again a kind of inferring of the cause from the effect; the mind asks where these light-impressions and colours come from and supposes these shapes and figures are their causes: it regards them as occasioning these lights and colours because, by day and with eyes open, it is accustomed to finding that every colour, every light-impression does in fact have a cause that occasions it. Here, then, the imagination is continually providing the mind with images borrowed from the sight-impressions of the day, and this is precisely the way in which it fashions the dream-fantasy: – that is to say, the supposed cause is inferred from the effect and introduced *after* the effect: and all with extraordinary rapidity, so that, as with a conjurer, a confusion of judgement can here arise and successive events appear as simultaneous events or even with the order of their occurrence reversed. – These facts show us *how late* more rigorous logical thinking, a clear perception of the nature of cause and effect, must have been evolved if our faculties of reason and understanding *even now* involuntarily grasp at those primitive forms of conclusion and inference and we still live about half of our life in this condition. – The poet and the artist, too, *foists upon* his moods and states of mind causes which are cer-

* dream-thinking: *Traumdenken*

tainly not the true ones; to this extent he recalls an earlier humanity and can aid us to an understanding of it.

14

Sympathetic resonance. – All *stronger* moods bring with them a sympathetic resonance on the part of related sensations and moods: they as it were root up the memory. Something in us is provoked to recollection and becomes aware of similar states and their origins. Thus there come to be constructed habitual rapid connections between feelings and thoughts which, if they succeed one another with lightning speed, are in the end no longer experienced as complexes but as *unities*. It is in this sense that one speaks of the moral feelings, of the religious feelings, as though these were simple unities: in truth, however, they are rivers with a hundred tributaries and sources. Here too, as so often, the unity of the word is no guarantee of the unity of the thing.

15

No inner and outer in the world. – As Democritus* transferred the concepts Above and Below to infinite space, where they make no sense, so philosophers in general transfer the concept 'inner and outer' to the essence and phenomena of the world; they believe that profound feelings take one deep into the interior, close to the heart of nature. But such feelings are profound only insofar as when they occur certain complex groups of thoughts which we call profound are, scarcely perceptibly, regularly aroused with them; a feeling is profound because we regard the thoughts that accompany it as profound. But a profound thought can nonetheless be very distant from the truth, as, for example, every metaphysical thought is; if one deducts from the profound feeling the element of thought mixed in with it, what remains is the *strong* feeling, and this has nothing to do with knowledge as such, just as strong belief demonstrates only its strength, not the truth of that which is believed.

16

Appearance and thing in itself. – Philosophers are accustomed to station themselves before life and experience – before that which they call the world of appearance – as before a painting that has been unrolled once and for all and unchangeably depicts the same scene: this scene, they believe, has to be correctly interpreted, so as to draw a conclusion as to the nature of the being that produced the picture: that is to say, as to the nature of the thing in itself, which it is customary to regard as the sufficient reason† for the existence of the world of appearance. As against this, more rigorous logicians, having clearly identified the concept of the metaphysical as that of the unconditioned, consequently also unconditioning, have disputed any connection between the unconditioned (the metaphysical world) and the world we know: so that what appears in

* Democritus (c. 460 to c. 370 BC): Greek philosopher, one of the latest of the so-called 'pre-Socratic' philosophers

† The principle of sufficient reason's various formulations include 'every existent has a ground' and 'every event has a cause'; Schopenhauer discussed the history and justification of the principle in *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813).

appearance is precisely *not* the thing in itself, and no conclusion can be drawn from the former as to the nature of the latter. Both parties, however, overlook the possibility that this painting – that which we humans call life and experience – has gradually *become*, is indeed still fully in course of *becoming*, and should thus not be regarded as a fixed object on the basis of which a conclusion as to the nature of its originator (the sufficient reason) may either be drawn or pronounced undrawable. Because we have for millennia made moral, aesthetic, religious demands on the world, looked upon it with blind desire, passion or fear, and abandoned ourselves to the bad habits of illogical thinking, this world has gradually *become* so marvellously variegated, frightful, meaningful, soulful, it has acquired colour – but we have been the colourists: it is the human intellect that has made appearance appear and transported its erroneous basic conceptions into things. Late, very late – it has reflected on all this: and now the world of experience and the thing in itself seem to it so extraordinarily different from one another and divided apart that it rejects the idea that the nature of one can be inferred from the nature of the other – or invites us in a chillingly mysterious fashion to *abandon* our intellect, our personal will: so as to attain to the real by *becoming real* oneself. Others again have assembled all the characteristic traits of our world of appearance – that is to say, the idea of the world spun out of intellectual errors we have inherited – and, *instead of indicting the intellect as the guilty party*, have charged the essence of things with being the cause of the very uncanny character this world in fact possesses and have preached redemption from being. – With all these conceptions the steady and laborious process of science, which will one day celebrate its greatest triumph in a *history of the genesis of thought*, will in the end decisively have done; for the outcome of this history may well be the conclusion: That which we now call the world is the outcome of a host of errors and fantasies which have gradually arisen and grown entwined with one another in the course of the overall evolution of the organic being, and are now inherited by us as the accumulated treasure of the entire past – as treasure: for the value of our humanity depends upon it. Rigorous science is capable of detaching us from this ideational world only to a limited extent – and more is certainly not to be desired – inasmuch as it is incapable of making any essential inroad into the power of habits of feeling acquired in primeval times: but it can, quite gradually and step by step, illuminate the history of the genesis of this world as idea – and, for brief periods at any rate, lift us up out of the entire proceeding. Perhaps we shall then recognize that the thing in itself is worthy of Homeric laughter: that it appeared to be so much, indeed everything, and is actually empty, that is to say empty of significance.

17

Metaphysical explanations. – The young person values metaphysical explanations because they reveal to him something in the highest degree significant in things he found unpleasant or contemptible; and if he is

discontented with himself this feeling is alleviated when he comes to recognize the innermost enigma or misery of the universe in that which he so much condemns in himself. To feel more irresponsible and at the same time to find things more interesting – that is the twofold benefit for which he believes he has metaphysics to thank. Later on, to be sure, he acquires mistrust of the whole metaphysical mode of explanation; then perhaps he sees that the effects he has experienced are to be attained equally well and more scientifically by another route: that physical and historical explanations produce that feeling of irresponsibility at least as well, and that interest in life and its problems is perhaps enflamed even more by them.

