

A man in love frequently furnishes comic as well as tragic aspects; for being in the possession of the spirit of the species and controlled by it, he no longer belongs to himself, and consequently his line of conduct is not in keeping with that of the individual. It is fundamentally this that in the higher phases of love gives such a poetical and sublime colour, nay, transcendental and hyperphysical turn to a man's thoughts, whereby he appears to lose sight of his essentially material purpose. He is inspired by the spirit of the species, whose affairs are infinitely more important than any which concern mere individuals, in order to establish by special mandate of this spirit the existence of an indefinitely long posterity with _this_ particular and precisely determined nature, which it can receive only from him as father and his loved one as mother, and which, moreover, _as such_ never comes into existence, while the objectivation of the will to live expressly demands this existence. It is the feeling that he is engaged in affairs of such transcendent importance that exalts the lover above everything earthly, nay, indeed, above himself, and gives such a hyperphysical clothing to his physical wishes, that love becomes, even in the life of the most prosaic, a poetical episode; and then the affair often assumes a comical aspect. That mandate of the will which objectifies itself in the species presents itself in the consciousness of the lover under the mask of the anticipation of an infinite happiness, which is to be found in his union with this particular woman. This illusion to a man deeply in love becomes so dazzling that if it cannot be attained, life itself not only loses all charm, but appears to be so joyless, hollow, and uninteresting as to make him too disgusted

with it to be afraid of the terrors of death; this is why he sometimes of his own free will cuts his life short. The will of a man of this kind has become engulfed in that of the species, or the will of the species has obtained so great an ascendancy over the will of the individual that if such a man cannot be effective in the manifestation of the first, he disdains to be so in the last. The individual in this case is too weak a vessel to bear the infinite longing of the will of the species concentrated upon a definite object. When this is the case suicide is the result, and sometimes suicide of the two lovers; unless nature, to prevent this, causes insanity, which then enshrouds with its veil the consciousness of so hopeless a condition. The truth of this is confirmed yearly by various cases of this description.