

Experience, although not that of everyday, verifies that that which as a rule begins only as a strong and yet controllable inclination, may develop, under certain conditions, into a passion, the ardour of which surpasses that of every other. It will ignore all considerations, overcome all kinds of obstacles with incredible strength and persistence. A man, in order to have his love gratified, will unhesitatingly risk his life; in fact, if his love is absolutely rejected, he will sacrifice his life into the bargain. The Werthers and Jacopo Ortis do not only exist in romances; Europe produces every year at least half-a-dozen like them: *sed ignotis perierunt mortibus illi*: for their sufferings are chronicled by the writer of official registers or by the reporters of newspapers. Indeed, readers of the police news in English and French newspapers will confirm what I have said.

Love drives a still greater number of people into the lunatic asylum. There is a case of some sort every year of two lovers committing suicide together because material circumstances happen to be unfavourable to their union. By the way, I cannot understand how it is that such people, who are confident of each other's love, and expect to find their greatest happiness in the enjoyment of it, do not avoid taking extreme steps, and prefer suffering every discomfort to sacrificing with their lives a happiness which is greater than any other they can conceive. As far as lesser phases and passages of love are concerned, all of us have them daily before our eyes, and, if we are not old, the most of us in our hearts.