18

Fundamental questions of metaphysics. – When one day the history of the genesis of thought comes to be written, the following sentence by a distinguished logician will also stand revealed in a new light: 'The primary universal law of the knowing subject consists in the inner necessity of recognizing every object in itself as being in its own essence something identical with itself, thus self-existent and at bottom always the same and unchanging, in short as a substance'. This law, too, which is here called 'primary', evolved: one day it will be shown how gradually, in the lower organisms, this tendency comes into being: how the purblind mole's eyes of this organization at first never see anything but the same thing; how then, when the various pleasurable and unpleasurable stimuli become more noticeable, various different substances are gradually distinguished, but each of them with one attribute, that is to say a single relationship with such an organism. – The first stage of the logical is the judgement: and the essence of the judgement consists, according to the best logicians, in belief. At the bottom of all belief there lies the *sensation of the pleasurable or painful* in respect to the subject experiencing the sensation. A new, third sensation as a product of two preceding single sensations is the judgement in its lowest form. – In our primary condition, all that interests us organic beings in any thing is its relationship to us in respect of pleasure and pain. Between the moments in which we become conscious of this relationship, the states of awareness of sensation, lie those of repose, of non-sensation: then the world and every thing is devoid of interest to us, we notice no alteration in it (just as now anyone absorbed with interest in something will still not notice someone walking by him). To the plants all things are usually in repose, eternal, every thing identical with itself. It is from the period of the lower organisms that man has inherited the belief that there are *identical things* (only knowledge educated in the highest scientificality contradicts this proposition). It may even be that the original belief of everything organic was from the very beginning that all the rest of the world is one and unmoving. – What lies farthest from this primeval stage of the logical is the notion of *causality*: even now, indeed, we believe at bottom that all sensations and actions are acts of free will; when the sentient individuum

observes itself, it regards every sensation, every change, as something *isolated*, that is to say unconditioned, disconnected: it emerges out of us independently of anything earlier or later. We are hungry, but originally we do not think that the organism wants to sustain itself; this feeling seems to be asserting itself *without cause or purpose*, it isolates itself and considers itself *willful*. Thus: belief in freedom of will is a primary error committed by everything organic, as old as the impulse to the logical itself; belief in unconditioned substances and in identical things is likewise a primary, ancient error committed by everything organic. Insofar, however, as all metaphysics has had principally to do with substance and freedom of will, one may designate it the science that treats of the fundamental errors of mankind – but does so as though they were fundamental truths.

19

Number. – The invention of the laws of numbers was made on the basis of the error, dominant even from the earliest times, that there are identical things (but in fact nothing is identical with anything else); at least that there are things (but there is no 'thing'). The assumption of plurality always presupposes the existence of *something* that occurs more than once: but precisely here error already holds sway, here already we are fabricating beings, unities which do not exist. – Our sensations of space and time are false, for tested consistently they lead to logical contradictions. The establishment of conclusions in science always unavoidably involves us in calculating with certain false magnitudes: but because these magnitudes are at least *constant*, as for example are our sensations of time and space, the conclusions of science acquire a complete rigorousness and certainty in their coherence with one another; one can build on them – up to that final stage at which our erroneous basic assumptions, those constant errors, come to be incompatible with our conclusions, for example in the theory of atoms. Here we continue to feel ourselves compelled to assume the existence of a 'thing' or material 'substratum' which is moved, while the whole procedure of science has pursued the task of resolving everything thing-like (material) in motions: here too our sensations divide that which moves from that which is moved, and we cannot get out of this circle because our belief in the existence of things has been tied up with our being from time immemorial. – When Kant says 'the understanding does not draw its laws from nature, it prescribes them to nature', this is wholly true with regard to the *concept of nature* which we are obliged to attach to nature (nature = world as idea, that is as error), but which is the summation of a host of errors of the understanding. – To a world which is *not* our idea the laws of numbers are wholly inapplicable: these are valid only in the human world.

20

A few steps back. – One, certainly very high level of culture has been attained when a man emerges from superstitious and religious concepts and fears and no longer believes in angels, for example, or in original sin,

and has ceased to speak of the salvation of souls: if he is at this level of liberation he now has, with the greatest exertion of mind, to overcome metaphysics. *Then*, however, he needs to take a *retrograde step*: he has to grasp the historical justification that resides in such ideas, likewise the psychological; he has to recognize that they have been most responsible for the advancement of mankind and that without such a retrograde step he will deprive himself of the best that mankind has hitherto produced. – In regard to philosophical metaphysics, I see more and more who are making for the negative goal (that all positive metaphysics is an error), but still few who are taking a few steps back; for one may well want to look out over the topmost rung of the ladder, but one ought not to want to stand on it. The most enlightened get only as far as liberating themselves from metaphysics and looking back on it from above: whereas here too, as in the hippodrome, at the end of the track it is necessary to turn the corner.

21

Probable victory of scepticism. – Let us for once accept the validity of the sceptical point of departure: if there were no other, metaphysical world and all explanations of the only world known to us drawn from metaphysics were useless to us, in what light would we then regard men and things? This question can be thought through, and it is valuable to do so, even if we do for once ignore the question whether the existence of anything metaphysical has been scientifically demonstrated by Kant and Schopenhauer. For the historical probability is that one day mankind will very possibly become in general and on the whole *sceptical* in this matter; thus the question becomes: what shape will human society then assume under the influence of such an attitude of mind? Perhaps the *scientific demonstration* of the existence of any kind of metaphysical world is already so *difficult* that mankind will never again be free of a mistrust of it. And if one has a mistrust of metaphysics the results are by and large the same as if it had been directly refuted and one no longer had the *right* to believe in it. The historical question in regard to an unmetaphysical attitude of mind on the part of mankind remains the same in both cases.

22

Disbelief in the 'monumentum aere perennius'. * – An essential disadvantage which the cessation of the metaphysical outlook brings with it lies in the fact that the attention of the individual is too firmly fixed on his own brief span of life and receives no stronger impulse to work at the construction of enduring institutions intended to last for centuries; he wants to pluck the fruit himself from the tree he plants, and he is therefore no longer interested in planting those trees which demand constant tending for a century and are intended to provide shade for long successions of generations. For the metaphysical outlook bestows the belief that it offers the last, ultimate foundation upon which the whole future of mankind is then invited to establish and construct itself; the individual is promoting

* *'monumentum aere perennius'*: a memorial longer lasting than bronze (Horace)

his salvation when, for example, he founds a church or a convent, he thinks it will be accounted to his credit and rewarded in the eternal future life of his soul, it is a contribution to the eternal salvation of the soul. – Can science, too, awaken such faith in its conclusions? The fact is that science needs doubt and distrust for its closest allies; nonetheless, the sum of unimpeachable truths – truths, that is, which have survived all the assaults of scepticism and disintegration – can in time become so great (in the dietetics of health, for example) that on the basis of them one may resolve to embark on 'everlasting' works. In the meanwhile, the *contrast* between our agitated ephemeral existence and the slow-breathing repose of metaphysical ages is still too strong, because the two ages are still too close together; the individual human being himself now runs through far too many inner and outer evolutions for him to venture to establish himself securely and once and for all even for so short a span as his own lifetime. A completely modern man who wants, for example, to build himself a house has at the same time the feeling he is proposing to immure himself alive in a mausoleum.

