

Every animal, and especially man, requires, in order to exist and get on in the world, a certain fitness and proportion between his will and his intellect. The more exact and true this fitness and proportion are by nature, the easier, safer, and pleasanter it will be for him to get through the world. At the same time, a mere approximation to this exact point will protect him from destruction. There is, in consequence, a certain scope within the limits of exactness and fitness of this so-called proportion. The normal proportion is as follows. As the object of the intellect is to be the light and guide of the will on its path, the more violent, impetuous, and passionate the inner force of the will, the more perfect and clear must be the intellect which belongs to it; so that the ardent efforts of the will, the glow of passion, the vehemence of affection, may not lead a man astray or drive him to do things that he has not given his consideration or are wrong or will ruin him; which will infallibly be the case when a very strong will is combined with a very weak intellect. On the other hand, a phlegmatic character, that is to say, a weak and feeble will, can agree and get on with little intellect; a moderate will only requires a moderate intellect. In general, any disproportion between the will and intellect--that is to say, any deviation from the normal proportion referred to--tends to make a man unhappy; and the same thing happens when the disproportion is reversed. The development of the intellect to an abnormal degree of strength and superiority, thereby making it out of all proportion to the will, a condition which constitutes the essence of true genius, is not only superfluous but actually an impediment to the needs and purposes of life. This means that, in youth, excessive energy in grasping the

objective world, accompanied by a lively imagination and little experience, makes the mind susceptible to exaggerated ideas and a prey even to chimeras; and this results in an eccentric and even fantastic character. And when, later, this condition of mind no longer exists and succumbs to the teaching of experience, the genius will never feel so much at home or take up his position in the everyday world or in civic life, and move with the ease of a man of normal intellect; indeed, he is often more apt to make curious mistakes. For the ordinary mind is so perfectly at home in the narrow circle of its own ideas and way of grasping things that no one can control it in that circle; its capacities always remain true to their original purpose, namely, to look after the service of the will; therefore it applies itself unceasingly to this end without ever going beyond it. While the genius, as I have stated, is at bottom a *_monstrum per excessum_*; just as conversely the passionate, violent, and unintelligent man, the brainless savage, is a *_monstrum per dejectum_*.