

To amuse the reader, on the other hand, Spinoza's definition deserves to be quoted because of its exuberant naïveté: *„Amor est titillatio, concomitante idea causae externae“* (*Eth.* iv., prop. 44). It is not my intention to be either influenced or to contradict what has been written by my predecessors; the subject has forced itself upon me objectively, and has of itself become inseparable from my consideration of the world. Moreover, I shall expect least approval from those people who are for the moment enchained by this passion, and in consequence try to express their exuberant feelings in the most sublime and ethereal images. My view will seem to them too physical, too material, however metaphysical, nay, transcendent it is fundamentally.

First of all let them take into consideration that the creature whom they are idealising to-day in madrigals and sonnets would have been ignored almost entirely by them if she had been born eighteen years previously.