23

Age of comparison. – The less men are bound by tradition, the greater is the fermentation of motivations within them, and the greater in consequence their outward restlessness, their mingling together with one another, the polyphony of their endeavours. Who is there who now still feels a strong compulsion to attach himself and his posterity to a particular place? Who is there who still feels any strong attachment at all? Just as in the arts all the genres are imitated side by side, so are all the stages and genres of morality, custom, culture. – Such an age acquires its significance through the fact that in it the various different philosophies of life, customs, cultures can be compared and experienced side by side; which in earlier ages, when, just as all artistic genres were attached to a particular place and time, so every culture still enjoyed only a localized domination, was not possible. Now an enhanced aesthetic sensibility will come to a definitive decision between all these forms offering themselves for comparison: most of them – namely all those rejected by this sensibility – it will allow to die out. There is likewise now taking place a selecting out among the forms and customs of higher morality whose objective can only be the elimination of the lower moralities. This is the age of comparison! It is the source of its pride – but, as is only reasonable, also of its suffering. Let us not be afraid of this suffering! Let us rather confront the task which the age sets us as boldly as we can: and then posterity will bless us for it – a posterity that will know itself to be as much beyond the self-enclosed original national cultures as it is beyond the culture of comparison, but will look back upon both species of culture as upon venerable antiquities.

24

Possibility of progress. – When a scholar of the old culture swears to have nothing more to do with people who believe in progress he is right. For the old culture has its goods and greatness behind it and history compels

one to admit that it can never be fresh again; one needs to be intolerably stupid or fanatical to deny this. But men are capable of *consciously* resolving to evolve themselves to a new culture, whereas formerly they did so unconsciously and fortuitously: they can now create better conditions for the propagation of men and for their nutrition, education and instruction, manage the earth as a whole economically, balance and employ the powers of men in general. This new, conscious culture destroys the old, which viewed as a whole has led an unconscious animal- and plant-life; it also destroys mistrust of progress – it is *possible*. It would, of course, be rash and almost nonsensical to believe that progress must *necessarily* follow; but how could it be denied that progress is possible? On the other hand, progress in the sense and along the paths of the old culture is not even thinkable. If romantic fantasizings still do designate their goals (e.g. self-contained original national cultures) as 'progress', they nonetheless borrow their image of it from the past: in this domain their thinking and imagining lacks all originality.

25

Private and public morality. – Since the belief has ceased that a God broadly directs the destinies of the world and that, all the apparent twists and turns in its path notwithstanding, is leading mankind gloriously upward, man has to set himself ecumenical goals embracing the whole earth. The former morality, namely Kant's, demanded of the individual actions which one desired of all men: that was a very naive thing; as if everyone knew without further ado what mode of action would benefit the whole of mankind, that is, what actions at all are desirable; it is a theory like that of free trade, presupposing that universal harmony *must* result of itself in accordance with innate laws of progress. Perhaps some future survey of the requirements of mankind will show that it is absolutely not desirable that all men should act in the same way, but rather that in the interest of ecumenical goals whole tracts of mankind ought to have special, perhaps under certain circumstances even evil tasks imposed upon them. – In any event, if mankind is not to destroy itself through such conscious universal rule, it must first of all attain to a hitherto altogether unprecedented *knowledge of the preconditions of culture* as a scientific standard for ecumenical goals. Herein lies the tremendous task facing the great spirits of the coming century.

26

Reaction as progress. – Sometimes there appear blunt and forceful spirits capable of exciting great enthusiasm whose development is nonetheless retarded, so that they conjure up again an earlier phase of mankind: they serve to prove that the modern tendencies against which they act are not yet strong enough, that there is something lacking in them: otherwise the latter would be able to offer better resistance to these conjurers. Thus Luther's Reformation, for example, witnesses that in his century all the impulses to freedom of spirit were still uncertain, tender and youthful; science was as yet unable to raise its head. The whole Renaissance,

indeed, seems like an early spring almost snowed away again. But in our century, too, Schopenhauer's metaphysics demonstrates that even now the scientific spirit is not yet sufficiently strong: so that, although all the dogmas of Christianity have long since been demolished, the whole medieval Christian conception of the world and of the nature of man could in Schopenhauer's teaching celebrate a resurrection. Much science resounds in his teaching, but what dominates it is not science but the old familiar 'metaphysical need'. One of the greatest, indeed quite invaluable advantages we derive from Schopenhauer is that through him our sensibilities are for a time compelled to return to older ways of contemplating the world and mankind that once held sway which we would otherwise have no easy access to. The gain for historical justice is very great: I believe that no one would find it easy to do justice to Christianity and its Asiatic relations without Schopenhauer's assistance: on the basis of present-day Christianity alone it would be quite impossible. Only after this great *triumph of justice*, only after we have corrected the mode of historical interpretation introduced by the Age of Enlightenment on so essential a point as this, may we bear the banner of the Enlightenment – the banner bearing the three names Petrach,* Erasmus,† Voltaire – further onward. Out of reaction we have created progress.

27

Substitute for religion. – One believes one is commending a philosophy when one presents it as a popular substitute for religion. The economy of the spirit does indeed occasionally require transitional orders of ideas; thus the passage from religion to a scientific mode of thought is a violent and perilous leap, something to be advised against. To that extent this recommendation of a philosophy is justified. But in the end one also has to understand that the needs which religion has satisfied and philosophy is now supposed to satisfy are not immutable; they can be *weakened* and *exterminated*. Consider, for example, that Christian distress of mind that comes from sighing over one's inner depravity and care for one's salvation – all conceptions originating in nothing but errors of reason and deserving, not satisfaction, but obliteration. A philosophy can be employed either to *satisfy* such needs or to *set them aside;* for they are acquired, time-bound needs resting on presuppositions that contradict those of science. To effect a transition here, to relieve the heart overladen with feeling, it is much more useful to employ *art;* for those conceptions we have spoken of will be nourished far less by art than they will be by a metaphysical philosophy. From art it will then be easier to go over to a truly liberating philosophical science.

28

Words in bad odour. – Away with those overused words optimism and pessimism! We have had enough of them. Occasion for using them is growing less day by day; it is only idle chatterers who still have such an

* Petrach: Francesco Petrach (1304–74): Italian poet and scholar
† Erasmus: Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536): Dutch humanist

indispensable need of them. For why in the world should anyone want to be an optimist if he does not have to defend a God who *has* to have created the best of worlds if he himself is goodness and perfection – but what thinker still has need of the hypothesis of a God? – But any occasion for a pessimistic creed is likewise lacking, unless one has an interest in provoking the advocates of God, the theologians or the theologizing philosophers, and forcefully asserting the opposite point of view: that evil reigns, that there exists more pain than pleasure, that the world is an artifice, the apparition of an evil will to live. But who still bothers about theologians – except other theologians? – Disregarding theology and opposition to theology, it is quite obvious that the world is neither good nor evil, let alone the best of all or the worst of all worlds, and that these concepts 'good' and 'evil' possess meaning only when applied to men, and perhaps even here are, as they are usually employed, unjustified: in any event, we must cast off both that conception of the world that inveighs against it and that which glorifies it.

29

Drunk with the odour of blossoms. – The ship of mankind has, one believes, a deeper and deeper draught the more heavily it is laden; one believes that the more profoundly a man thinks, the more tenderly he feels, the more highly he rates himself, the greater the distance grows between him and the other animals – the more he appears as the genius among animals – the closer he will get to the true nature of the world and to a knowledge of it: this he does in fact do through science, but he *thinks* he does so even more through his arts and religions. These are, to be sure, a blossom of the world, but they are certainly not *closer to the roots of the world* than the stem is: they provide us with no better understanding of the nature of things at all, although almost everyone believes they do. It is *error* that has made mankind so profound, tender, inventive as to produce such a flower as the arts and religions. Pure knowledge would have been incapable of it. Anyone who unveiled to us the nature of the world would produce for all of us the most unpleasant disappointment. It is not the world as thing in itself, it is the world as idea (as error) that is so full of significance, profound, marvellous, and bearing in its womb all happiness and unhappiness. This consequence leads to a philosophy of *logical world-denial*: which can, however, be united with a practical world-affirmation just as easily as with its opposite.

30

Bad habits in drawing conclusions. – The commonest erroneous conclusions drawn by mankind are these: a thing exists, therefore it has a right to. Here the conclusion is from the capacity to live to the fitness to live, from the fitness to live to the right to live. Then: an opinion makes happy, therefore it is a true opinion, its effect is good, therefore it itself is good and true. Here the effect is accorded the predicate beneficent, good, in the sense of useful, and then the cause is furnished with the same predicate good, but here in the sense of the logically valid. The reverse of these

propositions is: a thing cannot prevail, preserve itself, therefore it is wrong; an opinion causes pain and agitation, therefore it is false. The free spirit, who is all too often acquainted with the erroneousness of this kind of reasoning and has to suffer from its consequences, often succumbs to the temptation to draw the opposite conclusions, which are of course in general equally erroneous: a thing cannot prevail, therefore it is good; an opinion causes pain and distress, therefore it is true.

31

The illogical necessary. – Among the things that can reduce a thinker to despair is the knowledge that the illogical is a necessity for mankind, and that much good proceeds from the illogical. It is implanted so firmly in the passions, in language, in art, in religion, and in general in everything that lends value to life, that one cannot pull it out of these fair things without mortally injuring them. Only very naive people are capable of believing that the nature of man could be transformed into a purely logical one; but if there should be degrees of approximation to this objective, what would not have to be lost if this course were taken! Even the most rational man from time to time needs to recover nature, that is to say his *illogical original relationship with all things.*

32

Injustice necessary. – All judgements as to the value of life have evolved illogically and are therefore unjust. The falsity of human judgement derives firstly from the condition of the material to be judged, namely very incomplete, secondly from the way in which the sum is arrived at on the basis of this material, and thirdly from the fact that every individual piece of this material is in turn the outcome of false knowledge, and is so with absolute necessity. Our experience of another person, for example, no matter how close he stands to us, can never be complete, so that we would have a logical right to a total evaluation of him; all evaluations are premature and are bound to be. Finally, the standard by which we measure, our own being, is not an unalterable magnitude, we are subject to moods and fluctuations, and yet we would have to know ourselves as a fixed standard to be able justly to assess the relation between ourself and anything else whatever. Perhaps it would follow from all this that one ought not to judge at all; if only it were possible to *live* without evaluating, without having aversions and partialities! – for all aversion is dependent on an evaluation, likewise all partiality. A drive to something or away from something divorced from a feeling one is desiring the beneficial or avoiding the harmful, a drive without some kind of knowing evaluation of the worth of its objective, does not exist in man. We are from the very beginning illogical and thus unjust beings *and can recognize this*: this is one of the greatest and most irresolvable discords of existence.

33

Error regarding life necessary to life. – Every belief in the value and dignity of life rests on false thinking; it is possible only through the fact that empa-

thy with the universal life and suffering of mankind is very feebly developed in the individual. Even those rarer men who think beyond themselves at all have an eye, not for this universal life, but for fenced-off portions of it. If one knows how to keep the exceptions principally in view, I mean the greatly gifted and pure of soul, takes their production for the goal of world-evolution and rejoices in the effects they in turn produce, one may believe in the value of life, because then one is *overlooking* all other men: thinking falsely, that is to say. And likewise if, though one does keep in view all mankind, one accords validity only to *one* species of drives, the less egoistical, and justifies them in face of all the others, then again one can hope for something of mankind as a whole and to this extent believe in the value of life: thus, in this case too, through falsity of thinking. Whichever of these attitudes one adopts, however, one is by adopting it an *exception* among men. The great majority endure life without complaining overmuch; they *believe* in the value of existence, but they do so precisely because each of them exists for himself alone, refusing to step out of himself as those exceptions do: everything outside themselves they notice not at all or at most as a dim shadow. Thus for the ordinary, everyday man the value of life rests solely on the fact that he regards himself more highly than he does the world. The great lack of imagination from which he suffers means he is unable to feel his way into other beings and thus he participates as little as possible in their fortunes and sufferings. *He*, on the other hand, who really could participate in them would have to despair of the value of life; if he succeeded in encompassing and feeling within himself the total consciousness of mankind he would collapse with a curse on existence – for mankind has as a whole *no* goal, and the individual man when he regards its total course cannot derive from it any support or comfort, but must be reduced to despair. If in all he does he has before him the ultimate goallessness of man, his actions acquire in his own eyes the character of useless squandering. But to feel thus *squandered*, not merely as an individual but as humanity as a whole, in the way we behold the individual fruits of nature squandered, is a feeling beyond all other feelings. – But who is capable of such a feeling? Certainly only a poet: and poets always know how to console themselves.

34

In mitigation. – But will our philosophy not thus become a tragedy? Will truth not become inimical to life, to the better man? A question seems to lie heavily on our tongue and yet refuses to be uttered: whether one *could* consciously reside in untruth? or, if one were *obliged* to, whether death would not be preferable? For there is no longer any 'ought'; for morality, insofar as it was an 'ought', has been just as much annihilated by our mode of thinking as has religion. Knowledge can allow as motives only pleasure and pain, utility and injury: but how will these motives come to terms with the sense for truth? For they too are in contact with errors (insofar as inclination and aversion and their very unjust assessments

are, as we said, the essential determinants of pleasure and pain). The whole of human life is sunk deeply in untruth; the individual cannot draw it up out of this well without thereby growing profoundly disillusioned about his own past, without finding his present motives, such as that of honour, absurd, and pouring mockery and contempt on the passions which reach out to the future and promise happiness in it. Is it true, is all that remains a mode of thought whose outcome on a personal level is despair and on a theoretical level a philosophy of destruction? – I believe that the nature of the after-effect of knowledge is determined by a man's *temperament*: in addition to the after-effect described I could just as easily imagine a different one, quite possible in individual instances, by virtue of which a life could arise much simpler and emotionally cleaner than our present life is: so that, though the old motives of violent desire produced by inherited habit would still possess their strength, they would gradually grow weaker under the influence of purifying knowledge. In the end one would live among men and with oneself as in *nature*, without praising, blaming, contending, gazing contentedly, as though at a spectacle, upon many things for which one formerly felt only fear. One would be free of emphasis, and no longer prodded by the idea that one is only nature or more than nature. For this to happen one would, to be sure, have to possess the requisite temperament, as has already been said: a firm, mild and at bottom cheerful soul, a temper that does not need to be on its guard against malice or sudden outbursts and in whose utterances there is nothing of snarling and sullenness – those familiar tedious qualities of old dogs and men who have long been kept on the leash. A man from whom the ordinary fetters of life have fallen to such an extent that he continues to live only so as to know better must, rather, without envy or vexation be able to forgo much, indeed almost everything upon which other men place value; that free, fearless hovering over men, customs, laws and the traditional evaluations of things must *suffice* him as the condition he considers most desirable. He is happy to communicate his joy in this condition, and he *has*, perhaps, nothing else to communicate – which involves, to be sure, one more privation and renunciation. If more is nonetheless desired of him, he will, with a benevolent shake of the head, point to his brother, the free man of action, and perhaps not conceal a certain mockery in doing so: for of his 'freedom' there is a curious tale still to be told.

2

ON THE HISTORY OF THE MORAL SENSATIONS

35

Advantages of psychological observation. – That reflection on the human, all too human – or, as the learned expression has it: psychological observation – is among the expedients by means of which one can alleviate the burden of living, that practice in this art lends presence of mind in difficult situations and entertainment in tedious circumstances, that one can, indeed, pluck useful maxims from the thorniest and most disagreeable stretches of one's own life and thereby feel a little better: that was believed, that was known – in former centuries. Why has it been forgotten by this century, in which, at least in Germany, indeed in all Europe, poverty in psychological observation is apparent through a hundred signs? Not especially in novels, novellas or philosophical writings – these are the work of exceptional men; it is already more evident, however, in assessments made of public events and personalities: but the art of psychological dissection and computation is lacking above all in the social life of all classes, in which, while there may be much talk about people, there is none at all about *man*. But why is the richest and most inoffensive material for conversation neglected in this way? Why does one not even read the great masters of the psychological maxim any more? – for it can be said without any exaggeration that it is hard to find any educated person in Europe who has read Larochefoucauld* or those related to him in style and spirit, and very much harder to find one who has read them and does not revile them. Even this uncommon reader, however, will probably derive much less pleasure from them than the form they employ ought to give him; for even the most refined head is not in a position to appreciate the art of polishing maxims as it ought to be appreciated if he himself is not drawn to it and has not competed in it. In the absence of such practical instruction, one takes the creation and shaping of maxims to be easier than it is, one does not feel intensely enough the charm and sense of achievement in it. That is why present-day readers of maxims find relatively little to satisfy them, indeed hardly more than a mouthful of pleasantries; so that it is with them as it usually is with observers of cameos: who praise because they cannot love, and are quick to admire but even quicker to go away.

36

Objection. – Or is there a debit side to this proposition that psychological

* Larochefoucauld: François, Duc de Larochefoucauld (1613–80): French writer and aphorist.

observation is one of the means of bestowing charm on existence and relieving and mollifying it? Ought one not to have been sufficiently convinced of the unpleasant consequences of this art to want now deliberately to direct the eyes of anyone in process of formation away from it? A certain blind faith in the goodness of human nature, an innate aversion to the dissection of human actions, a kind of modesty in regard to the nakedness of the soul may indeed be more desirable things for the total happiness of an individual than that psychological perspicacity which may be helpful in particular cases; and perhaps belief in goodness, in virtuous men and actions, in an abundance of impersonal benevolence in the world has in fact made men better, inasmuch as it has made them less mistrustful. If one enthusiastically imitates Plutarch's* heroes and feels a repugnance towards suspiciously probing the motives of their actions, one may not be serving truth but one may well be furthering the wellbeing of human society: psychological error and insensibility in this domain in general promotes humanity, while knowledge of truth perhaps gains for us one more hypothesis such as Larochefoucauld placed before the first edition of his *Sentences et maximes morales: 'Ce que le monde nomme vertu n'est d'ordinaire qu'un fantôme formé par nos passions à qui on donne un nom honnête pour faire impunément ce qu'on veut.'*† Larochefoucauld and the other French masters of psychical examination (to whom there has lately been added a German, the author of the *Psychological Observations*)‡ are like skilful marksmen who again and again hit the bullseye – but it is the bullseye of human nature. Their skill evokes amazement, but in the end a spectator inspired not by the spirit of science but that of philanthropy execrates an art that appears to implant a sense of suspicion and reductionism into the souls of men.

37

Nevertheless. – However credit and debit balance may stand: at its present state as a specific individual science the awakening of moral observation has become necessary, and mankind can no longer be spared the cruel sight of the moral dissecting table and its knives and forceps. For here there rules that science which asks after the origin and history of the so-called moral sensations and which as it progresses has to pose and solve the sociological problems entangled with them: – the older philosophy knows nothing of the latter and has, with paltry evasions, always avoided investigation of the origin and history of the moral sensations. With what consequences is now very clearly apparent, since it has been demonstrated in many instances how the errors of the greatest philosophers usually have their point of departure in a false explanation of certain human actions and sensations; how on the basis of an erroneous

* Plutarch: Greek biographer and essayist (c. 46 to c. 127); his *Lives* contain characterizations of eminent Greeks and Romans.

† *'Ce que . . . qu'on veut'*: That which the world calls virtue is usually nothing but a phantom formed by our passions to which we give an honest name so as to do what we wish with impunity.

‡ The author of the *Psychological Observations*: Paul Rée, with whom Nietzsche was closely acquainted (the book appeared in 1875).

analysis, for example that of the so-called unegoistic actions, a false ethics is erected, religion and mythological monsters are then in turn called upon to buttress it, and the shadow of these dismal spirits in the end falls across even physics and the entire perception of the world. If, however, it is certain that superficiality in psychological observation has laid the most dangerous traps for human judgement and reasoning and continues to lay them, so now what is required is that perseverance in labour that does not weary of heaping stone upon stone, brick upon brick, what is required is the abstemious courage not to be ashamed of such modest labour and to defy every attempt to disparage it. It is true that countless individual observations regarding the human and all too human have first been discovered and expressed in circles of society accustomed to sacrifice, not to scientific knowledge, but to intellectual coquetry; and the odour of that ancient home of the moral maxim – a very seductive odour – has continued to adhere almost inextricably to the whole genre: so that on account of it the scientific man involuntarily evidences a certain distrust of this genre and of its seriousness. But it suffices to point to the consequences: for already it is becoming apparent what results of the most serious description are emerging from the ground of psychological observation. For what is the principle which one of the boldest and coldest of thinkers, the author of the book *On the Origin of the Moral Sensations*,* arrived at by virtue of his incisive and penetrating analyses of human action? 'Moral man', he says, 'stands no closer to the intelligible (metaphysical) world than does physical man'. This proposition, hardened and sharpened beneath the hammer-blow of historical knowledge, may perhaps at some future time serve as the axe which is laid at the root of the 'metaphysical need' of man – whether as *more* of a blessing than a curse to the general wellbeing, who can say? – but in any event as a proposition with the weightiest consequences; at once fruitful and fearful and looking out upon the world with that Janus-face possessed by all great perceptions.

38

To what extent useful. – Thus: whether psychological observation is more advantageous or disadvantageous to man may remain undecided; what is certain, however, is that it is necessary, because science cannot dispense with it. Science, however, knows no regard for final objectives, just as nature knows nothing of it: but, as the latter occasionally brings into existence things of the greatest appropriateness and usefulness without having willed them, so genuine science, *as the imitation of nature in concepts*, will also occasionally, indeed frequently promote the well-being of mankind and achieve what is appropriate and useful – but likewise *without having willed it*.

He who finds the breath of such a way of thinking too wintry for him perhaps has merely too little fire in him: if he cares to look around him,

* The author of the book *On the Origin of the Moral Sensations*: again Paul Rée; the book, which is Rée's chief work, was written during 1876–7 in the house in Sorrento in which Nietzsche was at the same time writing *Human, All Too Human*.

however, he will perceive illnesses that require icepacks, and people so 'compounded together' of fire and spirit they are hard put to it to find air cold and cutting enough for them. Moreover: just as individuals and nations too much given to seriousness have a need of frivolity, just as others too excitable and emotional require from time to time the pressure of a heavy burden if they are to stay healthy, ought *we*, the *more spiritual* men of an age which is visibly becoming more and more ignited, not to seize hold on every means there is of extinguishing and cooling, so that we can remain at least as steady, inoffensive and moderate as we still are, and thus perhaps one day be able to serve this age as its mirror and self-reflection? –

39

*The fable of intelligible freedom.** – The principal stages in the history of the sensations by virtue of which we make anyone accountable for his actions, that is to say, of the moral sensations, are as follows. First of all, one calls individual actions good or bad quite irrespective of their motives but solely on account of their useful or harmful consequences. Soon, however, one forgets the origin of these designations and believes that the quality 'good' and 'evil' is inherent in the actions themselves, irrespective of their consequences: thus committing the same error as that by which language designates the stone itself as hard, the tree itself as green – that is to say, by taking for cause that which is effect. Then one consigns the being good or being evil to the motives and regards the deeds in themselves as morally ambiguous. One goes further and accords the predicate good or evil no longer to the individual motive but to the whole nature of a man out of whom the motive grows as the plant does from the soil. Thus one successively makes men accountable for the effects they produce, then for their actions, then for their motives, and finally for their nature. Now one finally discovers that this nature, too, cannot be accountable, inasmuch as it is altogether a necessary consequence and assembled from the elements and influence of things past and present: that is to say, that man can be made accountable for nothing, not for his nature, nor for his motives, nor for his actions, nor for the effects he produces. One has thereby attained to the knowledge that the history of the moral sensations is the history of an error, the error of accountability, which rests on the error of freedom of will. – Schopenhauer concluded otherwise, thus: because certain actions bring after them a feeling of *displeasure* ('consciousness of guilt'), there must exist a sense of accountability; for there would be *no ground* for this feeling of displeasure if not only were all the actions of man determined by necessity – which is in fact the case, a view also held by this philosopher – but man himself acquired his entire *nature* with this same necessity – which Schopenhauer denies. From the fact of that feeling of displeasure Schopenhauer believes he can demonstrate a freedom which man must have acquired somehow, not in

* Schopenhauer adhered to Kant's concept of intelligible freedom and defends it in *On the Basis of Morality*, ch. 2 section 10.

respect of his actions but in respect to his nature: freedom to *be* thus or thus, that is to say, not to *act* thus or thus. From the *esse*,* the sphere of freedom and accountability, there follows in his opinion the *operari*† – the sphere of strict causality, necessity and unaccountability. That feeling of displeasure appears to relate to the *operari*, to be sure – to that extent it is in error – in truth, however, to the *esse*, which is the deed of the free will, the basic cause of the existence of an individual: man becomes that which he *wills* to become, his willing precedes his existence. – Here the erroneous conclusion is drawn that from the fact of a feeling of displeasure there can be inferred the justification, the rational *admissibility* of this feeling of displeasure; and from this erroneous conclusion Schopenhauer arrives at his fantastic concept of so-called intelligible freedom. But a feeling of displeasure after a deed is absolutely not obliged to be rational; on the contrary, it cannot be, since it rests precisely on the erroneous presupposition that that deed need *not* have taken place of necessity. Thus: it is because man *regards* himself as free, not because he is free, that he feels remorse and pangs of conscience. – This feeling is, moreover, something one can disaccustom oneself to, and many people do not feel it at all in respect of actions which evoke it in others. It is a very changeable thing, tied to the evolution of morality and culture and perhaps present in only a relatively brief span of world-history. – No one is accountable for his deeds, no one for his nature; to judge is the same thing as to be unjust. This also applies when the individual judges himself. The proposition is as clear as daylight, and yet here everyone prefers to retreat back into the shadows and untruth: from fear of the consequences.

40

The over-animal. – The beast in us wants to be lied to; morality is an official lie told so that it shall not tear us to pieces. Without the errors that repose in the assumptions of morality man would have remained animal. As it is, he has taken himself for something higher and imposed sterner laws upon himself. That is why he feels a hatred for the grades that have remained closer to animality: which is the explanation of the contempt formerly felt for the slave as a non-man, as a thing.

41

The unalterable character.‡ – That the character is unalterable is not in the strict sense true; this favourite proposition means rather no more than that, during the brief lifetime of a man, the effective motives are unable to scratch deeply enough to erase the imprinted script of many millennia. If one imagines a man of eighty-thousand years, however, one would have in him a character totally alterable: so that an abundance of different individuals would evolve out of him one after the other. The brevity of human life misleads us to many erroneous assertions regarding the qualities of man.

* *esse*: being

† *operari*: action, manner of acting

‡ The view that character is unalterable was held insistently by Schopenhauer; see his *Essay on the Freedom of the Will*, ch. 3.

42
The order of desirable things and morality. – The accepted order of rank of desirable things, according to whether a low, higher or highest egoism desires the one or the other, now determines whether one is moral or immoral. To prefer a low-esteemed thing (sensual pleasure, for example) to a more highly valued one (health, for example) counts as immoral; as does preferring luxury to freedom. But the order of rank of desirable things is not firm and the same at all times; if someone prefers revenge to justice, according to the standard of an earlier culture he is moral, according to that of ours immoral. 'Immoral' therefore means that one is not yet, or not yet sufficiently sensible of the higher, more refined, more spiritual motives which a new culture has introduced: it designates one who is retarded, has remained behind, though always it is only a matter of degree. – The order of rank of desirable things itself is not erected or altered in accordance with moral considerations; but once it has been established it then determines whether an action is moral or immoral.

43
Cruel men as retarded men. – We have to regard men who are cruel as stages of *earlier cultures* which have remained behind: the deeper formations in the mountain of mankind which are otherwise hidden are here for once laid open. They are retarded men whose brain has, through some chance or other in the course of hereditary transmission, failed to develop in as sensitive and multifarious a way as is normal. They show us what we all *were*, and fill us with horror: but they themselves are as little accountable for it as a piece of granite is for being granite. Just as certain human organs recall the stage of evolution of the fish, so there must also be in our brain grooves and convolutions that correspond to that cast of mind: but these grooves and convolutions are no longer the riverbed along which the stream of our sensibility runs.

44
Gratitude and revenge. – The reason the man of power is grateful is this. His benefactor has, through the help he has given him, as it were laid hands on the sphere of the man of power and intruded into it: now, by way of requital, the man of power in turn lays hands on the sphere of his benefactor through the act of gratitude. It is a milder form of revenge. If he did not have the compensation of gratitude, the man of power would have appeared unpowerful and thenceforth counted as such. That is why every community of the good, that is to say originally the powerful, places gratitude among its first duties. Swift suggested that men are grateful in the same degree as they are revengeful.

45
Twofold prehistory of good and evil. – The concept good and evil has a twofold prehistory: *firstly* in the soul of the ruling tribes and castes. He who has the power to requite, good with good, evil with evil, and also actually

practises requital – is, that is to say, grateful and revengeful – is called good; he who is powerless and cannot requite counts as bad. As a good man one belongs to the 'good', a community which has a sense of belonging together because all the individuals in it are combined with one another through the capacity for requital. As a bad man one belongs to the 'bad', to a swarm of subject, powerless people who have no sense of belonging together. The good are a caste, the bad a mass like grains of sand. Good.and bad is for a long time the same thing as noble and base, master and slave. On the other hand, one does not regard the enemy as evil: he can requite. In Homer the Trojan and the Greek are both good. It is not he who does us harm but he who is contemptible who counts as bad. In the community of the good goodness is inherited; it is impossible that a bad man could grow up out of such good soil. If, however, one of the good should do something unworthy of the good, one looks for excuses; one ascribes the guilt to a god, for example, by saying he struck the good man with madness and rendered him blind. – *Then* in the soul of the subjected, the powerless. Here every *other* man, whether he be noble or base, counts as inimical, ruthless, cruel, cunning, ready to take advantage. Evil is the characterizing expression for man, indeed for every living being one supposes to exist, for a god, for example; human, divine mean the same thing as diabolical, evil. Signs of goodness, benevolence, sympathy are received fearfully as a trick, a prelude with a dreadful termination, a means of confusing and outwitting, in short as refined wickedness. When this disposition exists in the individual a community can hardly arise, at best the most rudimentary form of community: so that wherever this conception of good and evil reigns the downfall of such individuals, of their tribes and races, is near. – Our present morality has grown up in the soil of the *ruling* tribes and castes.

46

Sympathy more painful than suffering. – There are cases in which sympathy for suffering is more painful than actual suffering. We find it more painful, for example, when one of our friends makes himself guilty of something shameful than when we do so ourselves. For we believe, firstly, in the purity of his character more than he does: then, probably precisely on account of this belief, our love for him is stronger than his own love for himself. Even if his egoism really does suffer more than our egoism does, inasmuch as he has to endure the evil consequences of his act more than we do, nonetheless the unegoistic in us – this word is never to be taken in a strict sense but only as a simplified form of expression – is affected more strongly by his guilt than is the unegoistic in him.

47

Hypochondria. – There are people who out of empathy with and concern for another person become hypochondriac; the species of sympathy that arises in this case is nothing other than an illness. Thus there is also a Christian hypochondria such as overcomes those solitary, religiously

inclined people who have the suffering and death of Christ continually before their eyes.

48

Economy of goodness. – Goodness and love as the most salutary medicine in traffic between men are such precious inventions one could well wish they might be employed as economically as possible: but this is impossible. Economy of goodness is the dream of the boldest utopians.

49

Benevolence. – Among the little but immeasurably frequent and thus very influential things to which science ought to pay more attention than to the great, rare things, benevolence too is to be reckoned; I mean those social expressions of a friendly disposition, those smiles of the eyes, those handclasps, that comfortable manner with which almost all human action is as a rule encompassed. Every teacher, every official brings this addition to what he does as a matter of duty; it is the continual occupation of humanity, as it were its light-waves in which everything grows; especially within the narrowest circle, within the family, is life made to flourish only through this benevolence. Good-naturedness, friendliness, politeness of the heart are never-failing emanations of the unegoistic drive and have played a far greater role in the construction of culture than those much more celebrated expressions of it called pity, compassion and self-sacrifice. But usually they are neglected and undervalued; and there is, indeed, very little of the unegoistic in them. The *sum* of these small doses is nonetheless enormous; their collective force is among the mightiest of forces. – One can likewise discover much more happiness in the world than clouded eyes can see: one can do so if one calculates correctly and does not overlook all those moments of pleasure in which every day of even the most afflicted human life is rich.

50

The desire to excite pity. – Larochefoucauld is certainly right when, in the most noteworthy passage of his self-portrait (first printed 1658), he warns all those who possess reason against pity, when he advises that it be left to those people of the commonality who (because their actions are not determined by reason) require the passions if they are to be brought to the point of aiding a sufferer or energetically intervening in a case of misfortune; while pity, in his (and Plato's) judgement, enfeebles the soul. One should, to be sure, *manifest* pity, but take care not to possess it; for the unfortunate are so *stupid* that the manifestation of pity constitutes for them the greatest good in the world. – Perhaps one can warn even more strongly against this having pity if one understands this need felt by the unfortunate, not precisely as stupidity and intellectual deficiency, as a kind of mental disturbance that misfortune brings with it (that, indeed, is how Larochefoucauld seems to conceive it), but as something quite different and more suspicious. Observe children who weep and wail *in order that* they shall be pitied, and therefore wait for the moment when their condition will be noticed; live among invalids and the mentally afflicted

and ask yourself whether their eloquent moaning and complaining, their displaying of misfortune, does not fundamentally have the objective of *hurting* those who are with them: the pity which these then express is a consolation for the weak and suffering, inasmuch as it shows them that, all their weakness notwithstanding, they possess at any rate *one power*: the *power to hurt*. In this feeling of superiority of which the manifestation of pity makes him conscious, the unfortunate man gains a sort of pleasure; in the conceit of his imagination he is still of sufficient importance to cause affliction in the world. The thirst for pity is thus a thirst for self-enjoyment, and that at the expense of one's fellow men; it displays man in the whole ruthlessness of his own dear self: but not precisely in his 'stupidity', as Larochefoucauld thinks. – In the conversations of social life, three-quarters of all questions are asked, three-quarters of all answers given, in order to cause just a little pain to the other party; that is why many people have such a thirst for social life: it makes them aware of their strength. In such countless but very small doses in which malice makes itself felt it is a powerful stimulant to life: just as benevolence, disseminated through the human world in the same form, is the ever available medicine. – But will there be many honest men prepared to admit that causing pain gives pleasure? that one not seldom entertains oneself – and entertains oneself well – by mortifying other people, at least in one's own mind, and by firing off at them the grapeshot of petty malice? Most are too dishonest, and a few too good, to know anything of this *pudendum*;* and they are welcome to deny if they like that Prosper Merimée† is right when he says: '*Sachez aussi qu'il n'y a rien de plus commun que de faire le mal pour le plaisir de le faire.*'‡

51

How appearance becomes being. – Even when in the deepest distress, the actor ultimately cannot cease to think of the impression he and the whole scenic effect is making, even for example at the burial of his own child; he will weep over his own distress and the ways in which it expresses itself, as his own audience. The hypocrite who always plays one and the same role finally ceases to be a hypocrite; for example priests, who as young men are usually conscious or unconscious hypocrites, finally become natural and then really are priests without any affectation; or if the father fails to get that far then perhaps the son does so, employing his father's start and inheriting his habits. If someone obstinately and for a long time wants to *appear* something it is in the end hard for him to *be* anything else. The profession of almost every man, even that of the artist, begins with hypocrisy, with an imitation from without, with a copying of what is most effective. He who is always wearing a mask of a friendly countenance must finally acquire a power over benevolent moods without which

* *pudendum*: shameful part

† Prosper Merimée (1803–70): French writer, the author of *Carmen*

‡ '*Sachez aussi . . . de le faire*': Know, too, that there is nothing more common than to do evil for the pleasure of doing it.

the impression of friendliness cannot be obtained – and finally these acquire power over him, he *is* benevolent.

52
The point of honesty in deception. – With all great deceivers there is a noteworthy occurrence to which they owe their power. In the actual act of deception, with all its preparations, its enthralling in voice, expression and gesture, in the midst of the scenery designed to give it effect, they are overcome by *belief in themselves*: it is this which then speaks so miraculously and compellingly to those who surround them. The founders of religions are distinguished from these great deceivers by the fact that they never emerge from this state of self-deception: or very rarely they experience for once that moment of clarity when doubt overcomes them; usually, however, they comfort themselves by ascribing these moments of clarity to the evil antagonist. Self-deception has to exist if a grand *effect* is to be produced. For men believe in the truth of that which is plainly strongly believed.

53
Supposed stages of truth. – One of the commonest false conclusions is this: because someone is true and honest towards us, he speaks the truth. Thus a child believes in the judgements of its parents, the Christian in the assertions of the founder of the Church. There is likewise a disinclination to admit that all that which men have defended in earlier centuries with sacrifice of happiness and life were nothing but errors: perhaps one says they were stages of truth. But what one thinks at bottom is that, if someone has honestly believed in something and has fought and died for his belief, it would be altogether too *unfair* if what had inspired him had actually been no more than an error. Such an event seems to go against eternal justice; which is why the heart of sensitive people again and again contradicts their head, and decrees: there absolutely must exist a necessary connection between moral action and intellectual insight. Unhappily it is otherwise; for there is no such thing as eternal justice.

54
The lie. – Why do almost all people tell the truth in ordinary everyday life? – Certainly not because a god has forbidden them to lie. The reason is, firstly because it is easier; for lying demands invention, dissimulation and a good memory. (Which is why Swift says that he who tells a lie seldom realizes what a heavy burden he has assumed; for, in order to maintain a lie, he has to invent twenty more.) Then because, in straightforward relationships, it is advantageous to say: I want this, I have done that, and things of that kind; because, that is to say, the route of authority and compulsion is more certain than that of cunning. – If, however, a child should have been brought up in complicated domestic circumstances, it is just as natural for him to employ the lie and involuntarily always to say that which serves his interests; a sense of truth, an aversion to lying as such, is quite foreign and inaccessible to him, and thus he lies in all innocence.